Islands District Council
Paper No. IDC 126/2012

Planning and Engineering Study on Future Land Use at the Ex-Lamma Quarry Area at Sok Kwu Wan, Lamma Island – Feasibility Study

Stage 1 Community Engagement

1. PURPOSES

1.1 The purposes of this paper is to seek Islands District Council's comments on the initial land use options formulated under the Planning and Engineering Study on Future Land Use at the Ex-Lamma Quarry Area at Sok Kwu Wan, Lamma Island – Feasibility Study (the Study).

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 In January 2012, the Planning Department (PlanD) and the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) commissioned the Study. The overall objective of the Study is to examine the future land use and explore the development potential of the Ex-Lamma Quarry Area (Study Site), including residential development and other compatible uses. The Study will also include the technical assessments to confirm the feasibility of the preferred land use options at the subsequent stage. The findings and recommendations of the Study will serve as a reference for revision of the relevant town plans to guide the future development.

3. STUDY AREA AND STUDY SITE

3.1 The Study Site is located on the northern coast of Sok Kwu Wan, Lamma Island, covering an area of approximately 34.3 hectares and approx. 1 km of coastline **(Plan 1)**. The Study Site is currently zoned "Undetermined" on the approved Lamma Island Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/I-LI/9, pending detailed consideration of appropriate uses.

3.2 The Study Area has a total area of 59.9 hectares, covering the Study Site, the adjacent "Comprehensive Development Area (CDA)", natural slopes and shorelines.

4. VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

4.1 The overall vision of the Study is to create a green and sustainable waterfront neighborhood that meets the land use needs while complementing the local character. The guiding principles are as follows:-

a) *Development Needs*

- to optimize the development potential of the Study Site
- to synergize with the local character and recreation/ tourism resources of Lamma with its natural assets, ecology, areas of natural beauty, important culture heritage, villages and pedestrian friendly environment
- to explore the potential of the Study Site for helping to meet housing demand
- to enhance visitors' appeal

b) *Local Aspirations*

- to respond to aspirations of the local communities for providing a diversity of land uses and enhancing vibrancy and economic vitality in the area

c) *Environment*

- to create a green and sustainable living environment
- to integrate with the natural and cultural resources in the surroundings
- to respect the distinct landform and landscape resources at the Study Site
- to promote quality waterfront development
- to design a barrier-free access environment

d) *Infrastructure*

- to enhance the linkages to other parts of Lamma Island and Hong Kong Island
- to utilize the available infrastructural facilities of Lamma Island for optimal development in the Study Site
- to connect to the adjacent development sites and integrate with the existing communities

5. KEY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 The Study Site is subject to the following key planning considerations:-

a) **Planning context** – the existing characters of Lamma Island, involving the natural landscape, local culture, rural settlement and car-free environment should be duly respected;

b) **Landscape** – The rich landscape resources at the Study Site and its vicinity, including the hillslopes with dense vegetation, 5ha man-made lake and shoreline should be respected and integrated into the future development;

c) **Ecology** – The Study Site provides a good habitat for various species of birds. Major disturbance to the habitat should be mitigated as far as possible;

d) **Accessibility** – the Sok Kwu Wan area relies on ferry services to connect to the urban area and the ferry schedule is adequate to meet the existing demand. However, the Study Site is currently not conveniently connected to other parts of the island such as Sok Kwu Wan and Lo So Shing. The connection needs to be improved;

e) **Infrastructure & Utilities** – there is currently no basic infrastructure and utility facilities within the Study Site;

f) **Fish Culture Zones** – future development should minimize the disturbance to the three fish culture zones located within the water bodies in Sok Kwu Wan;

g) **Quarry Platform** – being the nearest outlying island to the urban area, the 20-hectare platform area within the Study Site presents good potential for housing, tourism, recreation, and other compatible uses to meet the land use needs in Hong Kong; and

h) **Leisure and Tourism Destinations** – embedded with rich ecological, historical and landscape characters, and coupled with the famous seafood restaurants and fishermen villages at Sok Kwu Wan area, there is potential for the Study Site to integrate with the existing Sok Kwu Wan area to distinguish itself as a tourist destination and for weekend

getaway. The Study Site, with its tranquil seaside location in rural island setting, a large man-made lake, together with the proximity to urban area, has good potential of developing as a resort development.

