

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BRIEF

**GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO
REPORT OF TASK FORCE ON LAND SUPPLY**

INTRODUCTION

At the meeting of the Executive Council on 19 February 2019, the Council **ADVISED** and the Chief Executive **ORDERED** that the recommendations on land supply strategy and land supply options tendered by the Task Force on Land Supply (TFLS) be accepted, and that the Government's comprehensive response at Annex A to the Report of TFLS (the Report, at Annex B) be endorsed.

A
B

JUSTIFICATIONS

TFLS's Recommendations

2. Following an extensive five-month public engagement (PE) exercise, TFLS tendered its recommendations on land supply strategy and eight land supply options worthy of priority studies and implementation in the Report submitted to the Government on 31 December 2018. As regards the land supply strategy, TFLS recommends that the Government –

- (a) draw up a comprehensive and sustained regime of land supply, including sustaining land creation regardless of external factors; conducting more frequent updates and strategic reviews of the overall land supply situation steered by the most senior echelon of Government; and streamlining the process of land creation and supply;
- (b) adopt a multi-pronged land supply strategy through concurrent implementation of various land supply options in the short, medium and long term;

- (c) establish a land reserve with a forward-looking and macro vision and mind set; and
- (d) give thorough and holistic consideration to certain important principles in the development and planning of land, including striking a balance between development and environmental protection; creating capacity and unleashing development potential by enhancing infrastructure provision; strengthening communication with stakeholders; and pursuing “single site, multiple use” to optimise land use where possible.

Details are set out in paragraphs 5.2 to 5.8 of the Report.

3. As regards options to provide additional land supply in the short, medium to long term, TFLS recommends that Government accord priority to studying and implementing the following eight options –

Short-to-medium term options (with potential to provide additional land in around 10 years' time)

- (i) **Developing Brownfield Sites:** The Task Force considered that brownfield development which receives wide community support should be the priority and one of the focuses of the land supply strategy. Nevertheless, TFLS emphasised that it is not an easy option. Still, the Government should devise a comprehensive policy on developing brownfield sites and properly handle the concerns of brownfield operators to minimise resistance during the process (*paragraphs 5.16 to 5.21 of the Report*);
- (ii) **Tapping into Private Agricultural Land Reserve in the New Territories:** TFLS considers that while the Lands Resumption Ordinance (Cap. 124) (LRO) should continue to be invoked to take forward development projects wherever justified, the Public Private Partnership (PPP) approach provides an alternative means to unlock the development potential of private agricultural land in the New Territories (NT). As land titles have already been consolidated, the PPP should be able to release land for alternative development in the short-to-medium term. TFLS recommends that the Government devise an open, fair and transparent PPP mechanism to deal with applications while

ensuring public interest is served by specifying certain percentage for public housing in these projects (*paragraphs 5.29 to 5.35 of the Report*);

- (iii) **Alternative Uses of Sites under Private Recreational Leases (PRL):** For the 27 PRL sites held by private sports clubs including the Fanling Golf Course (FGC), TFLS recognises that Government will need to take into account, amongst other things, the outcome of Home Affairs Bureau (HAB)'s PRL policy review in considering their future uses. For the 172-hectare (ha) FGC, TFLS recommends Government accord priority to studying and resuming the 32 ha of the FGC east of Fan Kam Road. While no specific use for the 32 ha has been recommended, TFLS considers that Government should, through detailed preliminary studies, carefully consider and balance the different views in the community on the possible uses of the land, the ecological, conservation and heritage value, and the leisure and recreational functions of the FGC site (*paragraphs 5.44 to 5.50 of the Report*);

Medium-to-long term options (with potential to provide additional land in around 10 to 30 years' time)

- (iv) **Near-shore reclamation outside Victoria Harbour:** Recognising that reclamation can create new land bringing additional land supply, TFLS supports the proposed reclamation at the five near-shore locations, namely Lung Kwu Tan in Tuen Mun, Siu Ho Wan and Sunny Bay in North Lantau, Ma Liu Shui in Sha Tin and Tsing Yi Southwest. The Government should carry out thorough preliminary studies and land use planning, and devise appropriate measures to mitigate the impact on the environment, ecology and local community (*paragraphs 5.59 to 5.64 of the Report*);
- (v) **Developing the East Lantau Metropolis (ELM):** TFLS recognises the strategic importance of the ELM in terms of creating new land masses for integrated planning and development crucial to Hong Kong's long-term interests, expanding our strategic transport network and building a land reserve. Having regard to the scale of reclamation set out in

its PE document, TFLS supports the construction of artificial islands with an area of about 1 000 ha in the Central Waters, and recommends that Government commence preliminary studies and planning work as soon as possible to address issues of concern to society including impact on ecology and marine environment, costing and climate resilience (*paragraphs 5.72 to 5.77 of the Report*);

- (vi) **Developing Caverns and Underground Space:** TFLS notes the multiple benefits of developing caverns and underground space and recommends that the Government continue identifying suitable projects for developing caverns and underground space that are cost-effective and fulfil the overall interest of society (*paragraphs 5.83 to 5.86 of the Report*);
- (vii) **Developing More New Development Areas (NDAs) in the NT:** TFLS notes that NDAs can support integrated and comprehensive planning and the Government should take forward as soon as possible those planned NDA projects including Kwu Tung North/Fanling North (KTN/FLN) and the early commissioning of the preliminary studies and planning for the NT North (*paragraphs 5.91 to 5.93 of the Report*); and
- (viii) **Developing the River Trade Terminal (RTT) site:** TFLS recommends that the Government study and consider the overall re-planning of the RTT site together with the coastal area of Tuen Mun West, including the land to be reclaimed at Lung Kwu Tan for more comprehensive and flexible planning (*paragraphs 5.98 to 5.101 of the Report*).

4. As regards the other land supply options including the option of developing the periphery of country parks, whilst these options received low support or less attention from the community during the five-month PE and their relative priority to the above-mentioned eight options should be lower, TFLS reckons that the Government may consider in the long run whether to further examine their feasibility and the pros and cons. The Government may take into account the actual circumstances and TFLS's recommendations on individual options, in order to provide more information for further discussion in society. There are also other observations put forward by TFLS on enhancing the ongoing land supply initiatives, including optimisation of vacant land and under-utilised land resources, intensification

of development density of housing sites and streamlining of development controls. Relevant observations are covered in Chapter 6 of the Report.

Government's Response

Land supply strategy

5. Land is a critical and strategic resource for a city's development. This is especially the case for Hong Kong with a limited built-up area of about 270 km² housing 7.4 million population as well as our economic and social activities. **The Government fully endorses the TFLS's recommendations relating to the land supply strategy.** We see a need for a more robust and vision-driven land supply policy to be articulated to guide our land supply efforts in ensuring delivery of sufficient land on time to cater for Hong Kong's development. Taking into account TFLS's observations that the shortfall of 1 200 ha of land, which has been put forward in the context of the ongoing study titled "Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030" (Hong Kong 2030+)¹, has grossly under-estimated our long term demand for land, the broad-based support for creating a land reserve (as evident by nearly 85% of the responses of the randomised telephone survey), and the community's strong aspiration for better living environment, the Government's **land supply strategy will comprise the following features -**

- (a) land shortage is the root cause of many problems besetting Hong Kong, including not only housing but many other issues, and must be addressed by the entire community without delay. Hence, the Government's core strategy in this regard is to **increase land supply on a sustained basis.** We should uphold and follow through this policy position regardless of short-term economic changes or fluctuations in property prices;
- (b) the Government has an indispensable role in ensuring that

¹ The Hong Kong 2030+ is a planning study, conducted usually once every decade, to update the territorial development strategy which was last promulgated in 2007. The Hong Kong 2030+ study commenced in 2015 and a six-month PE was conducted in October 2016 until April 2017. It estimated that in the long term, Hong Kong requires some 4 800 ha of land for housing, economic development and various infrastructures and facilities. With only about 3 600 ha of estimated supply of land from planned and ongoing initiatives, it is estimated that Hong Kong is short of at least 1 200 ha in the long run. The study is yet to be completed: technical assessments and updating of the earlier land requirement forecast are being carried out for completion in 2019. The territorial development strategy for the next 30 years is expected to be finalised and promulgated in the latter half of 2019 tentatively.

sufficient land is available for development for many years into the future through long-term planning and strategic land banking. Hitherto our objective is to provide sufficient space for **coping with any anticipated increase in population and “committed” provision standards**. We should from now on also aim to **build up a land reserve for enabling potential improvements** in provision standards for good quality living environment in a compact, urbanised city; **fostering economic growth**; providing room for **coping with unforeseen circumstances and capitalising on unforeseen opportunities**; and **strengthening Government’s ability to provide land in a timely and effective manner** in response to Hong Kong’s ever changing needs, thus avoiding the bottleneck to our healthy development that would otherwise inevitably arise. To this end, the Planning Department (PlanD) should be empowered to make bolder forecasts factoring in the concept of land reserve when updating its projections on land demand;

- (c) the Government should continue to adopt a **multi-pronged strategy** to expand our land resources, to minimise reliance on individual sources and facilitate greater certainty in achieving the land supply strategy;
- (d) taking into account the long lead time for realising new supply of land (e.g. planning, conducting studies, public engagement, land resumption/clearance and construction), our land supply strategy should embrace the **early commissioning of all the necessary impact assessments and studies, while allowing room for reviewing the recommended land uses and the timetable for implementation** in the light of the outcomes of the studies and latest circumstances; and
- (e) land must be supported by good infrastructure for optimisation of development potential. The Government should adopt an **infrastructure-led and capacity creating approach** in planning and providing strategic transport infrastructure to encourage early development and allow sufficient buffer for growth, even if there might economically be some degree of sub-optimisation and we might see less than full utilisation of the underlying infrastructure during the early stage of development in some cases. In this

connection, we should better **integrate land use planning** and **infrastructure decision-making** to, where appropriate, intensify the land uses around the infrastructure and allow the cost effectiveness of corresponding infrastructural investments to be assessed over a longer, more reasonable timeframe. The Government will also make better use of **capital, technology** and **innovation** to overcome limitations in land.

6. There should be **high level steer** overseeing and coordinating the assessment of land demand and supply and the strategic planning for different land uses, so that land is planned and reserved from a strategic perspective and can be delivered on time to meet Hong Kong's short, medium and long term needs. To this end, **the composition and terms of reference of the existing Steering Committee on Land Supply (SCLS)² chaired by the Financial Secretary would be expanded** to look into the following areas-

- (a) adopt a vision-driven and forward-looking approach in re-assessing our land demand for housing, economic, community and recreational needs, taking into account public aspirations for better housing and quality living environment around where we live, the space required to maintain our economic competitiveness, the needs of the elderly and their families amidst an ageing population, and accordingly the scale of land reserve that we should target for. The revised assessment will be incorporated into the final strategy for Hong Kong 2030+ to be released in the latter half of 2019;
- (b) oversee the adoption of an infrastructure-led and capacity creating approach in planning and providing strategic transport infrastructure, as well as integration of land use planning and infrastructure decision making;
- (c) consider whether, and if so how, alternative funding and execution arrangements should be adopted for major development projects; and

² The SCLS is a standing mechanism within the Government to coordinate work on planning, development and land supply. Since the establishment of the Committee (including the Steering Committee on Housing Land Supply before its re-organisation) in end-2010, SCLS has been steering the formulation and implementation of various land supply initiatives and coordinating inter-bureau issues concerning land supply. Members include relevant Directors of Bureaux and Heads of Departments overseeing the purview of development (including planning, lands and works), housing, transport, environment and finances.

- (d) coordinate cross-bureau efforts and monitor progress to ensure that land supply strategy and its implementation are taken forward in a timely and effective manner.

Specific responses to land supply options recommended by TFLS

7. The Government fully accepts the land supply options that should be accorded priority studies and implementation as recommended by TFLS. The gist of our responses to the recommended options is set out in paragraphs 8 to 19 below.

Expediting brownfield development

8. Redeveloping brownfield sites has all along been a key component of the Government's multi-pronged land supply strategy. Of the some 1 300 ha brownfield sites, the Government is proactively taking forward the development of about 340 ha in the context of the KTN/FLN NDA, the Hung Shui Kiu (HSK) NDA and the Yuen Long South (YLS) Development. The development of brownfield sites will further be examined in the context of the Phase One study on NT North NDA covering the San Tin/Lok Ma Chau area expected to be commissioned in Q3 2019 – see section on the option of NDA in paragraph 18 below. For the remaining 760 ha of brownfield sites that are not at the moment covered by any current or proposed NDAs, the Government will conduct a study around mid-2019 to assess their development potential and prioritise those sites identified with housing potential for follow-up study by departments.

9. Unlike some overseas cases where brownfield sites have been left vacant for a long time, most brownfield sites in Hong Kong are economically active. They are an important component of our production chain and it will be unrealistic to expect all of them to disappear from Hong Kong in the future. In making available brownfield sites for development, we need to consider putting in place arrangements that can, taking account of our economic and social needs, facilitate some of the operations to continue elsewhere in Hong Kong in a land-efficient and environmentally conscious manner. To this end, we are in the course of finalising two brownfield-related studies, one on distribution and profile of NT brownfield operations and the other on the feasibility of accommodating brownfield operations in multi-storey buildings (MSBs). In the light of consultants' recommendations, and subject to further discussion with relevant bureaux, the Government will formulate policy

measures to promote development of MSBs and incentivise brownfield operations to be relocated to such MSBs for announcement within 2019, together with the release of the study reports.

Unleashing development potential of private agricultural land

10. The 2018 Policy Address (PA) outlines the Land Sharing Pilot Scheme (LSPS) which seeks to unlock privately-owned agricultural lots in the NT for both public and private housing development in the short-to-medium term. The 2018 PA has suggested that a range of no less than 60% to 70% of the additional gross floor area of the application under the LSPS should be dedicated for public housing, and that the cost of justified infrastructural works may be deducted from land premium. Taking into account the directional pointers in the 2018 PA and TFLS's recommendations, the Government is in the process of drawing up more specific criteria and other details of the implementation framework for LSPS, with a view to inviting applications in the second half of 2019 after seeking the endorsement of the Chief Executive-in-Council.

Developing 32 ha of land of FGC for housing purpose

11. From the perspectives of promoting sports development, recognising FGC's contribution to golfing development including its function as a major training ground for local elite golfers and a venue for international golf tournaments, and the opening up of the FGC facilities to many non-governmental organisations and individuals. On the other hand, we acknowledge that the promotion of golf under the sports policy will not be rendered impossible by the partial development option, and that the shortage in housing land supply is so critical in the short to medium term that the Government has to leave no stones unturned in examining options which may make a contribution during this critical period.

