



HONG KONG 2030

Planning Vision and Strategy

Stage 2 Public Consultation

Consultation Digest

[<ENTER>](#)

STAGE 2 PUBLIC CONSULTATION CONSULTATION DIGEST

[A Warm Welcome](#)

[Closer Links With The Mainland](#)

[More Responsive to Special Land Needs](#)

[More Sustainable Use Of Industrial Buildings](#)

[New Development Opportunities, Better Quality](#)

[More Jobs Closer To Homes](#)

[Facilitating Businesses Of Tomorrow](#)

[Essential But Unwelcome Facilities](#)

[Better Planning For Waterfront Uses](#)

[More Choices For Recreation And Sports](#)

[Criteria For Option Evaluation](#)

[Annex : Eight Key Study Areas](#)

[We Welcome Your Views](#)



A WARM WELCOME

A very warm welcome to the Stage Two Public Consultation on the Hong Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy Study. In this consultation exercise, we wish to hear your views on:

- The issues that are important to the formulation of development options; and
- The assumptions and criteria that should be used to construct and evaluate the development options.

Shaping Our Future Together

Developing a physical planning framework for Hong Kong's future is an important matter for the entire community. It is, therefore, essential that all residents be engaged in the consultation process for the Hong Kong 2030 Study.

Between February and April 2001, we consulted the community on the planning objectives and the key subjects that the Hong Kong 2030 Study should address. Together eight "Key Study Areas", as shown in the [Annex](#), were proposed for public discussion. The results of the public consultation exercise, which were reported in the Stage One Public Consultation Report released in late November 2001, confirmed that research efforts should be focussed on these areas. Some additional topics were raised, which we will take up as the study progresses.

Overview Of Key Issues

Since the Stage One Public Consultation, we have been studying the eight 'Key Study Areas' together with the public comments that have been received. The subject matter is undoubtedly complex, and it is not difficult to imagine the many issues that the study team has encountered.

In considering what strategic planning issues should be presented for consultation, we are mindful that some are already the subject of separate studies which the community is being consulted on. Others require additional research and presenting them for public discussion at this stage would be pre-mature. Some, in fact, are unlikely to be settled within the time-frame of the HK2030 Study and research on these issues will be on-

going.

Bearing in mind that the HK2030 Study is a strategic planning study, and that its key objective is to address "how much, what type and where land for development should be provided", we have identified nine issues which have an important bearing on the formulation of development options in the next stage of the study. They relate to the planning for:

- a. Closer links with the Mainland;
- b. Greater responsiveness to special land needs;
- c. More sustainable use of our land resource;
- d. New development opportunities, better quality;
- e. More jobs closer to homes;
- f. Facilitating businesses of tomorrow;
- g. Essential but unwelcome facilities;
- h. Better planning for waterfront uses; and
- i. More choices for recreation and sports.

Additional Information

To assist in more informed discussions on these issues, a separate Supplementary Note with more elaborate explanations is available. Also, more background information is available at the HK2030 website at www.info.gov.hk/hk2030.

CLOSER LINKS WITH THE MAINLAND

Hong Kong is, economically and socially, an inseparable part of the Pearl River Delta. To foster further economic and social interactions between these two places, measures to increase the capacity of existing boundary control points are being implemented and additional transport links will shortly be constructed. In addition, various long term ideas are being investigated, such as a possible road link to the west bank of the Pearl River Delta, a possible 'eastern corridor' connecting Hong Kong with eastern Shenzhen and Guangdong Province, the possibility of linking our railway network with that of the Pearl River Delta, and the possibility of opening up the Frontier Closed Area for development and utilizing the land resources in the Mainland.



Additional research on the above long term ideas is needed before more definitive results are available for consultation with the public. However, it is clear that as a result of closer socio-economic integration, our population is becoming more 'mobile'. These possible initiatives, if they eventually materialise, will inevitably increase that mobility even further.

According to the Census and Statistics Department, of our 6.7 million population, 2.7% are mobile residents (Hong Kong permanent residents who have stayed in Hong Kong for at least one month but less than three months during the six months before or after the reference time-frame). According to the Department's projection, about 3.5% of the predicted population of about nine million in 2030 could be 'mobile'.