6. INITIAL PUBLIC VIEWS

6.1 Views were collected during the informal discussions with local parties, green groups, professional institutions and other concern groups in March/April 2012. The initial views collected are summarized as below: -

a) Future development should conserve the natural landscape, the rural character and the 'car-free' environment of Lamma Island.

b) The 5ha man-made lake should be preserved for public enjoyment.

c) Extensive housing is not supported though public housing could be explored at the Study Site.

d) Provision of public and private housing development should be considered.

e) The proposal should consider integrating the Study Site with the adjacent 'CDA' zone.

7. INITIAL LAND USE OPTIONS

Planned Population

7.1 Two initial land use options, namely "Seaside Living" (i.e. housing) and "Seaside Paradise" (i.e. tourism plus housing) are formulated. With a flat size ranging from 50sqm to 100sqm, the respective population is estimated to be about 5,000 to 7,000 (Option 1) and 2,800 (Option 2).

7.2 A mix of housing types including Private housing with a portion of the subsidized housing would be produced at the Study Site to meet the imminent demand. However, taking into account of its geographical location and other considerations, no public rental housing is proposed in the options. The housing mix of the proposed development would be set out at the subsequent stage of the Study.

Key Planning and Urban Design Components

7.3 The key components in the planning and design concepts that are commonly adopted in the initial options (including Option 1 “housing themed” and Option 2 “tourism cum housing themed”) are as follows :

a) to have future developments mainly at the existing platform areas at the Study Site;

b) to protect the visual connection to the natural backdrop of the Study Site from major vantage points;

c) to adopt stepped height profile for buildings descending towards the waterfront ;

d) to enhance both external and internal connectivity to the Study Site;

e) to provide a waterfront promenade along the coastline of the Study Site for public enjoyment;

f) to provide a marina to help address the growing need for marina facilities and the increasing demand for yacht mooring for public use. Part of the marine facilities will be reserved for public use; and

g) to provide supporting GIC facilities to serve the future development and the remaining area of Sok Kwu Wan.

7.4 Apart from the basic components, two initial land use options have been formulated by adopting different design concepts as below :

Options 1 (Housing) : “Seaside Living” – A Green Community

7.5 Housing developments are the major land uses of this Option. The 20-ha flat land within the Study Site provides an opportunity for residential developments. It’s key design features as below:

a) An **Entrance Plaza** located in front of the new pier will be developed into a vibrant marketplace for residents and visitors alike. The large public place could host a number of activities to enhance

the local character, such as farmer's market, exhibition stalls for local trades/industries, etc.

b) An **Eco-tourism Centre** at the southern edge of the lake will foster the appreciation of the natural landscape features of Lamma Island and become the major landmark.

c) A **Community Square** is proposed at the northern platform with wide frontages for commercial uses and outdoor dining facilities, which will help promote the space as the gathering point for the community.

7.6 In order to accommodate 5,000 to 7,000 population targets, two variation options (Options 1a and 1b) are proposed under Option 1.

a) Option 1a **(Plan 2)**

(i) This option aims to achieve a maximum population level, by fully utilizing the available infrastructure facilities for optimal development. The planned population is approximately 5,000 and a total of about 2,000 flats will be provided. The man-made lake will be wholly preserved as a visual amenity of the Study Site.

(ii) Low to medium density housing proposed will be located at the three flat platforms. A stepped height profile with 3-4 storey buildings near the waterfront and taller buildings with a maximum height of 10 storeys near the mountain backdrop will be adopted to preserve the natural ridgeline and achieve a high visual permeability.

b) Option 1b **(Plan 3)**

(i) This option aims to achieve a relatively higher population level and density but without significantly compromising the existing rural island character of the Study Site and its surrounding context. The planned population is approximately 7,000 with a total of about 2,800 flats will be provided. Since the existing platform areas would not be able to accommodate further population intake, there is a need to identify additional land via

partial filling of the man-made lake. To cater for the additional population intake, a new submarine fresh water pipe connected from Hong Kong Island and associated facilities will be required.

(ii) A stepped height profile with low-rise buildings near the waterfront and taller buildings with a maximum height of 8-12 storeys near the mountain backdrop will be adopted to preserve the natural ridgeline and provide a reasonable degree of visual permeability, though not as high as Option 1a, can be achieved.