12. Taking into account TFLS's recommendation regarding FGC as a short-to-medium term land supply option, we have decided to develop the 32 ha of land east of Fan Kam Road of FGC for the purpose of housing development (with emphasis on public housing), and will accordingly commence a detailed, technical study in the second half of 2019 to ascertain the highest flat yield attainable within the corresponding timeframe; assess the scope of infrastructural works required to support such development; identify environmental, ecological and other constraints, and formulate mitigation measures to contain any identified impacts to within acceptable limits; and come up with an implementation plan with timing and costs. We

aim to complete the technical study in end-2020 or early 2021. Accordingly, the 32 ha of land will not be covered by any lease renewal for the FGC and will only be subject to a special three-year hold-over arrangement after expiry of the current lease in August 2020. After the special three-year hold-over arrangement, the 32 ha of land will revert to the Government.

13. As regards the remaining 140 ha of land for the FGC, the Government has no plan to pursue any alternative land uses, as any proposal to resume the remaining 140 ha of the FGC site would compromise the Government's sports policy and, as suggested by TFLS, involve the formulation of reprovisioning arrangements as well as considerable challenges posed by ecological, heritage and infrastructural constraints. Besides, it is against the principle of good policy and cost effectiveness to devote resources into the full resumption of the FGC site when there are other sources of land supply for the longer term. Upon the expiry of the current lease in August 2020, the lease renewal of FGC should only apply to the remaining 140 ha of land. According to the results of the PRL policy review, the renewed lease should cover a period up to the end of June 2027 at nominal land premium and nil administrative fee, with modified terms on aspects such as further "opening up" requirements and enhancement of governance measures.

Expediting studies on artificial islands in the Central Waters

14. Of our existing 270 km² built-up area, about one-quarter (70 km²) are from reclaimed land. The fact that major reclamation had at one time almost come to a complete halt is a key reason for the drastic reduction of land supply in recent years. To address the dire land shortage and build up land reserve effectively, we need to resume reclamation which can create new, large land masses without involving land resumption or moving of existing users. The experience of Singapore's Marina Bay shows that reclaimed land can effectively support the creation of a sizeable land bank³. We believe the 1000-ha Kau Yi Chau artificial islands, supported by TFLS and forming part of the Lantau Tomorrow Vision, is of enormous strategic importance to Hong Kong's long term future.

15. The proposed Kau Yi Chau artificial islands can provide significant planning benefits as larger areas can be more readily planned with a full range of land uses that our community needs. It would address our housing shortage through providing 150 000 - 260 000 housing units (with 70% being

³ As part of a forward-looking approach adopted by the Singaporean Government, 360 ha of land next to the existing Central Business District (CBD) was reclaimed throughout the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s in anticipation of the potential growth of the CBD.

public housing), and host our third Core Business District providing some 200 000 quality jobs. The space created will also allow us to thin out the population density in the urban area, revitalise old neighbourhoods and put in community and social services where they are lagging behind provision standards. Indeed, the additional space will make it possible for the provision standards to be further improved to meet community aspirations and changing circumstances. Importantly, the project will give us a golden opportunity to put in place the road and railway links that will greatly relieve the transport pressures faced by residents in North West NT. Taking into account TFLS's recommendation, the Government will take forward the detailed studies for the reclamation of the Kau Yi Chau artificial islands, with an area of about 1000 ha, and related infrastructure, and seek funding approval from the Legislative Council (LegCo) in the first half of 2019.

Expediting studies on near-shore reclamation

16. As regards reclamation at near-shore locations, the Government proposes to take forward detailed studies for the projects at Lung Kwu Tan and its adjacent areas in Tuen Mun, Sunny Bay and Siu Ho Wan⁴ in North Lantau. We intend to seek funding approval from LegCo for the relevant studies in the second half of 2019. The Government does not intend to proceed with reclamation at Tsing Yi Southwest which faces significant site constraints, and that reclamation at Ma Liu Shui will be put on hold subject to review to address concerns over traffic impact and housing mix in slower time.

Continuing cavern and underground space development/studies

17. The Government will actively pursue the relocation of the Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works and Diamond Hill Fresh Water and Salt Water Service Reservoirs to cavern, and continue with the ongoing pilot studies on underground space development in selected strategic urban areas.

⁴ The reclamation project at Siu Ho Wan will be a small-scale one involving the construction of a new highway running parallel to the North Lantau Highway.

Taking forward NDA projects

18. Subject to the approval of funding by LegCo's Finance Committee by mid-2019, the Government will press ahead with the implementation of the KTN/FLN NDA. We aim to seek funding approval for implementing HSK NDA in the latter half of 2019 and initiate statutory planning process in respect of YLS Development in 2019. Furthermore, PlanD aims to commence a detailed study on the first phase of NT North NDA, which will cover the San Tin/Lok Ma Chau area, in Q3 2019.

Commencing studies on RTT site and Tuen Mun West

19. The Government will study the development potential and possible land use of the RTT site as part of studies on the coastal area of Tuen Mun, including reclamation at Lung Kwu Tan mentioned in paragraph 16.

Other land supply options: country park periphery

20. With regard to the option of developing areas on the periphery of country parks, the Government notes that the option has failed to garner clear majority support from the general public, and that TFLS has not included country park periphery as one of the recommended options. In light of the strong reservation in the community and given that the development of country park periphery will involve more hurdles and complexities compared with the other medium-to-long term options as pointed out by TFLS, as well as the pressing need now to focus attention and resources on those options with priority as recommended by TFLS, we will not at this stage further pursue the alternative land use of country park periphery. We will accordingly discuss with the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS) the arrangements for not proceeding further with its study on the feasibility of such development at two specific sites⁵ after the completion of those fact-finding tasks already commenced, as proceeding further with the study will unlikely be meaningful in the latest circumstances or represent a judicious use of precious resource.

⁵ In May 2017, the last-term Government invited HKHS to undertake ecological and technical studies on the land on the periphery of country parks. The scope of studies, undertaken by HKHS at its own costs, covered two study areas (each of about 20 ha) in Tai Lam and Shui Chuen O on the periphery of Tai Lam and Ma On Shan Country Parks respectively. The Studies mainly look into the two study areas' ecological, landscape and aesthetic values; recreational and development potentials; and the major technical factors and practical constraints of developing public housing and other public facilities thereon.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL

C 21. The proposal is in conformity with the Basic Law, including provisions concerning human rights. The financial, civil service, economic, sustainability, environmental and family and gender implications of the recommendations are set out at **Annex C**.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

22. TFLS has formulated its recommendations to the Government taking account of the public views received during the five-month PE held from 26 April 2018 to 26 September 2018. During the PE, public views were collected through multiple channels and various forms, including traditional paper questionnaires, interactive web-based questionnaires, a wide randomised telephone survey and direct dialogue with the general public and stakeholders. A total of 145 PE activities in the form of meetings, workshops, forums, seminars, exchange sessions and outreach activities with the public and stakeholders were conducted / attended by TFLS. In addition, 40 roving exhibitions across 18 districts in Hong Kong were held. The LegCo Panel on Development was also consulted on 29 May 2018 and 19 September 2018⁶ during the PE.

23. At the end of the PE, nearly 100 000 views were received by TFLS, including more than 29 000 questionnaires, some 3 000 interviews in a randomised telephone survey, and over 68 000 public submissions collected from other channels (with over 90% being submissions from signature campaigns). Details of the PE, including the independent analyses by the Social Science Research Centre of the University of Hong Kong and the views received, are set out in Appendices of the Report which have been uploaded to the website www.landforhongkong.hk for public consumption.

PUBLICITY

24. The Government's response to the Report will be announced vide a press conference and the issue of press release. The Development Bureau will also brief the LegCo Panel on Development and details of the meeting will be worked out.

⁶ Being a special meeting convened by the Panel on Development to receive views of deputations.

BACKGROUND

25. TFLS was established in September 2017 to take a macro review of the sources of land supply and different land supply options. The 22 non-official members and eight official members appointed by the Chief Executive come from different disciplines, including planning, engineering, architecture, surveying, environment, academia, think tanks, social services, housing development and district administration. Having analysed the views collected in the five-month PE, TFLS submitted the Report to the Government on 31 December 2018.

ENQUIRIES

26. Enquiries relating to this brief can be directed to Miss Cheryl Chow, Principal Assistant Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands) at 3509 8805.

Development Bureau
20 February 2019

**Government's Response to
Recommendations and Major Comments
in the Report of Task Force on Land Supply (TFLS)**

**(A) TFLS's recommendations on land supply strategy
(paragraphs 5.2 – 5.8 of the Report)**

TFLS's Recommendations/ Observations <i>(reference in the Report)</i>		Government's Response
1.	<p>The Government should adopt land supply strategy with various features.</p> <p><i>(paragraphs 5.2 – 5.8)</i></p>	<p>✓ The Government fully endorses the TFLS's recommendations relating to the land supply strategy. We see a need for a more robust and vision-driven land supply policy to be articulated to guide our land supply efforts in ensuring delivery of sufficient land on time to cater for Hong Kong's development.</p> <p>✓ Taking into account TFLS's observations that the shortfall of 1 200 ha of land, which has been put forward in the context of the Hong Kong 2030+, has grossly under-estimated our long term demand for land, the broad-based support for creating a land reserve and the community's strong aspiration for better living environment, the Government's land supply strategy will comprise the following features -</p> <p>(a) the Government's core strategy is to increase land supply on a sustained basis. We should uphold and follow through this</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">TFLS's Recommendations/ Observations <i>(reference in the Report)</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Government's Response</p>
	<p>policy position regardless of short-term economic changes or fluctuations in property prices;</p> <p>(b) the objective of our land supply strategy is to provide sufficient space for coping with any anticipated increase in population and committed provision standards. We should aim to build up a land reserve for enabling potential improvements in provision standards for good quality living environment in a compact, urbanised city; fostering economic growth; providing room for coping with unforeseen circumstances and capitalising on unforeseen opportunities; and strengthening Government's ability to provide land in a timely and effective manner in response to Hong Kong's ever changing needs;</p> <p>(c) the Government should continue to adopt a multi-pronged strategy to expand our land resources, to minimise reliance on individual sources and facilitate greater certainty in achieving the land supply strategy;</p> <p>(d) taking into account the long lead time for realising new supply of</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">TFLS’s Recommendations/ Observations <i>(reference in the Report)</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Government’s Response</p>
	<p>land, our land supply strategy should embrace the early commissioning of all the necessary impact assessments and studies, while allowing room for reviewing the recommended land uses and the timetable for implementation in the light of the outcomes of the studies and latest circumstances; and</p> <p>(e) the Government should adopt an infrastructure-led and capacity creating approach in planning and providing strategic transport infrastructure to encourage early development and allow sufficient buffer for growth. In this connection, we should better integrate land use planning and infrastructure decision-making to, where appropriate, intensify the land uses around the infrastructure and allow the cost effectiveness of corresponding infrastructural investments to be assessed over a longer, more reasonable timeframe. We will also make better use of capital, technology and innovation to overcome limitations in land.</p> <p>✓ To strengthen high level steer overseeing and coordinating the assessment of land demand and supply and the strategic planning for</p>

TFLS's Recommendations/ Observations <i>(reference in the Report)</i>	Government's Response
	<p>different land uses, the Government will expand the composition and terms of reference of the existing Steering Committee on Land Supply (SCLS) chaired by the Financial Secretary to include all the Directors of Bureaux requiring land to support their policy objectives and the Government Economist. Among other things, the expanded SCLS will look into the following areas -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) adopt a vision-driven and forward-looking approach in re-assessing our land demand for housing, economic, community and recreational needs, taking into account public aspirations for better housing and quality living environment, the space required to maintain our economic competitiveness, the needs of the elderly and their families amidst an ageing population, and accordingly the scale of land reserve that we should target for; (b) oversee the adoption of an infrastructure-led and capacity creating approach in planning and providing strategic transport infrastructure, as well as integration of land use planning and infrastructure decision making;

TFLS's Recommendations/ Observations <i>(reference in the Report)</i>	Government's Response
	<p>(c) consider whether, and if so how, alternative funding and execution arrangements should be adopted for major development projects; and</p> <p>(d) coordinate cross-bureau efforts and monitor progress to ensure that land supply strategy and its implementation are taken forward in a timely and effective manner.</p>

(B)TFLS’s recommendations on the land supply options worthy of priority studies and implementation

(paragraphs 5.9 – 5.101 of the Report)

TFLS’s Recommendations/ Observations <i>(reference in the Report)</i>		Government’s Response
<i>Developing Brownfield Sites</i>		
2.	<p>Developing brownfield sites should be a priority option for implementation.</p> <p><i>(paragraph 5.16)</i></p>	<p>✓ Developing brownfield sites for land-efficient uses has all along been a key component of the Government’s multi-pronged land supply strategy.</p>
3.	<p>The Government should devise a comprehensive policy on the development of brownfield sites in the NT; ascertain the development potential of about 200 hectares of brownfield sites in NT North; identify land parcels with development potential among the remaining 760 hectares of brownfield sites not yet included in current planning and development projects; give priority to the development of brownfield sites close to existing planned New Development Areas (NDAs) and transport infrastructure and consider appropriate enhancement of infrastructure close to such land parcels.</p> <p><i>(paragraph 5.17)</i></p>	<p>✓ The Government will continue to take forward development of about 340 hectares (ha) of brownfields through planned NDA projects. Specifically, funding approval from the Legislative Council (LegCo) for the main works of Kwu Tung North (KTN)/ Fanling North (FLN) and Hung Shui Kiu (HSK) NDAs will be sought in the first and second half of 2019 respectively. Statutory planning for Yuen Long South (YLS) Development will also start in 2019.</p> <p>✓ For the New Territories (NT) North involving 200-ha of brownfields, the Government will commence the Phase One study on NT North NDA covering the San Tin/Lok Ma Chau area (with about</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">TFLS’s Recommendations/ Observations <i>(reference in the Report)</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Government’s Response</p>
<p>4. Concerns of brownfield operators must be handled properly. <i>(paragraph 5.18)</i></p>	<p>65 ha of brownfields) in Q3 2019.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ For the remaining 760 ha of brownfield sites that are not at the moment covered by any current or proposed NDAs, the Planning Department will commence an in-house study mid-2019 to assess their development potential and prioritise those sites with housing potential for follow-up study by departments. ✓ In parallel, the two brownfield-related studies (one on distribution and profile, and another on feasibility of accommodating brownfield operations in Multi-storey buildings (MSBs)) are expected to be completed shortly. In light of consultants’ recommendations and subject to further discussion with relevant bureaux, the Government will formulate policy measures to promote development of MSBs and incentivise brownfield operations to be relocated to such MSBs. We aim to announce the study findings together with policy proposals within 2019.