This projection has not taken into account possible intensification of the socio-economic integration, due to possible additional road and rail links over the long term, being investigated in this study. In addition, as Hong Kong becomes more cosmopolitan, the number of expatriate workers could also increase.

To-date, no account is taken of the mobile population in the planning framework. Nor do we have a good understanding of the background (e.g. their age structure), their travelling pattern (e.g. frequency) and their aspirations on facility provision in Hong Kong. Whilst surveys will be undertaken to collect more information, we would like to seek the community's views on:

- How should the mobile population be taken into account in the planning for housing, infrastructure, schools and other community facilities?
- Understanding that the population spends considerable time outside Hong Kong, primarily across the boundary, do they make more, or less, use of various facilities provided in Hong Kong? And do they have special preference on the location of the facilities?
- Many may have taken up residence in the Mainland or may even have their usual residence there. What would be the impact of these "off-shore" residence on the housing demand in Hong Kong?
- Perhaps you are also part of this mobile population, in which case what are your needs and aspirations for the provision of various facilities such as health, education, social welfare, etc.?
- Any other views and suggestions?

MORE RESPONSIVE TO SPECIAL LAND NEEDS

Globalisation intensifies competition between cities and regions. A good quality environment and an efficient infrastructural system are essential in maintaining competitiveness; as is the availability of adequate land at a reasonable price.

In terms of making land available, our traditional approach has been, initially, to forecast the requirements for various types of land such as industrial, office, housing, and then plan and create. This approach, however, may not be responsive enough to the demand arising from special economic activities.



Demand for land arising from special economic activities is more difficult to predict. Technological advancement has been such that more and more unconventional economic activities could emerge, which may not be captured in a present day forecasting exercise. Also, investment interests are mobile and may not wait for land to be created.

The issues on which we wish to hear your views are:

- How should we cater for the special land needs arising from foreign and local investments? Should we create a land bank and, if so, how big?
- How should it be created, by reclamation or levelling hills, or the resumption of private land in the New Territories?
- Any other views and suggestions?

MORE SUSTAINABLE USE OF INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS

Many major cities, like Hong Kong, experience economic restructuring, leaving large tracts of industrial areas and industrial and godown buildings redundant. For more sustainable use of precious land resources, these cities encourage and allow the conversion, as against requiring redevelopment, of obsolete industrial and godown buildings for other uses. A suggestion for allowing the conversion of surplus industrial buildings in Hong Kong for other (particularly residential) uses was raised in the Stage One Public Consultation.

Overseas, the conversion of industrial buildings for residential use normally takes place after the entire industrial area has become obsolete and the industrial activities moved out altogether. The situation in Hong Kong is somewhat different in that an obsolete industrial building is often located amidst, or by the side, of other industrial buildings still in use.

Over the years, we have re-zoned extensive industrial areas for other uses, including residential development, but most of these have been implemented by way of redevelopment. A more sustainable approach to the use of our land resource and building stock (which simultaneously saves landfill space) is one of our planning

objectives. In the light of this, we would like to have your views on:

- Under what circumstances should we allow conversion to residential use?
- Should conversion be left to the market or should policy initiatives be introduced such as the relaxation of certain provisions in the Buildings Ordinance?
- How should we deal with possible environmental impacts due to residential and industrial areas or buildings being located next to each other?
- How should we deal with other technical issues, such as fire safety concerns, excessive density, provision of community facilities etc.?
- Any other views and suggestions?

NEW DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES, BETTER QUALITY

To cater for the growing population and expanding economy, new development areas will need to be identified. However, new development areas are difficult to find. There are now limited, if any, opportunities to reclaim inlets and foreshore areas around the harbour. The community's wish is that reclamation in the harbour should be minimised as far as possible.

Finding new development areas in the New Territories is not without problems. Many existing residential developments and industrial activities will be affected by land resumption.

There have been proposals to develop the Frontier Closed Area (FCA). In considering the proposal, however, we must first bear in mind that the area now serves an important security function in combating cross-boundary crimes and illegal immigration. The FCA also serves as a buffer zone for our security forces to maintain the integrity of the boundary between the HKSAR and the Mainland. Also, the extent of developable land in the FCA is not extensive.