7.7 The pros and cons between Options 1a and 1b are summarized in **Table 1** below:

Table 1: Comparison of Pros and Cons for Options 1a and 1b

	Option 1a 'Seaside Living' (Population: 5,000)	**Option 1b 'Seaside Living' (Population: 7,000)**
Pros	Man-made lake will be wholly preserved	Higher flat production
	More compatible with the rural island setting	Able to strike a balance between housing supply and preserving the natural attributes
	Preservation of views to the natural ridgeline with high visual permeability	Protection of views to the natural ridgeline, with a reasonable degree of visual permeability
	Minor upgrading works required for the existing freshwater system	-
Cons	Lower flat production	Need to lay a new submarine fresh water pipe connected from Hong Kong Island and other associated facilities
	-	About half of the man-made lake need to be backfilled
	-	Less compatible with the rural island setting

Option 2 (Tourism cum Housing) : "Seaside Paradise" – A Tourist Paradise for All (Plan 4)

7.8 This Option aims to enhance the tourism appeal for the Study Site, as featured by a number of tourism and recreational facilities. Housing developments will also be provided but in a lower density profile, with a view to complementing the tourism resort setting under the option. The lake being one of the key landscape attributes to enhance the tourism potential will be retained.

7.9 The planned population is 2,800 with a total of 1,000 flats will be provided. Stepped height profile with low-rise buildings at the waterfront and taller buildings with a maximum of 8 storeys will be placed inland to preserve the natural ridgeline and maintain a high degree of visual permeability.

7.10 The proposed low-rise **resort hotel facilities** along the lakefront and hillside with tranquil and serene environment will provide alternative accommodation experience for visitors, contributing to the economic benefit to Hong Kong.

7.11 A low-rise, pavilion-style building cluster labeled as **"Lamma Hub"** will serve as the major arrival point of the Study Site. The sizeable event plaza surrounded by the low-rise commercial spaces with integrated design can host both festive events demanding for large outdoor space.

7.12 A **water sport centre** will help develop the active recreational and leisure potential of the man-made lake through the provision of different water-based recreational activities, such as water cycling.

8. ACCESSIBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY (Plan 5 and 6)

8.1 Similar connectivity strategies are adopted in Option 1 and Option 2 to enhance the connectivity of the Study Site.

a) A new pier is proposed at the mid-point of the Study Site. A new stop for existing ferry services operated between Central/Aberdeen and the existing Sok Kwu Wan Pier is proposed.

b) New hiking trails are proposed to link up with other parts of the Lamma Island. A pedestrian corridor is an alternate option to connect with the Lo So Shing/ Sok Kwu Wan area. However, construction of the proposed corridor may involve site formation, land resumption and/or potential environmental impacts to the existing dense vegetation and natural coastline and the Lo So Shing Site of Archaeological Interest. Its technical feasibility is subject to detailed technical investigation. Public views are invited on the proposed corridor.

c) Cycle tracks and pedestrian walkways will be planned throughout the Study Site to serve different development sites.

d) A tree-lined access corridor running along the south-western to north-eastern end is proposed to connect different sites within the Study Site. The viability of implementing the shuttle services within the study site will be investigated at the later stage of the study.

9. STAGE 1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

9.1 There is a two-stage community engagement programme for this Study to allow early public participation in the study process. The Stage 1 CE is in progress to solicit public views on the initial land use options at the Study Site. The views collected will provide essential inputs to the formulation of the preferred options at the next stage of the Study.

9.2 A two-month Stage 1 Community Engagement has commenced and will last till early-February 2013. A Community Workshop will be organized at Sok Kwu Wan, and a Community Forum and a Public Forum will be held in Yung Shue Wan and the City Gallery, Central in January 2013 respectively. The PlanD and CEDD will brief and consult Islands and Southern District Councils, Lamma Island (North) & (South) Rural Committees, the Town Planning Board and the Legislative Council. Roving exhibitions will be arranged at different locations during the community engagement period. All relevant information on the Study will soon be uploaded to the Study webpage at http://www.ex-lammaquarry.hk.

9.3 We hope that through this briefing session, Members could have better understanding of the initial options. Members are invited to provide valuable views to us.

ATTACHMENTS

Plan 1 Study Area and Study Site
Plan 2 Initial Land Use Option 1a
Plan 3 Initial Land Use Option 1b
Plan 4 Initial Land Use Option 2
Plan 5 External Access
Plan 6 Internal Access

Appendix I Stage 1 Community Engagement Digest

PLANNING DEPARTMENT
CIVIL ENGINEERING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
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