TFLS's Recommendations/ Observations <i>(reference in the Report)</i>		Government's Response
<i>Tapping into Private Agricultural Land Reserve in the New Territories</i>		
5.	<p>The Government should formulate a detailed mechanism for public-private partnership (PPP) that is open, fair and transparent to realise the potential of private land in the NT.</p> <p><i>(paragraphs 5.30 and 5.31)</i></p>	<p>✓ The 2018 Policy Address (PA) outlines the Land Sharing Pilot Scheme (LSPS) which seeks to unlock privately-owned agricultural lots in the NT for both public and private housing development in the short-to-medium term. The 2018 PA has suggested that a range of no less than 60% to 70% of the additional gross floor area of the application under the LSPS should be dedicated for public housing, and that the cost of justified infrastructural works may be deducted from land premium.</p> <p>✓ Taking into account the directional pointers in the 2018 PA and TFLS's recommendations, the Government is in the process of drawing up more specific criteria and other details of the implementation framework for LSPS, with a view to inviting applications in the second half of 2019 after seeking the endorsement of the Chief Executive-in-Council.</p>
6.	<p>Set specific benchmarks for the proportion of public housing in PPP projects, with the benefits accrued to the community being no less than the amount of public money invested by the Government in infrastructural upgrading for the subject projects.</p> <p><i>(paragraph 5.32)</i></p>	

TFLS's Recommendations/ Observations <i>(reference in the Report)</i>		Government's Response
<i>Alternative Uses of Sites under Private Recreational Leases (PRL)</i>		
7.	<p>Accord priority to studying and resuming the 32 hectares of land of Fanling Golf Course (FGC) to the east of Fan Kam Road.</p> <p><i>(paragraph 5.47)</i></p>	<p>✓ The Government will develop the 32 ha of land east of Fan Kam Road of FGC for the purpose of housing development (with emphasis on public housing), and will accordingly commence a detailed, technical study in the second half of 2019 to ascertain the highest flat yield attainable within the corresponding timeframe; assess the scope of infrastructural works required to support such development; identify environmental, ecological and other constraints, and formulate mitigation measures to contain any identified impacts to within acceptable limits; and come up with an implementation plan with timing and costs.</p> <p>✓ We aim to complete the technical study in end-2020 or early 2021. Accordingly, the 32 ha of land will not be covered by any lease renewal for the FGC and will only be subject to a special three-year hold-over arrangement after expiry of the current lease in August 2020. After the special three-year hold-over arrangement, the 32 ha of land will revert to the Government.</p>
8.	<p>Whether the remaining 140 hectares of land of FGC site should be further released for other developments in the longer run, the Government should consider identifying a suitable site to relocate the golf course, the lead time for relocation, impact on the ecology and conservation values of the site, as well as the necessary ancillary infrastructure to support other developments.</p> <p><i>(paragraph 5.49)</i></p>	

TFLS's Recommendations/ Observations <i>(reference in the Report)</i>		Government's Response
		<p>✓ As regards the remaining 140 ha of land for the FGC, the Government has no plan to pursue any alternative land uses. Upon the expiry of the current lease in August 2020, the lease renewal of FGC should only apply to the remaining 140 ha of land. According to the results of the PRL policy review, the renewed lease should cover a period up to the end of June 2027 at nominal land premium and nil administrative fee, with modified terms on aspects such as further “opening up” requirements and enhancement of governance measures.</p>
<i>Near-shore reclamation outside Victoria Harbour</i>		
9.	<p>The Task Force supports in principle the reclamation projects at the five proposed near-shore locations, namely Lung Kwu Tan in Tuen Mun, Siu Ho Wan and Sunny Bay in North Lantau, Ma Liu Shui in Sha Tin, and Tsing Yi Southwest.</p> <p><i>(paragraph 5.60)</i></p>	<p>✓ The Government proposes to take forward detailed studies for the projects at Lung Kwu Tan, Sunny Bay and Siu Ho Wan^{Note}, with a target to submit funding applications for the related studies to LegCo in the second half of 2019.</p> <p>✓ Reclamation at Ma Liu Shui will be put on hold subject to review to address concerns over traffic impact and public/private housing mix in</p>
10.	<p>The Government should carry out thorough preliminary studies and</p>	

TFLS's Recommendations/ Observations <i>(reference in the Report)</i>		Government's Response
	<p>planning, as well as conduct environmental impact assessment according to the statutory mechanism. Appropriate measures should be devised to mitigate the impact of reclamation works on the environment and ecology.</p> <p><i>(paragraph 5.63)</i></p>	<p>slower time.</p> <p>✓ The Government does not intend to proceed with reclamation at Tsing Yi Southwest reclamation, as its possible uses and potential are limited by the hazardous facilities (e.g. oil tanks) nearby.</p> <p><small>Note</small> The reclamation at Siu Ho Wan will be a small-scale one involving the construction of a new highway running parallel to the North Lantau Highway.</p>
11.	<p>The Government should provide more information and analyses to address the concerns directly relevant to local residents, especially those relating to whether the carrying capacity of existing transportation infrastructure is sufficient, with the aid of feasibility and planning studies.</p> <p><i>(paragraph 5.64)</i></p>	
<i>Developing the East Lantau Metropolis (ELM)</i>		
12.	<p>The Task Force recognises the strategic importance of the ELM in terms of creating new land masses for integrated planning and development crucial to Hong Kong's long-term interests, expanding our strategic transport network and building a land reserve.</p>	<p>✓ The Government will take forward the detailed studies for the reclamation of the Kau Yi Chau artificial islands, with an area of about 1000 ha, and related infrastructure, being part of the Lantau Vision Tomorrow, and seek funding approval from LegCo in the first half of 2019.</p>

TFLS's Recommendations/ Observations <i>(reference in the Report)</i>		Government's Response
	<i>(paragraphs 5.72 to 5.74)</i>	<p>✓ The Government is aware of the public concerns relating to the artificial islands. We will conduct the needed site investigations, technical studies, and traffic and environmental impact assessments, etc. in the future studies and then draw up a detailed proposal. In the course of the studies, public engagement activities will be conducted to provide more comprehensive information for consulting the public and gathering their views and suggestions.</p>
13.	<p>The Government should address and handle with caution the impact of construction of artificial islands on the marine environment and ecology; costs and time involved; and whether the artificial islands could stand up to the impact of climate change and extreme weather conditions.</p> <p><i>(paragraph 5.75)</i></p>	
14.	<p>The Task Force considers that developing the 1000-hectare ELM artificial islands is a key initiative to resolve the problem of land shortage in the medium-to-long term. The Government should commence the preliminary studies and planning to collect more information and data for deciding the next step.</p> <p><i>(paragraph 5.76)</i></p>	
<i>Developing Caverns and Underground Space</i>		
15.	<p>The Task Force supports Government to continue its efforts to identify caverns and projects suitable for underground space development and to proceed with the necessary studies and</p>	<p>✓ The Government will actively pursue the relocation of the Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works and Diamond Hill Fresh Water and Salt Water Service Reservoirs to cavern, and continue with the</p>

TFLS’s Recommendations/ Observations <i>(reference in the Report)</i>		Government’s Response
	<p>planning, bearing in mind the cost-effectiveness of the projects and the interests of the community.</p> <p><i>(paragraph 5.86)</i></p>	<p>ongoing pilot studies on underground space development in selected strategic urban areas.</p>
<i>More New Development Areas (NDAs) in the NT</i>		
16.	<p>The Government should take forward the planned NDA projects as soon as possible.</p> <p><i>(paragraph 5.93)</i></p>	<p>✓ The Government will continue to press ahead with the implementation of the KTN/FLN and HSK NDAs and YLS. Specifically, subject to LegCo’s funding approval in the first half of 2019, land resumption and infrastructural works for the First Phase of the KTN/FLN NDA development will commence in the second half of 2019 for population intake to start in 2023/24. Funding approval for the main works of HSK NDA will be sought in the second half of 2019. Statutory planning for YLS will also start in 2019.</p> <p>✓ The Government will commence a detailed study on the first phase of NT North, which will cover the San Tin/Lok Ma Chau Development Node, in Q3 2019. The timing for triggering detailed studies on the remaining areas of the NT North</p>
17.	<p>The Government should adopt a “people-oriented” and “policy-led” approach when exploring how to enhance implementation measures on NDAs.</p> <p><i>(paragraph 5.93)</i></p>	

<p style="text-align: center;">TFLS’s Recommendations/ Observations <i>(reference in the Report)</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Government’s Response</p>
	<p>New Town at Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling/Hung Lung Hang will be determined later.</p> <p>✓ The Government introduced in May 2018 measures to enhance the ex-gratia compensation and rehousing arrangements for domestic households or business operators affected by the Government’s development clearance exercises. The proposal, which should smoothen the implementation of NDA developments, was approved by the LegCo.</p>
<p><i>Developing the River Trade Terminal (RTT) Site</i></p>	
<p>18. The Government should consider holistically the land uses of the entire coastal area of Tuen Mun West (including the RTT site, the Lung Kwu Tan reclamation site as well as the industrial and special industrial facilities nearby) and examine rationalisation and realignment of operations on different sites, so as to increase planning flexibility.</p> <p><i>(paragraph 5.99)</i></p>	<p>✓ The Government will seek funding approval from LegCo in the second half of 2019 to initiate study on the re-planning of the coastal area of Tuen Mun including the RTT site as part of the detailed study for the proposed reclamation at Lung Kwu Tan.</p>

***(C) TFLS’s comments on other land supply options
(paragraphs 6.1 – 6.50 of the Report)***

<p>TFLS’s Recommendations/ Observations <i>(reference in the Report)</i></p>	<p>Government’s Response</p>
<p><i>Relocation or Consolidation of Land-Extensive Recreational Facilities</i></p>	
<p>19. The Task Force considers that relocation and consolidation of land-extensive sports and recreational facilities does not gain general support from the community. <i>(paragraph 6.6)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Government notes Task Force’s observations on this option. ✓ While the Government has no intention to implement this option on a large scale or as a major means to increase land supply, the Government shares the Task Force’s observation that should there be individual sites that carry the potential for relocation and consolidation of land-extensive sports and recreational facilities under the “single site, multiple use” model to optimise land use and if such initiative can bring overall benefit to society, the Government will further consult relevant District Councils and local stakeholders on relevant proposals.
<p><i>Developing Areas on the Periphery of Country Parks</i></p>	
<p>20. Notwithstanding the fact that this option was supported by over half of the respondents in the telephone survey, it garnered obviously less support in the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Government notes the Task Force’s observations on this option. ✓ In light of the strong reservation in

TFLS’s Recommendations/ Observations <i>(reference in the Report)</i>		Government’s Response
	<p>responses collected through alternative channels (including questionnaires), and the responses reflected mainly objections in principle.</p> <p><i>(paragraph 6.14)</i></p>	<p>the community and given that the development of country park periphery will involve more hurdles and complexities compared with the other medium-to-long term options as pointed out by TFLS, as well as the pressing need now to focus attention and resources on those options with priority as recommended by TFLS, we will not at this stage further pursue the alternative land use of country park periphery.</p>
21.	<p>Compared with the other medium-to-long term options, developing areas on the periphery of country parks involves more issues, hurdles and complexity. Moreover, the possibility of legal challenges throughout the process should not be underestimated.</p> <p><i>(paragraph 6.15)</i></p>	<p>✓ We will accordingly discuss with the Hong Kong Housing Society the arrangements for not proceeding further with its study on the feasibility of such development at two specific sites after the completion of those fact-finding tasks already commenced.</p>
<i>Increasing Development Intensity of “Village Type Development” Zones</i>		
22.	<p>The Task Force finds it difficult to accord priority to this option for implementation. Nonetheless, from the perspective of optimising land use, the Government may consider if there is room to review the Small House Policy upon conclusion of the judicial review proceedings in relation to this</p>	<p>✓ The Government notes the Task Force’s observations on this option.</p> <p>✓ The Government will keep in view the development of the judicial review against the Small House Policy.</p>

TFLS's Recommendations/ Observations <i>(reference in the Report)</i>		Government's Response
	subject. <i>(paragraph 6.24)</i>	
<i>Topside Development of Existing Transport Infrastructure</i>		
23.	<p>The Task Force endorses the direction of utilising the topside space of transport infrastructure for other developments, but it would be more desirable to consider holistically the need and the feasibility to do so alongside the planning of the transport infrastructure, so as to handle the planning and design of different facilities at the same time, better integrate the functional uses of both developments, and minimise complex interface issues.</p> <p><i>(paragraph 6.31)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Government notes the Task Force's observations on this option. ✓ The Government will explore on a case-by-case basis whether topside development can be pursued when designing and implementing new transport infrastructure projects, taking into account the principle of "single site, multiple use", to optimise land use. ✓ The Government will also continue to take forward planned topside development at existing transport infrastructure, including the topside development above the Siu Ho Wan Depot Site which has the potential to provide public and private housing of no less than 14 000 residential units in total in the medium-to-long term. We will also continue to explore the development potential of topside development above other existing transport infrastructure including railway facilities.

<p style="text-align: center;">TFLS’s Recommendations/ Observations <i>(reference in the Report)</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Government’s Response</p>
<i>Utilising the Development Potential of Public Utilities Sites</i>	
<p>24. The Task Force considers that the Government should review in due course whether individual public utilities sites are still performing their original functions, and whether certain sites carry the potential for development (including topside development), particularly the reasonably large sites in the urban areas.</p> <p><i>(paragraph 6.36)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Government notes the Task Force’s observations on this option. ✓ When reviewing the land leases of public utilities sites (including telephone exchange) before their expiry in accordance with the existing mechanism, Government will examine whether there is a need to retain the site for its original use. Government will also review as appropriate the development potential of individual sites (especially relatively large ones at good locations) including potential for topside development, with reference to relevant planning studies for that area.
<i>Kwai Tsing Container Terminals (KTCTs) Sites</i>	
<p>25. The Task Force considers that notwithstanding that the options of relocation and topside development of the Terminals could hardly contribute to resolving the land shortage in the short-to-medium and medium-to-long run, the Task Force considers that, for the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Government notes the Task Force’s observations on the options, particularly its comments on relocation of KTCTs in the longer term. ✓ KTCTs are important port facilities and economic infrastructure of Hong Kong which underpin the

TFLS's Recommendations/ Observations <i>(reference in the Report)</i>		Government's Response
	<p>long-term development, the Government may explore whether it is worthwhile to study the relocation option, taking into account the latest developments in the logistics, maritime and ports industries in Hong Kong, the Mainland (especially the Greater Bay Area) and the whole region, the needs of Hong Kong Port, as well as the overall land demand and supply situation in Hong Kong.</p> <p><i>(paragraph 6.43)</i></p>	<p>development of our trading and logistics sector. Since relocation of such major infrastructure is a massive exercise with many implications and interface issues, we will first accord priority to other land supply options.</p>
<i>Reclaiming Part of Plover Cove Reservoir (PCR) for New Town Development</i>		
26.	<p>The Task Force does not recommend reclaiming part of the PCR as a land supply option.</p> <p><i>(paragraph 6.50)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Government notes the Task Force's observation on this option. ✓ The Government has no intention to pursue this option.