Other proposals have been to intensify the density of development in the Main Urban Area. But here, there are many practical issues to consider. Apart from its already very high density, there are also constraints imposed by the limited infrastructure and community facilities.



There is also a question of development density for the new towns. The early generation new towns, such as Sha Tin and Tai Po, were planned and developed on a lower density; whereas the later generation new towns, such as Tseung Kwan O, were designed for a much higher density due to pressure for more housing. However, some people have expressed their concern that the density for the latest new towns is simply too high, and that it is creating a rather oppressive environment. We understand that land is at a premium and that the population pressure is high, but for a quality living environment, the question is: where is the balance?

- Where should new development areas be located - in the New Territories, Frontier Closed Area?
- If the Frontier Closed Area should be developed, what should be located there and why?
- What are your views on the density criteria that should be adopted for planning future development areas. Should it be similar to Sha Tin or Tseung Kwan O, or somewhere in-between?
- Any other views and suggestions?

MORE JOBS CLOSER TO HOMES

While over the years job opportunities have been progressively decentralised from the central business core to areas such as Quarry Bay, Kwun Tong and Cheung Sha Wan etc., the majority of jobs are still concentrated in the Main Urban Area. It is estimated that of about 3.2 million jobs currently available in the territory, some 78%

are provided in the Main Urban Area and the remaining 22% are in the New Territories. As the proportion of the population living in the New Territories increases, the imbalance in job provision between the New Territories and the Main Urban Area could intensify.

The over-concentration of jobs in the Main Urban Area can bring about many problems, such as traffic congestion, particularly along cross-harbour routes, sub-optimal use of expensive transport infrastructure and air pollution.

Studies indicate that, based on market operations alone, the scope for decentralisation of jobs to the New Territories would be limited mainly due to the extensive employment land available in the Main Urban Area. This is coupled with the increasingly service-oriented economy under which the tendency for firms to agglomerate in existing business districts is much greater. Therefore, there is limited opportunity for rezoning of employment land in the Main Urban Area without arousing many objections and unduly disrupting existing economic activities.

- Do you consider the provision of jobs in the New Territories to be a critical planning issue?
- If it is, what measures should be put in place to encourage decentralisation?
- Any other views and suggestions?

FACILITATING BUSINESSES OF TOMORROW

Elsewhere, particularly in the western world, advancement in information technology has made a significant impact on the way business is conducted. As a result of the use of information technology, there is less direct contact between people. Business operations are more mobile and there is also a growing trend for home-based offices. The consequences of this trend are beneficial to many urban problems such as in reducing traffic congestions at peak hours.

In Hong Kong, however, the impact has been less significant. Survey results indicate that in the short to medium term, information technology advancement is not expected to lead to the replacement of conventional offices by home-based offices, and conventional business by e-commerce. Nevertheless, development of communications could spur some major firms to relocate their backup offices in areas outside the Central Business District.



We are less sure of the impact of information technology over the longer term, but we must establish a planning framework that would facilitate the development of the information technology business. In this regard, we have already relaxed the land use regulations relating to industrial and business buildings so that they can accommodate telecommunications and information technology activities. The Government has also streamlined the procedures for modifying industrial land leases for information technology usage.

- Do you have any other suggestions on making our planning framework more information technology-friendly, i.e. more conducive to information technology development?
- In the absence of more information on the impact of information technology development on land use, how should the long term planning framework take this aspect into account?
- Any other views and suggestions?

ESSENTIAL BUT UNWELCOME FACILITIES

We are in the process of ascertaining and quantifying the land needs of key facilities. Over the long term, it is obvious that we will need to identify land for such major facilities as waste treatment facilities, landfills, sewage treatment and pumping facilities, construction and demolition wastes and inert materials disposal outlets, columbarium and funeral homes, energy facilities, prisons, helipads, etc.

All of these facilities are essential to the future development of Hong Kong, and yet identifying suitable sites that are acceptable to the community is becoming increasingly difficult. Often, the difficulties do not lie in complying with the technical requirements, but simply because these are perceived as 'unfriendly' neighbours. In your view:

- What major facilities other than those mentioned above, should be provided in Hong Kong to meet our future development needs?
- How best should these facilities be provided?
- Any other views and suggestions?

