

LEGCO QUESTION NO. 10

(Written Reply)

Date of sitting: 24 March 2004

Asked by: Hon LAW Chi-kwong Replied by: Secretary for Housing,
Planning and Lands

Question

In October 2001, the Government issued to the Urban Renewal Authority (“URA”) the Urban Renewal Strategy, which specified that the Strategy would be reviewed and updated regularly every two or three years; whereas the Urban Renewal Authority Ordinance provides that URA shall follow the guidelines set out in the Strategy when preparing its five-year corporate plans. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (a) of the reasons for not having completed the first review on the Strategy and the latest position of the review; and
- (b) whether it has consulted the public on how the contents of the Strategy should be reviewed and updated, including consultation with the residents affected by the redevelopment projects and local organizations; if it has, of the outcome of the consultation; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply

President,

In accordance with the Urban Renewal Authority Ordinance, the Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands may prepare from time to time an Urban Renewal Strategy (URS) for the purpose of carrying out urban renewal. The URS provides policy guidelines for the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) in the implementation of the urban renewal programme, and the URA shall follow these guidelines when preparing its draft five-year corporate plans. The first URS was published in November 2001 after wide public consultation.

2. My replies to the two parts of the question are as follows –
- (a) The Administration has indicated in the first URS that the document will be reviewed and updated regularly (every two to three years). In his 2004 Policy Address, the Chief Executive has pointed out that urban renewal involves wide-ranging implications, and we will consider various practicable options and promote discussion on urban renewal in the community. In this regard, we will commence a comprehensive review of the urban regeneration policy, covering (i) the review and updating of the URS; (ii) how to facilitate private developers' participation in urban renewal; and (iii) the Government's support at the policy level.
 - (b) We are now studying internally on how to take forward the subject. We plan to come up with various options for public consultation around the end of this year.

In this connection, proper building management and maintenance forms an integral part of the overall policy to arrest building neglect and expedite urban renewal. At the end of last year, we launched a public consultation exercise on the subject, which will last until mid-April this year. The views collected will contribute towards the comprehensive review of the urban regeneration policy.