Development Bureau
February 2019

Striving for Multi-pronged Land Supply

Report of the Task Force on Land Supply

December 2018

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Annex 2	The 18 Land Supply Options
Annex 3	Sample Questionnaire
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Appendices (Available for downloading on website of the Task Force:
www.landforhongkong.hk)

- (I) Public Engagement Report (including the independent analysis of the Social Sciences Research Centre of The University of Hong Kong)
- (II) Telephone Survey Report by the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies of The Chinese University of Hong Kong
- (III) Public Opinions

Preamble

There is a dearth of land in Hong Kong, but land is essential for the advancement of society, economy and livelihood of the people. Land shortage has been plaguing Hong Kong in recent years. The pricy, tiny and cramped living predicaments are in a tailspin. Apart from a shortage of land for public and private housings, we also see sluggish supply of land for economic uses, transport infrastructure and community facilities. Insufficient land supply is not a cliché, but a pressing issue threatening our society and people's livelihood.

The Task Force on Land Supply (Task Force) was established in September 2017. Having a comprehensive view of the past, the present and the future on the basis of professional and objective analyses, the Task Force sets out for public discussion the current land shortage, estimates of land supply and demand in the next 30 years, and relevant information as well as the pros and cons of different options having the potential to increase land supply. Through public engagement and dialogue, the Task Force endeavours to narrow the differences and forge the greatest consensus in society, in order to break the deadlock of land shortage together.

Increasing land supply needs immediate action. Since its establishment, the Task Force has worked at full steam to examine the source of land supply. The five-month public engagement (PE) exercise, with the theme "Land for Hong Kong: Our Home, Our Say", was carried out from April to September 2018, working out the 18 land supply options for the public to make choices. The PE, conducted under an all-embracing, cross-sectoral and multi-channel approach, is probably one of the most extensive and representative public consultations done in recent years in terms of scale, coverage and public attention. More importantly, the PE carries people's hope for the future of Hong Kong and heightens society's awareness of issues of land resources; it also has stimulated heated discussions on the planning, allocation and rights over land. Its impact on Hong Kong is therefore profound.

This report is prepared based on the Task Force's consolidation and deliberation of the views collated from more than 29 000 questionnaires, some 3 000 interviews in a randomised telephone survey and some

70 000 public submissions. These were supplemented by the observations during PE and the accumulated experiences, professional knowledge and insights of Task Force Members from different disciplines and backgrounds. Along with views on the 18 land supply options, the Task Force has also carefully examined and consolidated other suggestions from the community for Government's reference. Such large-scale public consultation is in no way perfect, but the Task Force has been motivated throughout by the active participation of citizens; this impetus has backed and fortified our recommendations. As undertaken, all the data and views collected during this PE will be made public in entirety. The report is not a simple documentation of these public views, but represents a set of recommendations on land supply strategy and feasible options following a comprehensive study of the mainstream opinions and consensus in society.

I would like to take this opportunity to express gratitude to all stakeholders who were interested in land supply issues and participated in our PE activities, including the "silent majority" in the community. I am also thankful to all those who have given invaluable views to the Task Force or completed our questionnaires. Without the all-out efforts of Task Force Members and the unfailing support of the Government, the Task Force could not have accomplished this comprehensive evaluation with the community on the complex issues of land supply options, and strived together to make breakthrough on this deep-rooted problem of land shortage within a short tenure. It is indeed my great privilege and honour to have travelled this journey on land supply with you all; I am truly indebted to you.



Stanley Wong Yuen-fai, S.B.S., J.P.
Chairman of Task Force on Land Supply
December 2018

Executive Summary

- (1) The Task Force on Land Supply (the Task Force), comprising 22 non-official and eight official members appointed by the Chief Executive, was established in September 2017. The duties of the Task Force are to review and evaluate land supply options, to conduct an extensive public engagement (PE) exercise to raise public awareness of the shortage of land supply and promote public discussions on these issues, with a view to reaching a mainstream consensus on increasing land supply by facilitating the community to make trade-offs and narrowing the differences among stakeholders. The Task Force makes recommendations to the Government on the overall land supply strategy and prioritisation of different land supply options considering the views collected in the PE. Details are set out in **Chapter 1**.
- (2) The Task Force is of the view that Government's estimated land shortfall of 1 200 hectares (ha) in the long run in the "Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030" study (Hong Kong 2030+) is grossly conservative. The actual land shortage should be far more than 1 200 ha and the situation in the short term is particularly dire. In addition, the Task Force advocates building a land reserve by creating land more than the estimated shortfall. Not only would this enable timely and flexible deployment of land resources for different purposes in line with actual circumstances and development needs in the future; it would also give us the ability to cope with various unforeseeable opportunities and challenges. Details are set out in **Chapter 2**.
- (3) The Task Force emphasises that a multi-pronged approach must be adopted in order to increase land supply, tackle the variances in the scale and development lead time of different land supply options, and meet society's needs for various types of land. The Task Force has identified 18 land supply options with the potential to provide additional land; these comprise four short-to-medium term options, six medium-to-long term options and eight conceptual options. Between 26 April and 26 September 2018, a five-month PE exercise entitled "Land for Hong Kong: Our Home, Our Say" was carried out to invite all sectors of society to offer their views on these options

and other land supply-related issues. Details are set out in **Chapters 2 and 3.**

- (4) The Task Force adopted a methodical approach to collect public views through different formats and multiple channels. The PE covered 185 events including face-to-face exchanges among the Task Force, the general public and stakeholders, as well as web-based and paper questionnaires and telephone survey. Members of the public could also express their views by mail, facsimile, email, telephone or in person. During the PE, the Task Force received a total of over 29 000 responses to questionnaires and 68 300 submissions via other channels; the randomised telephone survey also completed interviews with 3 011 people. Details are set out in **Chapter 3.**
- (5) The Task Force notes that the community generally agrees that the shortage of land supply is a pressing problem; that there is no single option to solve the problem; and that a multi-pronged approach must be adopted to break this stalemate. Most people also support creating more land for a land reserve to save for rainy days. Details are set out in **Chapter 4.**
- (6) Upon detailed analysis and examination of the public views collected from various channels during the PE, the Task Force has come up with recommendations on the land supply strategy and land supply options worthy of priority studies and implementation. Details are set out in **Chapter 5.**
- (7) On land supply strategy, the Task Force recommends the Government to –
 - (7.1) Draw up a comprehensive and sustained regime of land supply, which should include the following key elements:
 - (i) sustaining land creation;
 - (ii) conducting regular and more frequent updates and reviews of the overall land supply and demand situation;
 - (iii) enhancing the transparency of information on the land supply and demand situation as far as practicable;

- (iv) exploring ways to rationalise and streamline the procedures from land creation, land supply to construction of facilities and to expedite the land creation process; and
 - (v) facilitating more diversified land development and utilisation.
- (7.2) Adopt a multi-pronged land supply strategy through concurrent implementation of various land supply options in the short, medium and long term to expand and diversify our sources of supply to ensure a sustained and steady stream of land resources to meet the needs for different land uses at different times.
- (7.3) Establish a land reserve, with a forward-looking and macro vision and mindset to cater for unforeseeable needs and offer planning flexibility and space, by initiating planning work as early as possible.
- (7.4) Give thorough and holistic considerations to the following principles in the development and planning of land:
- (i) caring for the environment for balanced development;
 - (ii) creating capacity with “infrastructure first”;
 - (iii) allowing flexibility for planning;
 - (iv) adopting a people-oriented approach and adequate communication;
 - (v) pursuing three-dimensional (3D) planning and “single site, multiple uses”; and
 - (vi) controlling cost and creating value.
- (8) As for land supply options, given the acute land shortage in the short-to-medium term, and the fact that there are fewer short-to-medium term options and the delivery of such options is subject to uncertainties, the Task Force’s basic position is that no short-to-medium option should be given up lightly unless there are strong justifications. As for the medium-and-long term options, which take more time to study and implement, the Government should immediately commence relevant studies and planning of various options to ensure a sustained supply of land in the

medium-to-long term and build a land reserve in the longer run. This would help fulfil different requirements for land in different periods of time. In this connection, the Task Force recommends the Government according priority to studying and implementing the following land supply options.

Short-to-medium term Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing brownfield sites - Tapping into private agricultural land reserve in the New Territories - Alternative uses of sites under private recreational leases
Medium-to-long term Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Near-shore reclamation outside Victoria Harbour - Developing the East Lantau Metropolis - Developing caverns and underground space - More new development areas in the New Territories - Developing the River Trade Terminal site

Note: The above options are listed in the order as shown in Chapter 4 of the PE Booklet.

- (9) As for the other options, the Task Force considers that, in the long run, the Government may consider whether further studies of the feasibility and pros/cons of these options should be conducted, taking into account the actual circumstances and recommendations on individual options by the Task Force; this would provide more information for further discussion by society. Meanwhile, the Task Force has also examined the ongoing land supply initiatives currently pursued by the Government, and made suggestions for improvement. Details are set out in **Chapter 6**.
- (10) There are some opinions on matters outside the purview of the Task Force, and many views related to the use of existing land, enhancement of land administration and land financing arrangements. Following detailed examination and consolidation by the Task Force, these views are set out in **Chapters 4 and 6** which may serve as reference for the Government in formulation of relevant policies. All other opinions are compiled in **Appendix III**.

Chapter 1 Task Force on Land Supply

Background

- 1.1 The Chief Executive pointed out in her election manifesto that, to tackle the housing problem, we must find more land. We should draw on the collective wisdom of society and recognise the need for compromises and give-and-take in order to reach a consensus and find a solution that benefits the community as a whole. Accordingly, the Chief Executive proposed to establish a dedicated task force led by professionals to invite all sectors of society to take a macro review of the sources of land supply, look for feasible options, consolidate and set out the information, pros and cons of different options, in order to facilitate a wide discussion in society on how to find more land and make informed choices.
- 1.2 The Task Force was established in September 2017 for a term until February 2019. The 22 non-official and eight official members appointed by the Chief Executive come from different disciplines, including planning, engineering, architecture, surveying, environment, academia, think tanks, social services, housing development and district administration. Based on the multi-pronged land supply strategy of the Government, the Task Force is responsible for reviewing and assessing different land supply options and launching a PE exercise to facilitate the community in discussions on the pros and cons of these options. The Task Force should, based on the opinions collected during the PE, draw up recommendations on the overall land supply strategy and the prioritisation of different land supply options for submission to the Government.
- 1.3 The membership list and terms of reference of the Task Force are set out in **Annex 1**. Since its establishment, the Task Force has held 31 meetings, as well as 13 working group meetings to prepare for the PE.

Challenges

- 1.4 Of the land area of 1 111 square kilometres (km²) in Hong Kong, only 24.4% is built up¹. As regards the undeveloped area, apart from that covered by planned projects or projects under studies, most of the remaining area covers ecological, landscape, and historical/cultural assets (including country parks, sites of special scientific interest and conservation area). There are also offshore islands as well as steep slopes and hills which are not suitable for high-density development. Discounting these, there is indeed not much land for development.
- 1.5 Some suggest that Hong Kong is not short of land and the key is to optimise utilisation of existing land. The Task Force is however of the view that, whilst there is always room to improve planning, utilisation and management of the developed area, there is no doubt that supply of land for housing, commercial and community facilities is very tight. As a result, our planning tends to lose sight of other wider considerations and balancing of needs. Existing means of converting land uses of certain sites or rationalising some planning, land administration or development procedures might help release some land to meet the more urgent needs, but these measures are unlikely to make any substantive difference to the difficulties of people's living condition, let alone meet the future demands and bring hopes and changes to society.
- 1.6 The land shortage in Hong Kong is urgent and dire. The land supply in the past has fallen sharply and not kept pace with the growth of population and households as well as the development of the economy and society. This has given rise to a series of social issues with far-reaching implications². To tackle these, the Task Force has set the following objectives and vision.

¹ Please refer to the Planning Department's website (https://www.pland.gov.hk/pland_en/info_serv/statistic/landu.html) for details.

² Please refer to Chapter 1 of the PE Booklet for details.

Objectives

Raising Awareness and Promoting Discussion

- 1.7 In recent years, property price and rental rates have been surging, and people live further away from the city centre or in smaller units. The rising cost of living reflects to some extent the social costs inflicted by scarcity of land. Land shortage not only increases the burden on housing and business operations, but also worsens people's quality of life and the competitiveness of Hong Kong. Nevertheless, society generally lacks the awareness on the demand for land, the sources of land supply and the land development process. The pain caused by land shortage has slowly led to a sense of helplessness and grievances among many people.

- 1.8 One of the main tasks of the Task Force is to raise public awareness of the land supply situation by explaining to people the land shortage faced by Hong Kong for a better understanding of this widespread and serious problem, so as to encourage all sectors of society, different groups and stakeholders, as well as "the silent majority" to get involved in the discussion on the issue. Specifically, the Task Force invites the community to offer views along the following directions –
 - 1.8.1 To put forward a proposal to the Government that can increase significantly the land supply. The proposal should not only meet the land shortage of at least 1 200 ha, but also create more land to build a land reserve to provide buffer and flexibility in meeting the long-term development needs of society and people's aspirations; and

 - 1.8.2 To adopt a multi-pronged land supply strategy, which should include short-to-medium term options to address pressing needs, and also medium-to-long term options and conceptual ones to sustain land supply.

Narrowing Differences and Building Consensus

1.9 In a diverse society, it is normal for people to hold different views on the same issue. It is also natural for people of different background, belief, social class and wants to look at the problem of land shortage with dissimilar principles and focuses. The Task Force is well aware of this. Therefore, the purpose of PE is not to ask the public to approve one single solution, nor to have one side convince the other through debates in order to reach a consensus. The objective of the PE is to provide a platform for all parties to listen and speak, hoping that everybody can each make a small step to solving the problem of land shortage and narrowing differences, with a view to bringing together the mainstream opinions on land supply issues.