BETTER PLANNING FOR WATERFRONT USES

There are many competing demands for land at the waterfront, which are not easy to resolve. Recent public consultations have revealed that there are growing community aspirations that the inner harbour area should be used for public enjoyment, which may affect some existing users. It is not easy to find suitable waterfront sites outside of the harbour either because waterfront land has been fully utilised or that the remaining coastlines are natural and scenic.



Another issue is about the future of our port. As a major user of waterfront land, our port is one of the finest in the world. Our economic success has, in many ways, been tied to the Port. As a key economic engine, our port has been number one in terms of container throughput. However, its future development is faced with two challenges.

First is the keen competition from the fast-emerging ports in southern China, particularly the Pearl River Delta region, which has been assessed in the latest Study on Port Cargo Forecasts. One of the study's conclusions is that although neighbouring ports offer lower monetary costs, Hong Kong has an advantage over them in terms of higher frequency of callings, extremely efficient operation and associated logistic services. Furthermore, the growth of cargoes in southern China is likely to outgrow the cargo diversion to these ports and, consequently, there remains scope for further expansion of our port. Given the potential challenges, however, we will need to focus more on the provision of higher value-added services such as logistics, to retain our competitiveness.

The second challenge is that finding suitable locations for port development that can satisfy sustainable development concerns has become a more complicated process. Enhancing the productivity of existing facilities has always been our priority, but at some stage new facilities will be required. Some possible locations have been studied, but the economic benefits would have to be balanced against social and environmental concerns.

- How can we better balance the various interests in the planning of our waterfront land?
- What are your views on the future of our port?
- How best should future port facilities be provided or located, in particular how, and where, can we achieve a balance between economic benefits and environmental constraints?
- Any other views and suggestions?

MORE CHOICES FOR RECREATION AND SPORTS

Recent studies reveal that there is no lack of facilities in Hong Kong for general recreation and sports. In planning new development areas we will maximise the opportunities for recreation and sports and reserve land for such facilities based on the planning standards and guidelines. We will also take into account recreation preferences and sporting trends in the planning of these facilities. For high level sporting activities and

international sporting events, the Government is planning to build a major stadium in South-east Kowloon.

For water sports, there is similarly no lack of opportunities in the extensive water bodies surrounding Hong Kong. However, there are some water sports, such as rowing and canoeing, that are not suited to the open sea. Our lack of sheltered natural water bodies, such as lakes and rivers, has limited our choice of water sports. Nevertheless, there are extensive reservoirs that have untapped potential.



Experience elsewhere indicates that well-managed and non-intensified water sports will not jeopardise the function of reservoirs in the safe and clean storage of water. The world-wide trend is to open up reservoirs for suitable, well-managed water sports, as shown in countries like the UK, USA and Singapore.

- What are your views on opening up our reservoirs for suitable well-managed recreation uses?
- What would be your concerns if the Government was to open up reservoirs for suitable recreation use?
- Should a pilot scheme be introduced? If so, in which reservoir?
- Any other views and suggestions?

CRITERIA FOR OPTION EVALUATION

Building Scenarios

One of the problems encountered in long-term strategic land use planning is the degree of uncertainty associated with the pace of economic growth, new life styles and other global matters beyond our control. Envisaging the potential range of future scenarios and assessing how well alternative plans can cope with them, is useful when the future is particularly uncertain. The most successful plans are those that are flexible and have mechanisms to provide timely responses to unexpected changes. On this basis, a scenario - building approach is being adopted in the study process. These will be formulated in Stage Three of the HK 2030 Study.

Assumptions And Parameters For Scenarios

Some basic assumptions and fundamental factors have to be established as a foundation for scenarios generation. We propose to work on the following basic premises/assumptions for the purpose of the HK2030 Study:

- Our life style and capitalist system will remain unchanged. We retain our legislation, customs regulations, tax structure, boundary management and immigration rules;
- The boundary of the HKSAR will not be altered;
- Boundary controls and restrictions on legal entrants from the Mainland to remain intact ;and
- The socio-economic ties between Hong Kong and the Mainland, in particular the Pearl River Delta, will be further enhanced.

While there are many driving forces likely to affect our future, the following parameters have initially been identified as having the greatest potential impact in shaping the future development pattern:

- Population growth and composition;
- Global, regional and local economic growth;
- Cross-boundary activities;
- Provision of major infrastructure facilities; and

- Environmental protection and conservation.

