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The Hong Kong Institute of Architects



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謝偉銓立法會議員
Tony TSE, LegCo Member
(建築、測量、都市規劃及園境界)
Architectural, Surveying, Planning and Landscape

By e-mail devbeng@devb.gov.hk and by Post

1 April 2019

To: Secretary for Development - Mr. WONG Wai-lun Michael, JP
Development Bureau,
Government of HKSAR,
19/F, West Wing, Central Government Offices,
2, Tim Mei Avenue,
Tamar, Hong Kong.

Dear Mr. Wong,

Comments on the Proposed Study on Lantau Tomorrow

First of all, I would like to extend our thanks to you and all members of your team for meeting the Lantau Tomorrow Professionals Concern Group and members of the four professional institutes (HKIA, HKILA, HKIP and HKIS) on 1.3.2019 and briefing us about the Government's Lantau Tomorrow proposal. After that meeting, the representatives of the four Institutes have considered the subject further and have put together their professional views about the proposal, including the visions, the methods of engaging consultancies and implementation of the works, and the possible impacts and precautionary advice, etc. They may have further comments and feedback as and when the Study has been set in motion. We understand that Government is now seeking LegCo's approval for funding to carry out a feasibility study. At this juncture, we sincerely urge Government to take these views, which I have collated below, into account, in the leading stages as well as in the main body of the proposed Study. Whilst I have made a brief summary of these views below, the full texts are attached at Appendices 1 to 4 for your reference. The summarised views are as follows:

1. **Vision** – The vision and goals need to be set out more clearly and aspire to achieve a living environment of **better quality** than the congested urban areas of today although there is, up to a point, merit for the city to be compact. Generally, the new development areas should be **sustainable, green and resilient, well connected, walkable, inclusive** for population of different ages, and as Government envisages, it should aptly function as a **double-gateway**



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facing Hong Kong itself as well as the Greater Bay Area. Despite the imminent need for housing land in the Territory, an appropriate **balance** should be aimed at between **private and public housing**, as well as provision of **matching job opportunities** and befitting community and welfare facilities. There are at present some doubts about a possible mis-match between the declared “CBD-3” function and the future demographic structure here.

2. As the vision is such a long term one and the investment involved is enormous, it is essential to gain the **community’s** strong and steady **support** from the beginning and throughout the course of implementation. It is therefore vital to **engage the public** at suitable stages. We would like to know how Government would carry out the public engagement. It may be useful to have two stages of engagement - starting from the broad concepts and visions, and then on the more detailed design proposals.
3. Also, as the **implementation** of the development would straddle many years, the development strategy needs to build-in suitable **flexibility** to cope with future changes and advancement of new technology. This could hopefully spread out the risks and may also alleviate the community’s anxiety as we need their confidence and support.
4. The **process and contents** of the Study and the planning proposals that will emerge from that must be **comprehensive**, by taking into account the regional context - such as enhancing the Study Area’s connectivity with the Greater Bay Area, as well as the effects of the development on the older urban areas of Hong Kong with regard to opportunities to upgrade Hong Kong’s built environment as a whole.
5. We recognize that the Study must engage **multi-disciplinary** experts in the Study **team**. We expect the outcome should be well balanced and **must not be dominated by engineering infrastructures**. Moreover, it should neither be bound by established and rigid departmental regulations, nor should the quality of the spaces so created be sacrificed simply by short term cost reasons and expedience. The intangible and long-term social benefits and the value of a greener environment should also be duly counted. Thus, this Concern Group would like to know how the Study team will be composed, as well as the consultancy procurement or engagement methods. We recommend that there is a justifiable need for an overall **urban design framework**, which subsequently could help the formulation of site-specific development control guidelines upon implementation. There are many examples of other cities the development of



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which were based on a strong theme and far-sighted vision. We need not copy from them directly but we should develop our own by taking into account our special circumstances.

Some specific comments –

Balance between conservation and development

- The subject area has a strong maritime character with high landscape value. A balance needs to be struck between conservation of the coastal features and the future development since the impacts of development may be irreversible. A thorough ecological survey of the flora and fauna is highly demanded. For the protection of some particular species including corals, lizard, finless porpoise, etc., it may call for the designation of a no-activity-area.
- Alternative land formation methods other than reclamation may be worth consideration, with a view to shortening, if possible, the period of impacts to the existing sea bed and marine life.
- Waterfront should be made easily accessible, as part of a people-centred quality outdoor space network. To make the new development area walkable, priority should be given to pedestrians rather than vehicles.

Technology

- Since it is a clean slate, there would be ample opportunities for the application of new technologies, including such ones as: carbon neutral, autonomous vehicles, artificial intelligence, car sharing, spatial co-sharing, ...etc.
- Should consider application of smart city elements e.g. SDI, BIM, GIS, IoT, etc. MIC and 3D printing methods may help to speed up the pace of development.
- Need to tackle concerns about climate change and provide for resilience against extreme weather.

Cost and Finance

- Consideration may need to be given to the use of piled platform methods. The ensued implications of design life and cost of maintenance, etc. to be compared with the traditional reclamation method. The two methods could be applied to different part of the whole development since it may be implemented in different phases.
- Risks may possibly be lowered by adopting PPP or BOT or some partnership with



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private sectors. Issuing of bonds may also be considered for financing the development. The target years for population intake currently appears overly optimistic and needs to be justified in the Study.

Despite the above cautions and challenges, Lantau Tomorrow is seen to be an **opportunity** to overcome the current spatial constraints and problems of congestions and the degrading urban environment. As the development may bring about adverse impacts to the natural environment, a **thorough study** is definitely required. Government is also encouraged to **think out of the box** and **break down current departmental barriers** where necessary for **embracing new technologies and innovations from the community through proactively engaging the public and the professional institutes**. We are happy to offer further comments and advice in the coming years to see the vision coming to fruition together.

The comments of the 4 professional institutes are attached at Appendices 1 to 4. If you and your colleagues have any questions, please feel free to contact the Concern Group and the Institutes.

Yours sincerely,

(P. Y. TAM)

Hon. Secretary of the Lantau Tomorrow Professionals Concern Group

cc: The Hon. Tony Tse Wai-chuen, BBS
President of HKIA (Attention: Mr. Felix LI)
President of HKILA (Attention: Ms. Iris HOI)
President of HKIP (Attention: Miss Fiona LUNG)
President of HKIS (Attention: Sr. Dr. Tony LEUNG)

- with attachments:

APPENDIX 1 Comments of the HKIA
APPENDIX 2 Comments of the HKILA
APPENDIX 3 Comments of the HKIP
APPENDIX 4 Comments of the HKIS