Vision

Making Hong Kong a Liveable, Competitive and Sustainable City

Liveable

1.10 We need to provide people with adequate housing in order to build a liveable city. A basic condition is having reasonable living space. At present, the average waiting time for a public rental housing unit has reached 5.5 years, and nearly 210 000 grassroots live in crowded and poor conditions like sub-divided units. According to figures of the Census and Statistics Department³, the median floor area of domestic households in Hong Kong was about 430 square feet (sq. ft.) in 2016; the floor area per capita was only 161 sq. ft.. To many, Hong Kong is not a liveable city; for an international metropolis, such housing is far from ideal.

1.11 Hong Kong is world-famous for its high density, compact and convenient city life. But, in general, the higher the population density, the lower the liveability of a city⁴. Hong Kong's current

³ Hong Kong 2016 Population By-census, Census and Statistics Department.

⁴ Please refer to Figure 15, Chapter 2 of the PE Booklet for details.

population density is about 27 000 person per km², which is at least five times higher than that of international cities such as London, New York and Tokyo. Optimising the use of existing land and suitably increasing development intensity are no doubt a way to increase developable land in the short term; but it cannot lower (or may even increase) the population density in general, making our living environment even more crowded. The Task Force considers that instead of solely relying on changing uses of developed land, the more fundamental way to improve our liveability is to create and develop more land, so as to progressively reduce the population density and provide reasonable living space.

1.12 “Liveability” is about providing not only reasonable living space, but also supporting infrastructure and community facilities. These include ample public recreational and sports facilities and comprehensive railway and road networks to provide comfortable living and more convenient commuting. All other sorts of community and welfare facilities are also essential; with our ageing population, the demands for elderly and health care facilities are especially strong. The land shortage has kept us from providing and enhancing more infrastructure and community facilities. Worse still, we have to convert some of the land reserved for these facilities to housing developments. Only by removing the bottleneck of land shortage can we further improve the planning of various facilities and make Hong Kong a liveable city.

Competitive

1.13 Work is part of people’s life. Whether we are talking about employment, start-up or doing business, we need a favourable environment to facilitate the development of industries and create job opportunities. Land is the basis of most economic activities. Be they traditional industries in need of industrial and commercial buildings, offices and retail floor area, or the new economy which emphasises innovation, sharing and exchange of ideas, they all need different scales and types of space. Sufficient economic land is pivotal to driving sustainable development and improving the competitiveness of Hong Kong.

1.14 In fact, economic land supply of Hong Kong has failed to meet the growth of the past decade. The shortage in commercial properties (including Grade A office premises⁵) has resulted in rising rents and prices. The “Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area” and the “Belt and Road Initiative” will strengthen the role of Hong Kong as an international financial centre and trading hub; the initiatives will further increase the demand of Mainland/ overseas enterprises for office buildings in Hong Kong. Emerging industries, in particular those in innovation, technology and start-ups that require affordable office space, might also find full-fledged growth impossible due to continuous shortage of economic land and high operating costs. These will affect the transformation of the economy and the overall competitiveness of Hong Kong.

Sustainable Development

1.15 As society and the economy continue to develop, we must give due regard to the concept of sustainable development and pay heed to environmental conservation, economic benefits and needs of different groups. Such development strategy best caters for the overall interest of society and helps Hong Kong move forward. To achieve sustainable development, the Task Force considers that one of the important elements is ensuring a stable supply of land in the long run, in order to provide sufficient planning flexibility for the Government to make forward-looking plans to develop smart, green and resilient infrastructural facilities and communities.

⁵ According to a research report of JLL named “Hong Kong land supply: Don’t forget about office” published in September 2018, the vacancy rate of Grade A office buildings continued to drop in the past two decades from 11.9% in 1999 to 4.2% in September 2018. Vacancies in Central, Wan Chai/Causeway Bay and Tsim Sha Tsui are respectively 1.5%, 1.6% and 1.4%. Rent of Grade A office building have been on the rise because of the long-term low vacancy rate. In the past three years, rent of Grade A office buildings across Hong Kong have increased by 6.5% on average, and that of Central was as high as 9.5% per annum. As for future supply, the report estimates that Hong Kong needs about 200 000 sq.m. of Grade A office buildings each year and potential new buildings supply is around 1900 000 sq.m. that is totally relying on the Government’s land sale programme. About 73% are in Kowloon and 27% in Hong Kong Island, which can only meet the needs of Hong Kong in the next decade.

1.16 It is the Task Force's vision to increase land supply of various types, so as to make Hong Kong an ideal place for living and working as well as a competitive city with sustainable development. The Task Force must emphasise that increasing land supply is not a panacea for all problems, but land shortage indeed has had a deep impact on everyone in society. Adequate, timely and continuous supply of land can provide resources to support implementation of policies and initiatives, paving way for enhancement of living standards and facilitating social development; without it, all policies will just be empty talks.

Chapter 2 Pressing need for Land Supply

Shortage far exceeds 1 200 ha

- 2.1 As soon as it was set up, the Task Force reviewed the guiding principles, assumptions, methodology and findings of the estimations on land supply and demand under the “Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030” (Hong Kong 2030+) study, over which the Government began to consult the public in 2016. Hong Kong 2030+ estimates that the overall land demand in Hong Kong is about 4 800 ha in the future. The estimate includes the land required for housing, economic activities and community facilities on the basis of population needs. However, it has not taken into account the land requirements for unforeseen situations or demands arising from new policy initiatives promulgated after the estimation was carried out. On the other hand, all the current, committed and planned developments can meet some 3 600 ha of the land demand. But, if any of these developments fail to be realised on schedule or in full, the ultimate supply will be less or delayed. In other words, in the long run, the land shortfall of Hong Kong would be at least 1 200 ha.
- 2.2 The Task Force is of the view that the estimated land shortfall of 1 200 ha in the long run is grossly conservative and has underestimated the actual needs. It is because such estimation has assumed that all the existing land supply projects, including rezoning and New Development Areas (NDAs), will be implemented smoothly according to the development scale and schedule proposed by the Government and neglected the grave uncertainties associated with these projects. Moreover, the estimate has yet to take into account society’s aspiration for a more spacious living environment and the strong demand for more elderly and health care facilities due to ageing population, as well as more decanting space to address the need to speed up urban renewal because of ageing of buildings. Taking account of all these factors, the Task Force believes that the actual land shortage will be far more than 1 200 ha, bearing in mind that this figure is yet to include the additional land required for a land reserve.

Serious Shortage in Short Term

2.3 Imbalance in supply-demand of land in Hong Kong not only refers to the land quantity but, more importantly, the mismatch in time. The Task Force notes that, among the 1 200 ha of shortage, about 815 ha will occur within 10 years⁶, accounting for 68% of the total shortage; about 108 ha of these are shortage in housing land⁷. The severity of the short-term gap is further exacerbated by the lead time required to create and supply land. The Task Force considers that the problem of land shortage is indeed dire and calls for decisive actions to increase land supply without delay.

Shortage for All Kinds of Land

2.4 Among the 1 200 ha of land shortage, housing land accounts for 230 ha, economic land accounts for 256 ha, and the remaining 700 ha for infrastructure and facilities⁸. During the PE, some suggested that, since housing land only accounts for a small proportion of the overall shortfall, the Task Force and the Government should focus on tackling the deficit of housing land first. For example, they suggested using one or two land supply options to provide land for housing to solve the immediate housing problem.

2.5 The Task Force does not agree with the above proposition. In fact, without land for infrastructure and community facilities, it would not be possible to provide housing on a large scale. As explained in Chapter 1, in terms of comprehensive planning, we need to provide society with land for different purposes and build a balanced and liveable community. Take the Sha Tin New Town as an example; housing land accounts for less than 20% of the land there, while another 20% is used as open space and Government, Institution or Community sites. The remaining area is taken up by roads and

⁶ Please refer to Figure 11, Chapter 2 of the PE Booklet for details.

⁷ Please refer to Figure 12, Chapter 2 of the PE Booklet for details.

⁸ Please refer to Figure 11, Chapter 2 of the PE Booklet for details.

infrastructures, economic land, greenbelt and existing villages. Tackling only the shortage of housing land in piecemeal or isolated manner will result in imbalanced planning and cause other problems.

Save for Rainy Days and Build Land Reserve

2.6 Land creation does not happen overnight. No matter which methods we adopt, the planning and development procedures can easily take 10 years, or even two to three decades, to complete. Hence, the Task Force aims to propose a multi-pronged land supply strategy to increase land of different kinds from various sources for provision at different times. This will ensure that the strategy will not be influenced by short-term fluctuations. Details of the land supply strategy recommended by the Task Force will be covered in Chapters 5 and 6.

2.7 The quantity of available land will not only determine whether the long-standing shortage in Hong Kong can be rectified, but also affect the degree of planning flexibility. As opposed to piecemeal planning with infill developments, larger land parcels in greater amount can provide us with more room and options in planning different land uses, layout and complementarity of facilities.

2.8 The Task Force has all along been advocating the need to build a land reserve in addition to developing sufficient land to meet the current estimated shortage. Not only would this enable timely and flexible deployment of land resources by Government for different purposes having regard to actual circumstances and development needs in the future, it would also avoid a repeat of the past and give us the ability to cope with unforeseeable opportunities and challenges.

18 Land Supply Options

2.9 There is no single and painless land supply option to eradicate the land shortage problem. Increasing land supply with a multi-pronged approach is the only way. To this end, the Task Force has put forward 18 options with the potential to provide

additional land⁹. According to their estimated lead time to provide land, these options are grouped into three categories –

- 2.9.1 Four short-to-medium term options, with potential to provide additional land in around 10 years' time;
- 2.9.2 Six medium-to-long term options, with potential to provide additional land in around 10 to 30 years' time; and
- 2.9.3 Eight conceptual options – unable to confirm when and how much additional land can be provided for the time being.

2.10 The list of these 18 options is in **Annex II**.

⁹ Additional land refers to the land which has not been included in the 3 600 ha of land supply in the forecast of the “Hong Kong 2030+” study. For details, please refer to Chapter 3 of the PE Booklet.

Chapter 3 Public Engagement Exercise

- 3.1 The Task Force carried out a five-month PE exercise entitled “Land for Hong Kong: Our Home, Our Say” between April 26 and September 26, 2018. The Task Force put forward 18 land supply options and invited all sectors of society to express views on these options and other land supply-related issues.
- 3.2 As mentioned in Chapter 1, the main objectives of the PE exercise were as follows:
 - 3.2.1 to raise public awareness of the facts and constraints in land supply; and
 - 3.2.2 to engage the public in thorough discussions on the pros and cons of different land supply options and facilitate consensus building on the preferred options and their priority.

Public Engagement Report

- 3.3 To assist in the preparation of the PE, the Task Force Secretariat appointed A-World Consulting Limited as the PE Director in accordance with the established procurement procedures of the Government. The PE Director provided the Task Force with professional advice on the overall strategy, objectives and modes of public engagement as well as implementation of the PE exercise. It was also responsible for coordinating and monitoring key PE activities, designing and producing PE materials, and analysing the public views received. In this regard, the analysis of public views was undertaken by the Social Sciences Research Centre of The University of Hong Kong (HKUSSRC). In addition, the Task Force Secretariat, following the Government’s established procurement procedures, commissioned the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies (HKIAPS) of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) to conduct a randomised telephone survey. The Secretariat also appointed other services providers to assist in the production of multi-media publicity materials, promotion and the

organisation of exhibitions.

3.4 The Task Force produced and launched the following materials during the PE period to raise public awareness of land supply issues¹⁰:

3.4.1 PE booklet, pamphlet and website www.landforhongkong.hk;

3.4.2 25 short videos, including TV Announcements in the Public Interest (API), short videos and animated infographics videos introducing land supply, land shortage and land supply options;

3.4.3 Facebook page and YouTube channel;

3.4.4 A dedicated 11-episode radio programme; and

3.4.5 12 Chairman's blogs online.

3.5 The Task Force collected views from the following main channels during the PE¹¹:

3.5.1 185 PE activities;

3.5.2 Web-based and paper questionnaires;

3.5.3 Randomised telephone survey; and

3.5.4 Opinions submitted by the public through mail, facsimile, email, telephone or in person.

3.6 The Task Force conducted 185 PE activities to communicate with the public and stakeholders directly, and listened to their views on land supply options and other related issues. These activities included:

3.6.1 4 public forums;

3.6.2 40 three-day roving exhibitions in 18 districts of Hong Kong;

¹⁰ Information on the PE exercise has all been uploaded to the PE website of the Task Force.

¹¹ Views collected were mainly used for quantitative and qualitative analyses. Quantitative analysis focused on views collected through randomised telephone surveys and questionnaires (except the four questions that allowed the respondents to provide open-ended answers). Views collected through other channels such as public forums, outreaching activities, records of meetings/ workshops/ seminars/ exchange sessions with different stakeholders, media reports and other written submissions were used for the qualitative analysis.

3.6.3 72 meetings, workshops, seminars and exchange sessions with different stakeholders, including :

- Legislative Council, advisory and statutory bodies (15)
- District Councils (4)
- Professional groups (24)
- Concern groups/stakeholder organisations (29)

3.6.4 20 youth outreach activities;

3.6.5 23 school outreach activities;

3.6.6 12 community outreach activities; and

3.6.7 14 corporate outreach activities.

3.7 The PE Report, including HKUSSRC's independent analysis of public opinion, submitted by the PE Director to the Task Force, is at **Appendix I**¹². The following paragraphs highlight the key components of the PE exercise.

View Collection

3.8 This PE exercise is probably one of the most wide-ranging public consultations in recent years. Considering the desire to seek information of people from different ages and backgrounds, the Task Force collected public views through multiple channels and various forms, including traditional paper questionnaires, interactive web-based questionnaires, a wide randomised telephone survey and direct dialogue with the general public and stakeholders by Task Force Members at various events.

Web-based and paper questionnaires (questionnaires)

3.9 With reference to the land shortage and the 18 proposed options, the Task Force, together with the PE Director and HKUSSRC, designed a questionnaire targeted at addressing the land shortage of at least 1 200 ha to invite the public to choose their preferred land supply options. As the early stage of the PE exercise mainly focused on publicity, promotion and education, paper and web-based

¹² Available for downloading on website of the Task Force.

questionnaires were rolled out in late May and early June 2018¹³ respectively. The paper questionnaires (at **Annex III**) were mainly distributed at roving exhibitions for the public to fill in after browsing the information at the exhibitions. The content of the web-based questionnaires was largely the same as that of the paper questionnaires, but the former was more interactive. For example, after choosing their preferred land supply options, the respondents were informed of the total land area of the chosen options upon automatic calculation by the system. There would be prompts to encourage, but not mandate, the selection of more options. The respondents could make changes anytime or submit the questionnaires directly. The web-based questionnaires also provided hyperlinks for the respondents to browse relevant information and videos. In addition to the 18 land supply options, four open-ended questions were included in the questionnaires for the public to make comment on the land supply options, other land supply suggestions and the general arrangements of PE.