Development Options

Alternative courses of action in responding to the possible scenarios are best-termed "development options".

Development options will be formulated by incorporating environmental considerations based on variations in strategic development concepts, conceptual distribution of population and employment, the transport network and the distribution of special land uses. For the purpose of constructing development options, we need to establish key variables for each of these broad development components. The proposed key variables can be found in the Supplementary Note to this Consultation Digest.

Evaluation Criteria

Each of the development options will be evaluated against the objectives established in the study process, so they can be judged according to their performance in achieving the objectives.

The evaluation will be subject to five streams of assessment: economic, environmental, land use planning, social and transport. The evaluation criteria are proposed as follows:

<p>Economic</p> <p>a. To enhance Hong Kong's potential for economic growth and ensure efficient use of resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhance GDP • strengthen the economic base • maximize benefit-to-cost ratio • provide more land for economic activities
<p>Environmental</p> <p>b. To enhance environmental quality and conserve natural and heritage resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimize air pollutant emissions to improve overall air quality • minimize exposure to roadside air pollution • minimize noise exposure • minimize exposure to potentially hazardous installations • minimize impacts on the quality of fresh and marine waters • minimize impacts on areas with ecological, heritage and landscape values • minimize use of greenfield sites and reclaimed land • minimize construction and demolition materials production
<p>Land Use Planning</p> <p>c. To ensure an optimized land use pattern which can meet various land requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adequate provision of living quarters to meet housing demand • adequate provision of land to meet various other development needs • balanced distribution of employment and housing land • adequate provision of infrastructure facilities to meet various development needs • foster socio-economic linkage with the Mainland
<p>Social</p> <p>d. To ensure access to major facilities and to foster community bonds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • optimize population density • minimize the impacts and the number of persons affected by urban renewal and clearance • increase employment opportunities

Transport

- e. To ensure a safe, reliable, efficient, economically viable and environmentally friendly transport system to enhance mobility within Hong Kong and across the boundary
 - enhance the safety, reliability and efficiency of the transport system
 - minimize adverse vehicle-related environmental impacts
 - minimize travel distance and time
 - promote the usage of public transport services
 - promote walking for short distance travel
 - promote better use of railways

- Are the assumptions and variables proposed for the scenarios and development options acceptable? Any other suggestions?
- What are your views on the evaluation framework?
- Are the proposed evaluation criteria acceptable?
- Any other suggestions?

ANNEX : EIGHT KEY STUDY AREAS

1. International town planning experiences
2. Population forecasts and the implications for housing and employment
3. New development opportunities
4. Requirements of port and other major infrastructure facilities
5. Environmental considerations and conservation
6. Improving links with the Mainland
7. Potential for tourism, recreation and cultural development
8. Implications of information technology development



WE WELCOME YOUR VIEWS

Every member of the community will be affected by some aspects of the HK 2030 Study. As part of the Stage II Consultation, the Planning Department is seeking public views on the key planning issues and the evaluation criteria outlined in this publication. A public forum will be held on

Saturday, January 26, 2002

Time: 9:00am to 12:30pm

Place: Lecture Theatre, Hong Kong Central Library, 66 Causeway Road, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong

(Registration will start at 8:45 a.m. The session will be in English and Cantonese, with simultaneous interpretation provided.)

The forum will be followed by a series of focus group meetings. The meetings will provide opportunities for more in-depth discussion and exchange of ideas on special issues among the participants, the representatives of concerned Government departments and the HK2030 Study Team. Focus group meetings will be organized to cover the following topics:

- Closer links with the Mainland;
- Greater responsiveness to special land needs;
- More sustainable use of our land resource;
- New development opportunities, better quality;
- More jobs closer to homes;
- Facilitating businesses of tomorrow;
- Essential but unwelcome facilities;
- Better planning for waterfront uses; and
- More choices for recreation and sports.

The details of these upcoming focus group meetings will be announced on the HK2030 website at www.info.gov.hk/hk2030

Your views and comments will be invaluable. Please forward them by March 15, 2002 to:

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You are welcome to leave your views on our electronic Message Board on our homepage at www.info.gov.hk/hk2030

[<back to content>](#)