3.10 During the PE, the Task Force received 29 065 questionnaires, including 21 608 web-based ones and 7 457 paper forms. The results of HKUSSRC's analysis show that the land supply options chosen by nearly 80% of the questionnaire respondents can provide over 1 200 ha of land, which would be enough to meet the land shortage of at least 1 200 ha and providing extras as reserve. The findings suggest that the public generally understand and acknowledge the serious problem of land shortage and the importance of creating a land reserve.

Telephone Survey

3.11 The Task Force commissioned HKIAPS, CUHK to conduct a randomised telephone survey between mid-August and mid-September 2018 to gauge public views on the 18 land supply options. The survey successfully interviewed 3 011 Hong Kong residents aged 18 or above, with 2 005 from landline telephone interviews and 1 006 from mobile phone interviews. The objective

¹³ The first month of the PE exercise (from late April to late May) was mainly for public education to facilitate society's grasp of the land shortage and various land supply options. Questionnaires to collect views were therefore launched in the second month of the PE (late May and early June).

of conducting both landline telephone and mobile phone interviews was to maximise the coverage of residents as far as possible and include residents without landline telephones. To better reflect the demographic profile of Hong Kong, the data was weighted according to the age-sex distribution of the population (excluding foreign domestic helpers) published by the Census and Statistics Department.

- 3.12 The content of the telephone survey questionnaire is in **Annex IV**. The results of the survey show that, among the 18 options, the supporting rate of 14 options exceeds 50%. The telephone survey report submitted by HKIAPS (including the research methodology, survey results and analysis) is in **Appendix II**¹⁴. The raw data collected by the survey is available for downloading on the website of the Task Force.

Public Engagement Exercise

- 3.13 The Task Force conducted 145 PE activities in the form of meetings, workshops, forums, seminars, exchange sessions and outreach activities with the public and stakeholders. Representatives of the PE Director and HKUSSRC recorded the views of participants in each session for analysis purpose.

- 3.14 The Task Force also held 40 roving exhibitions across 18 districts in Hong Kong. Each exhibition lasted for three days. Members of the Task Force joined these exhibitions from time to time to explain the content of the PE to the public and listen to their views.

Other Channels

- 3.15 During the PE, the Task Force received 68 300 views submitted through mails, fax, post, telephone or in person. Over 90% of them (about 64 400) are believed to be responses from signature campaigns or petitions organised by individual groups. Copies of these opinions have been uploaded to the Task Force's website.

¹⁴ Available for downloading on the website of the Task Force.

Outcome of Public Engagement Exercise

- 3.16 The Task Force has considered and discussed the PE Report in detail. The Task Force's overall observation and considerations are set out in Chapter 4. The Task Force's recommendations on land supply strategy and land supply options are detailed in Chapters 5 and 6.
- 3.17 With the five-month PE exercise and the publicity efforts by the Task Force, society in general has shown an interest in and understood and recognised the severe land shortage problem. People were also willing to express their views and make choices on the options. These are shown by the following:
- 3.17.1 There were nearly 100 000 responses collected from different channels during the PE;
 - 3.17.2 The 25 videos were viewed over 1.67 million times, and the PE website was visited 210 000 times;
 - 3.17.3 In the telephone survey, over 50% of the respondents mentioned that they had heard or seen the materials of PE exercise or roving exhibitions;
 - 3.17.4 There was much media coverage of the work of the Task Force as well as related news and issues;
 - 3.17.5 In the telephone survey, the supporting rate of 14 out of the 18 options exceeded 50%;
 - 3.17.6 About 80% of questionnaire respondents chose options with a total land supply of more than 1 200 ha; and
 - 3.17.7 Over 85% respondents of the randomised telephone survey chose options with a total land supply of more than 1 200 ha.
- 3.18 The Task Force is pleased to learn that society broadly understands the land shortage problem of at least 1 200 ha that Hong Kong is facing, and people in general show willingness to choose more land supply options which they find acceptable to provide land beyond the shortfall of 1 200 ha. This is most helpful for the Task Force to formulate a set of multi-faceted recommendations on land supply.
- 3.19 Task Force Members observed, through meetings with different people, public forums and exchanges with the public during the roving exhibitions in 18 districts, that the general public was familiar

with the land supply issues and options. Some people were prepared to demonstrate their grasp and critique of these issues.

Key Findings of the Analysis of HKUSSRC

3.20 From the quantitative analysis of the public views on the 18 land supply options by HKUSSRC (**Figures 1 to 3**), the Task Force noted that **the short-to-medium term and medium-to-long term land supply options**, with the exception of “Relocation or Consolidation of Land-Extensive Recreational Facilities” and “Developing Two Pilot Areas on the Periphery of Country Parks”, have the support of over 50% on average.

3.21 For the **conceptual options**, all the eight options were supported by less than 50% of the questionnaire respondents; amongst them the support for “Reclaiming part of Plover Cove Reservoir for New Town Development” was particularly low (only 16%). In the telephone survey, the support rate for the conceptual options of “Developing More Areas on the Periphery of Country Parks”, “Topside Development of Kwai Tsing Container Terminals” and “Reclaiming Part of Plover Cove Reservoir for New Town Development” were less than 50%. Similarly, the option of “Reclaiming part of Plover Cove Reservoir for New Town Development” obtained the lowest level of support (only 23%) in the telephone survey.

3.22 The nature and target respondents of the questionnaires and telephone survey are different. As mentioned in paragraph 3.9, the design of the questionnaire allowed the respondents to read and understand the information, including the total land area derived from the options selected, before they submitted their preferred combination of land supply options. The respondents completed the questionnaire on their own volition and without time constraint; hence they can be regarded as the more proactive and vocal ones in society. Relatively speaking, the telephone survey was carried out using a random sampling method to cover households and those mobile phone users without landline telephones. The telephone survey was able to gauge the overall views on land supply options of the general population of Hong Kong within a short span of time,

and could also minimise the selection bias during the data collection. These two view collection channels are considerably extensive and credible, reflecting the rational choices of society.

3.23 The complete analysis of HKUSSRC on public opinions can be found in Section 2 of the PE Report at **Appendix I**¹⁵.

Figure 1: Quantitative Analysis of Short-to-Medium Term Land Supply Options

Land Supply Option	Questionnaire		Telephone Survey	
	All responses (%)	Responses that meet the shortfall of at least 1 200 ha of land (%)	All responses (%)	Responses that meet the shortfall of at least 1 200 ha of land (%)
Developing Brownfield Sites	87	91	79	83
Tapping into the Private Agricultural Land Reserve in the New Territories	68	79	61	68
Alternative Uses of Sites under Private Recreational Leases	54	54	61	62
Relocation or Consolidation of Land-Extensive Recreational Facilities	33	34	23	24

¹⁵ Available for downloading from the website of the Task Force.

Figure 2: Quantitative Analysis of Medium-to-Long Term Land Supply Options

Land Supply Option	Questionnaire		Telephone Survey	
	All responses (%)	Responses that meet the shortfall of at least 1 200 ha of land (%)	All responses (%)	Responses that meet the shortfall of at least 1 200 ha of land (%)
Near-shore Reclamation Outside Victoria Harbour	49	58	61	68
Developing the East Lantau Metropolis	62	78	58	68
Developing Caverns and Underground Space	43	45	66	68
More New Development Areas in the New Territories	61	75	78	88
Developing the River Trade Terminal Site	41	46	65	68
Developing Two Pilot Areas on the Periphery of Country Parks	28	34	53	57

Figure 3: Quantitative Analysis of Conceptual Land Supply Options

Land Supply Option	Questionnaire		Telephone Survey	
	All responses (%)	Responses that meet the shortfall of at least 1 200 ha of land (%)	All responses (%)	Responses that meet the shortfall of at least 1 200 ha of land (%)
Developing the River Trade Terminal Site and its Surroundings in the Long Term	47	Not Applicable ¹⁶	67	Not Applicable ¹⁶
Developing More Areas on the Periphery of Country Parks	33		48	
Increasing Development Intensity of “Village Type Development” Zones	45		54	
Topside Development of Existing Transport Infrastructure	49		57	
Utilising the Development Potential of Public Utilities Sites	42		67	
Relocation of Kwai Tsing Container Terminals	44		52	
Topside Development of Kwai Tsing Container Terminals	37		44	
Reclaiming Part of Plover Cove Reservoir for New Town Development	16		23	

Data Sources of Figures 1 to 3:

1. Figures 1.5, 1.7 of Section 2 and Annex 2 of the PE Report (**Appendix I**)
2. Telephone Survey Report of HKIAPS, CUHK (**Appendix II**)

¹⁶ As the conceptual options have no assumption on the potential area of land supply, therefore there is no analysis for responses that can meet the shortfall of at least 1 200 ha of land.

Chapter 4 Overall Observations and Considerations

4.1 The Task Force was committed to listening to the people and truthfully reflecting their views in this report. The PE exercise is for the general public, and their extensive participation has motivated the Task Force and serves as the basis of the Task Force's recommendations. There were nearly 100 000 views collected from all channels and tens of thousands of persons participated in the PE exercise. Given society's high expectations, the Task Force is obliged to reflect the mainstream opinions of society to the Government in full. In this regard, all the survey results and public opinions received have been passed to HKUSSRC for independent analysis and are available for public inspection, with a view to setting out the views clearly and accurately. Below is an account of Task Force's overall observations and considerations of the views collected.

General Agreement on Land Shortage Problem

4.2 The Task Force understands strongly the public consensus on the urgency of action to tackle the land shortage. The community is also aware that the problem cannot be resolved by a single option, but by a multi-pronged approach with options covering the short, medium and long term. There is particularly widespread concern about the shortfall of land for housing. The average waiting time for public rental housing has lengthened from 4.7 years to 5.5 years in the past year. Information from various sources (including opinion surveys conducted by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the last few months) also indicates that society crave an increase in land supply to speed up public housing development, especially public rental housing. Quite a fair amount of people are hoping to see a drop in property price and rent gradually to a level that is affordable to the general public. The Government has to take decisive actions to increase the supply of land and housing.

4.3 In addition, a number of business and professional bodies are concerned about the shortage of land, say, for Grade A offices and

the logistics industry, as well as high rents and prices for all kinds of industrial and commercial buildings, including retail shops. On the other hand, there is clear and strong demand from the social welfare sector and NGOs for more land for community facilities, particularly for the elderly, due to the ageing population. Apart from these, when talking about increase of land supply to provide more housing, many people and professional bodies have pointed out the equal importance of giving priority to improving the transport infrastructure. It reflects people's recognition of the strong demand for land for other uses in addition to housing.

Support for Building a Land Reserve

4.4 The severe shortage of land today is a result of the lack of action to build a land reserve. Land supply has lagged behind the growth in demand, limited planning flexibility and hindered social and economic developments. Results of the telephone survey revealed that nearly 85% of the respondents support or strongly support the establishment of a land reserve. From the questionnaires, about 80% of the respondents chose options with a total land area exceeding 1 200 ha, while the median amounts to about 1 950 ha, all being far above the estimated land shortage. There were also many views collected during the PE pointing out the importance of a land reserve to resolve the land shortage problem in the long run. Society's consensus and support for the establishment of land reserve are obvious.

Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Analyses

4.5 HKUSSRC has carried out both quantitative and qualitative analyses of the public opinions. Quantitative analysis covers opinions collected from questionnaires and the telephone survey; even though the format of the two are slightly different, the questions of both concentrated on the respondents' views and preference of the 18 land supply options. More than 29 000 questionnaires were collected through the website and roving exhibitions, with a wide range of

content. Regarding the randomised telephone survey, the over 3 000 responses could reflect statistically the level of support of individual land supply options by the general public. On the other hand, the qualitative analysis covers all written and verbal opinions received (except the views covered by the above surveys¹⁷) as well as news and commentaries in the media. With some 68 300 written submissions received and the data collected from other channels, HKUSSRC has codified over 1.3 million counts of views in the qualitative analysis. These and the results of the quantitative analysis were reported to the Task Force for overall consideration.

- 4.6 On the understanding that different view collection methods have their own strengths and weaknesses, the Task Force intended to reach out to the widest possible spectrum of the community through as many platforms as possible during the PE period, with a view to creating the mainstream consensus.
- 4.7 The questionnaires reflected the opinions on land supply options of those motivated enough to offer their views, while the telephone survey was an expression of views of the randomly selected citizens. As the target and design of these two view collection tools were different, and taking into account the statistical variances, the results of these two surveys invariably differed and could not be simply combined for calculation; notwithstanding, they supplemented each other well. Hence, the Task Force examined and cross-referenced the two sets of data with caution from a macro perspective, and conducted quantitative analysis in a comprehensive manner.
- 4.8 Through multiple channels and varied formats, individuals and different groups offered a considerable volume of qualitative opinions, covering not only land supply options and related issues, but also social policies and livelihood matters. As the views were diversified and rich in substance, it was not appropriate to simply interpret the number of views received purely as statistics, or to compare them directly with the statistical data of quantitative analysis. These opinions should only be used for comprehensive

¹⁷ There are four open-ended questions in the questionnaire that allow respondents to provide their answers. The information obtained is included in the qualitative analysis.

qualitative analysis.

- 4.9 As stated by HKUSSRC in section 2 of Chapter 3 of the PE Report, in considering the data collected from quantitative and qualitative analyses, we must consider the different nature of the two methods of analysis as well as the characteristics, advantages and constraints of the view collection channels. Quantitative analysis reflects the general attitudes of society as a whole towards the land supply options proposed by the Task Force; qualitative analysis provides information on the considerations and principles underlying those attitudes, and include opinions other than those related to the 18 options. As the focus of the two analyses is different, it is not scientific to simply quantify the data and opinions received from the different channels, make mathematical comparisons of the figures, or jump to conclusion that the data and opinions collected from certain channels are more superior to others. Apart from cross-referencing different types of data and comments, Members of the Task Force also measured society's views on land supply options and related issues through direct exchanges with citizens and stakeholders at various PE activities. Indeed, such integration and holistic review of the quantitative and qualitative analyses is the major task of the Task Force after the PE exercise.

Opinions outside the Purview of Task Force

- 4.10 During the PE, the Task Force received a wide range of views. Some fall outside the Task Force's purview or relate to other social policies and livelihood matters. The more frequently discussed issues are as follows:

- 4.10.1 **Housing Policy:** There are suggestions on the current housing policy. Amongst them, many suggested raising the ratio of public housing, for example to increase the public/private housing split of 6:4 to 7:3 or even 8:2. There are also proposals to convert more private housing sites in the Land Sale Programme or urban renewal projects to public housing. Some people awaiting allocation of public rental housing suggested developing a large number of

transitional housing to meet the pressing needs. Some people argued that the Government should tackle the rising rents and property prices by demand management measures such as rent subsidies and rent control on the one hand; it should also suppress property prices by restricting sale of flats to Hong Kong residents only through land sale conditions or introducing vacancy tax on second-hand flats and capital gains tax on the other. Some suggested imposing levies on land hoarding by developers.

4.10.2 **Population Policy:** Some believed that residents from the Mainland who move to Hong Kong under one-way permits were the main reason for the continuous growth in population and serious shortage of land. They argued that, to resolve the land shortage in the long run, the Government should change or review its population policy, including taking over the approval for one-way permits, reducing quota of one-way permits and controlling the number of immigrants.

4.10.3 **“Land Justice”:** Some said that when dealing with land supply, the concept of “land justice” should be used. Though different people may have different interpretation of “land justice”, the concept is believed to suggest generally that society should not ignore the issues of land use planning and fairness in land allocation. Some advocated that land development should not be merely measured by economic value or tilted towards the interest groups, and the rights of the under-privileged groups should be protected and respected.

4.10.4 **Military Sites:** Prior to launching the PE exercise, the Task Force had been given to understand the stance of the Government on military sites, i.e. the use and management of military sites are matters of national defence; all existing military sites are used for defence purposes with none left idle; in this regard, using military sites is not an option to increase land supply; and the Government does not have any plan to seek for a change of the use of these sites.

Nevertheless, during the PE, some people still suggested the release of military sites for other developments.

4.10.5 ***Borrowing Land or Tapping the Opportunities in Greater Bay Area:*** Some said that the Government may borrow land from the Central Government (including sea territories) or request for reclamations (including floating islands) in Zhuhai, Shenzhen and other places close to Hong Kong, in order to set up a Hong Kong living community for public housing, elderly homes or relocation of large-scale facilities such as prisons or sewage treatment plants. Others said that Hong Kong should tap the opportunity arising from the Greater Bay Area and take advantage of the convenience brought by Hong Kong-Shenzhen-Guangzhou Express Rail Link and Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge to replan the overall layout of Hong Kong, thereby realising the concept of a “one-hour living circle”.

4.11 While the above suggestions fall outside of the purview of the Task Force and will not form part of the recommendations, in view of the considerable number of suggestions received, the Task Force sets out these opinions which may serve as reference for the Government in explaining its policies to the public.

Chapter 5 Recommendations on Land Supply

5.1 Upon detailed analysis and examination of the large volume of opinions collected from different channels during the PE, the Task Force has come up with recommendations on the overall land supply strategy and land supply options worthy of priority studies and implementation. The Task Force hopes that the recommendations will not only resolve the urgent short-term crisis of land shortage and establish a land reserve in the long run, but also provide directions for pursuing different land supply options, and enhance the strategy and implementation framework of land supply to resolve the land shortage problem rather than simply delaying it.

Land Supply Strategy

Comprehensive and Sustained Regime of Land Supply

5.2 Land supply is closely related to the daily lives of the people. The livelihood issues and the economic and social problems caused by the land shortage have left many people in great difficulties. However, it takes a long lead time to turn “primitive land” into “spade-ready sites”; no options can provide additional land instantly without going through preliminary studies, planning, consultation and vetting procedures. Out of the 18 options identified by the Task Force, only four have the potential to provide land in the short-to-medium term; even if all these options were fully realised, the land so created would still be insufficient to eliminate the current land shortage. If we were to find and create land only when the shortage problem surfaced, we would only be repeating the same mistake and prolonging the predicament we face today.

5.3 Learning from the past: the area of built-up land in Hong Kong increased by 6 000 ha between 1995 and 2005, but the corresponding figure for the following 10-year period, between 2005 and 2015, greatly shrunk to a mere 400 ha. Using an analogy of bread and flour, it would be too late if we were to realise that we are short of “flour” (i.e. land) when we are in immediate need of “bread” such as housing, schools, hospitals, elderly homes, parks,

ball courts, car parks, offices, storage and retail floor spaces. Therefore, **the Task Force considers that the Government must draw up a comprehensive and sustained regime of land supply** which should include the following key elements :

5.3.1 ***Sustained land creation:*** We must differentiate the two fundamental concepts of “land creation” and “land supply”. Land creation is the development of new land which involves many areas of work and procedures. The basic steps cover preliminary studies, technical assessments, public consultations and approval procedures which take time to complete. The larger and the more complicated the project is, the earlier we should start the process. Land creation, in particular the preliminary studies, should be undertaken in a sustained manner and free from external factors such as the economic cycles. The Government should also demonstrate its greatest determination to rise to the challenge. However, to create land does not necessarily mean that land must be made available and allocated immediately for specific uses. With an adequate land reserve, the Government could supply land required for public and private purposes in a flexible and timely manner in accordance with the changing needs of the community, policies and actual circumstances. A proper understanding of the concepts of “land creation” and “land supply” is conducive to society’s rational discussion of the need and implementation timetable of initiatives to increase land supply.

5.3.2 ***Regular reviews:*** The Government should conduct regular and more frequent updates and reviews of the overall land supply and demand situation. At present, the Government reviews the territorial development strategy around once every decade, and as part of this exercise, conducts an assessment of overall land supply and demand, and formulates strategic planning recommendations. The latest such review was the Hong Kong 2030+ published in late 2016. The review preceding that, entitled “Hong Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy”, was completed and promulgated in 2007. The Task Force considers that more frequent updates and assessment of the land supply and demand would help ensure

more effective monitoring of the situation by the Government. Moreover, the Government should also take into account society's latest aspirations for improved living space and public facilities. It should provide timely "alerts" on the looming problem of land shortage in the updates to keep the community informed as early as possible of the changes in land supply and demand and the measures to cope with the situation; this might include, *inter alia*, adjusting the pace of land supply. As the overall assessment on land supply and demand involves the long term policies, initiatives and resource allocation of different bureaux, it is desirable for the abovementioned strategic planning, which cuts across bureaux and departments, to be steered by the most senior echelon of the Government. In this way, Hong Kong's future development can be reviewed at a strategic level and best possible preparations be made to meet the land requirements.

5.3.3 ***Open and transparent:*** The Task Force considers that the Government should, as far as practicable, improve transparency of information on land supply and demand. The Government may consider establishing a database to raise the community's awareness of land supply and demand, to enable different sectors of society to have more objective and rational discussions of Government's land supply initiatives and plans.

5.3.4 ***Expediting action:*** The Government should explore and put forward ways to rationalise and streamline the procedures from land creation, land supply to the completion of different types of facilities. For example, the Government should expedite the approval process and reduce the duplicating approval procedures by different government departments (detailed discussion will be given in paragraphs 6.60 and 6.61 of this report) to ensure that both the supply of "flour" and "bread" will be timely. **The Government should also explore ways to expedite the land creation process beyond the prevailing framework. Possible areas to consider include setting up a dedicated body to coordinate and handle large-scale development projects; bring in market forces; and involve the community in taking forward**

development projects.

5.3.5 *Diversified development:* The Government may consider how to incorporate consideration of greater social benefits and non-economic elements in the allocation of land resources. For example, the Government may strengthen participation of the public and NGOs at suitable sites or projects to facilitate more diversified land development models.

Multi-pronged Strategy to Increase Land Supply

- 5.4 The Task Force stresses that, to eradicate the acute problem of land shortage, **a multi-pronged land supply strategy must be adopted.** As all options vary in terms of scale, lead time required, cost effectiveness and land uses, there is no single perfect option that could substitute for the others. The virtue of the multi-pronged land supply strategy is the complementarity of different options. **Only by expanding and diversifying our sources of land supply can we ensure a sustained and steady stream of land resources to meet the needs for different land uses at different times.**
- 5.5 For example, options involving developed land such as rezoning and increasing development intensity, as well as the Government's other on-going land supply initiatives, could indeed increase land supply within a shorter period of time. However, the land involved is usually small in area and such "infill" developments in existing built-up environment naturally attract local objections. On the other hand, large-scale land creation options such as NDAs or reclamation could provide sizeable land for comprehensive planning. However, they cannot increase land supply within a short period of time as they involve many studies, planning and vetting procedures, as well as land resumption and clearance, site formation and construction of infrastructure.

Establishing a land reserve with forward planning

- 5.6 While it is normal to expect ordinary people, businesses and the Government to put money aside as savings, with land being such an important social asset, Hong Kong can hardly manage by merely meeting imminent demands for land. As mentioned in previous chapters, the Task Force and the community in general support developing more land to build a land reserve. If the community is willing to invest in education, healthcare services, social welfare facilities as well as infrastructure to save for the rainy days, **the Task Force considers that society should likewise develop a land reserve from the perspective of investing for the future.** This is not only to tackle the imminent land shortage of 1 200 ha, but also to plan for additional land with a forward-looking, vision-driven and macro mindset, and provide more “spade-ready sites” available to cater for the unforeseeable needs and offer planning flexibility and space.
- 5.7 As explained in paragraph 5.3.1, even if the actual pace or magnitude of land creation and land supply might need to be adjusted according to the development needs in society, **the Government must race against times to kick start, as soon as possible, preliminary studies and planning for different options, and to collect and analyse a large amount of information and data for setting up a long-term “planning reserve”.** This would help form a scientific basis for the assessment of the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of individual projects, and enable more comprehensive and specific response to the community’s views and concerns on certain options. These studies are but the first stage of the whole land development process. Whether individual projects will be taken forward or the actual scale and pace in which they are to be taken forward will still be subject to deliberation and decision by society in due course. Without such preliminary studies, however, society will lack the basis for objective discussion. The Task Force hopes that the community will support the Government in pressing ahead with the preliminary studies for the land supply options as soon as possible, and to establish a database on the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of individual options. This would shorten the timeline to start these projects and allow the public to make discussions and decisions based on more facts and statistics.

Thorough and holistic considerations of relevant principles of land supply

5.8 During the telephone survey, apart from the 18 land supply options, the Task Force also invited respondents to answer the question of: “Which one of the following factors do you think should be considered first if Hong Kong needs to increase land supply?” The majority answer was “less impact on the natural environment” (34.4%); other answers in descending order of priority were “land can be provided more quickly” (20.5%), “more land can be provided” (18.2%), “relatively small impacts on the original land users or the community” (13.1%) and “less public funds are borne by the government” (4.6%). Based on the above results and other views collected, the Task Force considers that, in drawing up the land supply strategy and taking forward the work on land creation, the Government must give thorough and holistic considerations to the following principles:

- 5.8.1 *Caring for the environment for balanced development:* As we emphasised in Chapter 1, amidst the continued social and economic development, **we must uphold the concept of sustainable development in our pursuit of land development, taking into consideration environmental conservation and the needs of different strata of society; we must strike a suitable balance in an objective and scientific manner.** In fact, development and environmental conservation are not in opposition. Specifically, before implementation of a development project, the Government must give due consideration to any possible environmental impact arising from the project, conduct Environmental Impact Assessment, if applicable, in accordance with statutory requirements, to avoid high-density developments at sites of high ecological value and to formulate corresponding measures to mitigate environmental impact. The Government should continue to make long-term visionary planning to develop smart, green and resilient infrastructural facilities and communities.

5.8.2 *Creating capacity with “infrastructure first”*: Many stakeholders are concerned about the additional population that comes with the increased land supply and the extra burden put on the local transport infrastructure. These concerns are also common under the Government’s on-going rezoning initiative. Owing to the limited capacity of existing transport infrastructure, many options to unlock the land potential and provide new land (especially those in the New Territories (NT)) are unlikely to be attainable if the existing strategic transport infrastructure was not upgraded or no new infrastructure constructed. **Priority must be accorded to the provision of ancillary transport infrastructure when implementing land supply initiatives and development projects.** Apart from enhancing existing transport networks in individual districts as far as practicable, the Hong Kong 2030+ also advocates the “capacity-creating” planning concept for an enhanced strategic planning approach. This aims not only to cater for the foreseeable demands for land from the increased population and economic development, but also to plan for and reserve in advance, under such vision-driven approach, additional and reasonable capacity for infrastructure facilities (including transport infrastructure) and the environment, so as to create buffer for development and contingency. **From the perspective of increasing and expediting land supply, the Task Force supports the adoption of the “capacity-creating” approach for the planning of transport infrastructure to unlock the development potential of districts and create more possibilities by the requisite provision of infrastructures.** However, the Task Force is aware that the provision of buffer capacity would inevitably involve additional resources and cost. For example, provision of more space is needed to accommodate additional transport infrastructure in future such as railway stations, traffic lanes and grade-separated interchanges; or that, during the initial commissioning stage of this infrastructure, their utilisation rate might well be lower than their designed capacity. In pursuing the “capacity-creating” approach, the Government needs to think out-of-the-box. Apart from assessing the return rate of the infrastructure by

conventional means, it should also take into account their overall social and economic benefits (including the land value), and to explain these to the general public. Meanwhile, **the Government should take forward the various planned large-scale transport infrastructure as soon as possible**, especially those large-scale railway and road works that would help enhance the NT traffic networks, and support development and external connections, in order to release the land potential of the affected areas.

5.8.3 *Allowing flexibility for planning:* Land development projects especially major ones are fraught with uncertainties. The development scale and implementation timetable are often subject to different factors necessitating adjustment such as delays or scaling back of projects. Such deviation from the original plan might have an impact on the original estimation of land supply. Hence, we should **err on the side of caution in making estimation of land supply and demand. We must plan for land that can more than meet the estimated demand to cater for such uncertainties.** As mentioned above, building a land reserve with forward planning would allow us flexibility to make timely allocation of land resources and to accelerate land supply where necessary to meet the latest development needs and make up for the unforeseeable gap between land supply and demand.

5.8.4 *Adopting a people-oriented approach and adequate communication:* The Task Force has emphasised time and again that no land supply options are painless. All options entail impact on certain people or groups in varying degrees. Society should strike a balance and make choices between the overall communal benefits and the impact on individual stakeholders or interested groups. **The Government should also strengthen communication and engagement with the public, while giving due consideration to and addressing the demands of affected stakeholders,** so as to minimise possible resistance and uncertainties for the early realisation of the development projects and the ultimate land supply.

- 5.8.5 *Pursuing three-dimensional (3D) planning and “single site, multiple uses”*: Land resources are hugely valuable in Hong Kong. It is common to see different uses being accommodated on a single site in urban areas. When undertaking planning work for NDAs in future, **it is worth considering how to fully realise the potential of the land at grade or the space underground through 3D planning and the application of the concept of “single site, multiple use” as necessary**. The Task Force considers that 3D planning is more than high-rise development or decking over existing structures for housing development; instead, it means, on the premise of good planning, giving due regards to the location, characteristics, land uses in the vicinity and the local needs, and proper planning and design, while increasing development intensity as appropriate at suitable sites. For example, construction of topside green podiums or parks may be considered in the planning of trunk roads or transport interchanges; this may serve to mitigate traffic noise of the roads and provide different types of community facilities and green space to enhance people’s quality of living.
- 5.8.6 *Controlling cost and creating value*: Large-scale development projects often incur huge public spending. In planning such projects, **the Government should exercise prudence in budgeting and explain to the general public the costs and benefits of the projects**; this should include, *inter alia*, the land potential and other unquantifiable social return. Stringent project management measures should also be taken to ensure project delivery in line with the original schedule and budget. In addition, the Government should consider how these development projects could generate social and economic benefits, and tap into the opportunities arising from these projects to create more possibilities and improve people’s living environment. For example, the Government can capitalise on the implementation of major development projects to plan comprehensively for the community and upgrade transport infrastructure in the district and the nearby area. These major developments

may also provide a window for replanning to rationalise existing land uses, improve the environment and provide more community facilities serving local needs, thereby optimising the use of public money and creating more value.

Task Force's Recommendations on Short-to-Medium Term Options

5.9 In considering ways to increase land supply, the Task Force considers that the land shortage problem is pressing and is particularly mindful of the gravity in the short-to-medium term; the shortage of land in this period amounts to at least 815 ha, which accounts for over 60% of the total shortage of at least 1 200 ha. Among the 18 land supply options, only four can provide additional land in the short-to-medium term. In fact, even if all of the four options are implemented, the land so created would not be sufficient to eradicate the land shortage problem. Therefore, **the Task Force's basic position is that no option should be given up lightly, especially those which have the potential to provide land in the short-to-medium term, unless there are strong justifications.**

5.10 On the basis of the above and having examined the public views on the four short-to-medium term options collected during the PE, **the Task Force recommends that the Government accord priority to studying and implementing three of the short-to-medium term options, namely, "Developing Brownfield Sites", "Tapping into Private Agricultural Land Reserve in the New Territories" and "Alternative Uses of Sites under Private Recreational Leases".** The Task Force will set out the basic facts concerning these options, give a summary of the public views and elaborate on the overall considerations and recommendations of the Task Force in the ensuing paragraphs. The option of "Relocation or consolidation of land-extensive recreational facilities" will be discussed in Chapter 6.

Developing Brownfield Sites

5.11 The term “Brownfield” is defined differently in various places in the world. In Hong Kong, the term generally refers to former agricultural land in the NT which has been converted to other uses due to the decline of farming activities. Brownfield sites are not idle; most are used for economic activities which are essential to our city but cannot find suitable spaces in urban areas, such as open storage, port back-up facilities (including container lorry parks and container yards), logistics operations, vehicle parking, vehicle repair workshops, recycling yards, rural workshops and storage areas for construction machinery and materials.

5.12 Currently there are about 1 300 ha of brownfield sites in the NT; most are privately owned. NDA projects under planning and implementation by the Government, including those in Kwu Tung North/Fanling North (KTN/FLN), Hung Shui Kiu (HSK), Yuen Long South (YLS), etc. will cover about 340 ha of brownfield sites in total; another 200 ha fall within the New Territories North (NTN) strategic growth area. The remaining 760 ha of brownfield sites are scattered in different parts of the rural NT, such as Ping Shan, Wang Chau, Kam Tin, Pat Heung, Shek Kong, Ngau Tam Mei, San Tin and Lung Kwu Tan¹⁸. These brownfield sites are scattered in different areas, vary in size and are of irregular shape. In the absence of comprehensive planning of these land parcels, brownfield sites often intermingle with villages, squatters, active or fallow farmland and fish ponds. They also lack infrastructure facilities needed to support high-density development such as roads and sewerage. Developing brownfield sites requires land resumption and clearance; the existing brownfield operators affected have requested for reprovisioning arrangements from time to time.

5.13 Despite their scattered distribution across the NT, brownfield sites which amount to over 1 000 ha in total are generally regarded as an option with the potential to increase land supply in both short-to-medium term and medium-to-long term. The development potential of brownfield sites other than the 340 ha mentioned above

¹⁸ Please see Chapter 5.1 of the PE Booklet (page 37) for distribution of brownfield sites.

can only be determined by further studies. The Task Force notes that the Government is conducting two studies related to brownfield sites; one is on the existing profile and operations of brownfield sites in the NT and the other on the financial and technical feasibility of accommodating brownfield operations in multi-storey buildings (MSBs). The two studies are expected to be completed shortly.

Summary of Public Views

5.14 In terms of **quantitative analysis**, the respective percentages of support for developing brownfield sites as reflected from the results of our questionnaires and telephone survey are shown in the following table:

	All responses	Responses which could meet the shortfall of at least 1 200 ha of land
Questionnaires	87%	91%
Telephone survey	79%	83%

(Figure 1 on page 25)

5.15 In terms of **qualitative analysis**, most citizens and concern groups support developing brownfield sites. Quite a number of them consider that brownfield sites are mostly found in developed areas and hence can be released as soon as possible for housing and other uses. Moreover, through comprehensive planning, the development of brownfield sites can rationalise land uses in rural NT and halt the continual damage on the environment inflicted by certain brownfield operations. As such, many people agree with the propositions of “brownfields first” and “brown before green”. Those who oppose brownfield development or have reservations are mostly brownfield operators or stakeholders engaged in brownfield-related industries (e.g. logistics). Their primary concern is whether there will be proper accommodation or alternative arrangements after the resumption of brownfield sites, such that operators may continue with their operations and make a living. As for the suggestion that brownfield operations may be consolidated and accommodated in MSBs, stakeholders wonder if

all brownfield operations can operate in MSBs; they are also concerned about the much higher rents in the future as compared to ordinary brownfield sites. Some ask the Government to provide financial support to affected brownfield operators to enable them to remain in business. In addition, some note that developing brownfield sites is full of difficulties: issues such as resumption of private land and dealing with active economic operations during the process entail uncertainties and may render the option incapable of releasing large quantities of land for other uses in the short term; hence, it is not advisable to take this option as the only option or a must.

Task Force's Overall Considerations and Recommendations

5.16 According to the views collected from various channels, **developing brownfield sites is widely supported by society**. The Task Force agrees that developing brownfield sites will bring benefits on various aspects. Besides releasing disturbed agricultural land with little chance of rehabilitation for housing and other uses, developing brownfield sites can achieve the dual objectives of rationalising land uses in the NT and improving rural environs at the same time. Therefore, the Task Force considers that developing brownfield sites should be a **priority option for implementation** by the Government.

5.17 While developing brownfield sites may be an expected choice to most, the Task Force notes that **its success hinges on whether its implementation can be done swiftly and whether the problems and uncertainties during the development process can be resolved**. As mentioned above, major development projects in the NT under active planning and implementation by the Government already cover about 340 ha of brownfield sites in total. On the 200 ha or so of brownfield sites in NTN, as well as the remaining 760 ha scattered all over the rural districts, the Government should devise a strategy soon, with a view to developing about 110 ha and 220 ha of brownfield sites in the short-to-medium term (i.e. within the next 10 years) and medium-to-long term (i.e. within the next 10 to 30 years) respectively as a target. In taking forward brownfield development, the Task Force reckons that the Government should focus on the

following issues -

- 5.17.1 Devising a comprehensive policy on the development of brownfield sites in the NT, with the following underpinning principles: (i) giving priority to developing brownfield sites with potential for housing or other uses; (ii) retaining brownfield operations which conform with the law to support local industries, while enhancing land use efficiency of brownfield sites by improved planning and supporting facilities; (iii) rehabilitating brownfield sites at or near ecologically sensitive areas if possible, and avoiding high-density developments on such brownfield sites; and (iv) while developing brownfield sites, the Government should tighten regulatory and law enforcement efforts to prevent the proliferation of brownfield operations into areas of incompatible zonings, and remove and combat illegal or non-compliant brownfield uses as soon as possible;
 - 5.17.2 Ascertaining as soon as possible the development potential and feasibility of about 200 ha of brownfield sites in NTN;
 - 5.17.3 Identifying as soon as possible land parcels with development potential among the remaining 760 ha of brownfield sites not yet included in current planning and development projects, with priority given to developing larger and more concentrated clusters of brownfield sites; and
 - 5.17.4 Giving priority to expediting the development of brownfield sites close to existing planned NDAs and transport infrastructure (e.g. railways and major roads), and considering appropriate enhancement of infrastructure close to such land parcels (e.g. constructing or widening existing roads) to facilitate higher-density developments on these brownfields.
- 5.18 While developing brownfield sites is generally supported by the public, the Task Force notes that the challenges and difficulties involved are less discussed in the community. **To unleash the potential of brownfield sites, the Task Force considers that the**

concerns of brownfield operators must be handled properly, or else, brownfield development can hardly proceed. For example, the planning of KTN/FLN NDAs which involve some 50 ha of brownfield sites was reactivated in 2008, but a decade has passed and large-scale land resumption, pending funding application for the main works, has yet to start formally. For such development projects involving existing developed land such as brownfield sites, the affected stakeholders often demand monetary compensation as well as re-provisioning arrangements, and addressing these requests is no easy task. The Task Force notes that requests raised by brownfield operators primarily focus on two aspects, namely alternative operating space and financial support. As regards **operating space**, the MSB model currently studied by the Government should be able to accommodate some brownfield operations and facilitate certain operators to run in a more land-efficient manner and transform into businesses with higher add-value; but rents of MSBs will be much higher than those of the average brownfield site. The generally low rents for brownfield sites at present reflects the value of agricultural land lacking planning and supporting facilities; it has been one of the main reasons leading to the emergence of brownfield operations. Resuming brownfield sites for other developments will inevitably drive up the operating costs for brownfield operators significantly and displace those less competitive ones.

5.19 As to whether the Government should provide **financial support** to brownfield operators, the Task Force notes that the Government has an established mechanism to exercise statutory power to resume private land (including brownfield sites) for public purposes; eligible business operators affected by government development projects and required to relocate may receive compensation and ex-gratia allowances (EGAs) in accordance with existing policies. In response to concerns of brownfield operators affected by clearances, the Government has introduced a new EGA to eligible open-air/outdoor business undertakings¹⁹ as an alternative to the making of statutory claims. The Task Force is of the view that brownfield operations are commercial ventures and therefore the

¹⁹ See pages 7-8, Enclosure 1, <https://www.legco.gov.hk/yr17-18/english/fc/fc/papers/f18-48e.pdf>.

Government should carefully consider the justifications and principles for subsidising business operations with public money as it explores ways to enhance existing measures and handle requests for relocation or compensation from brownfield operators affected by development projects in the future.

5.20 In conclusion, developing brownfield sites is conducive to realising the considerable land potential in the short-to-medium and medium-to-long terms; the process of re-planning can also rationalise incompatible rural land uses and improve the environment. The two studies on brownfield distribution and accommodating brownfield operations in MSBs mentioned above, which will be completed by the Government soon, should help the Government identify clusters of brownfield sites with potential for priority development and devise proposals on alternative operating space. However, the potential and pace for developing brownfield sites depends on whether the supporting infrastructures are in place and how to properly handle the affected brownfield operations; these factors will constrain, to a certain extent, the full-scale development of such sites. **In other words, even though developing brownfield sites is strongly backed by the public, it is not an easy option nor one with guaranteed success. As such, while endeavouring to press ahead with brownfield development, it is imperative for the Government to continue with its multi-pronged approach to pursue other land supply options.**

5.21 The Task Force notes that, besides the two ongoing brownfield studies being conducted by the Government, the Chief Executive, in her 2018 Policy Address, asked the Development Bureau to co-ordinate among relevant departments to advance the study on developing brownfield sites in NTN, and to initiate a study on the remaining 760 ha of scattered brownfield sites to identify those with greater development potential. The Task Force hopes that the Government will complete these studies as soon as possible and report the results and follow-up work to the public, so as to address the public aspirations for further development of such sites.

Tapping into Private Agricultural Land Reserve in the New Territories

5.22 According to information available in the public domain and rough estimates, major developers are believed to be holding no less than 1 000 ha of agricultural land in the NT²⁰. Land resources of this scale, if utilised properly, would have a major positive impact on Hong Kong's housing supply.

5.23 At present, there are two main approaches to unlocking the potential of private agricultural land in the NT. The first one is through Government's statutory resumption of land under the Land Resumption Ordinance (Cap. 124) (LRO) after establishing a "public purpose", as in the case of taking forward the NDA or other public works projects. The second approach is market-driven, under which developers seek to change the use of agricultural land they own (for example, to residential use) through planning applications to Town Planning Board (TPB) and through lease modifications or land exchange applications to the Government, so as to enhance the site's development potential. In some cases, planning applications by developers have been unsuccessful mainly due to land use incompatibility or inadequate infrastructural capacity. For those cases which obtained planning permission, the scale of development in terms of plot ratio is relatively low, resulting in under-utilisation of the site involved. For example, in the past five years, the TPB processed over 20 planning applications for private housing development involving about 40 ha of NT land, with only seven applications (involving about 18 ha of land) approved. It is estimated that these projects will provide about 2 800 private residential units; the development density is low. Among the seven approved cases, land owners of only a few cases have submitted land exchange applications to the Lands Department (LandsD).

5.24 In light of these, the Task Force proposes that while continuing the practice of invoking the LRO to resume private land for

²⁰ The Government has yet to analyse the exact distribution of such agricultural land, but the Task Force believes that some may overlap with NDAs or brownfield sites; therefore the potential new land supply may be lower than this figure.

developments where the “public purpose” can be established, the community can explore whether and how a public-private partnership (PPP) approach should be adopted to better realise the development potential of private land, in particular agricultural land in the NT, so as to bring greater social benefits. Examples include whether the Government should provide infrastructural facilities on the periphery of private land to facilitate higher-density development, as well as request private developers to provide affordable subsidised housing on their land, in addition to private residential flats, to meet the housing needs of the public.

Summary of Public Views

5.25 In terms of **quantitative analysis**, the respective percentages of support for tapping into private agricultural land reserve in the NT as reflected from the results of our questionnaires and telephone survey are shown in the following table:

	All responses	Responses which could meet the shortfall of at least 1 200 ha of land
Questionnaires	68%	79%
Telephone Survey	61%	68%

(Figure 1 on page 25)

5.26 In terms of **qualitative analysis**, the majority view supports developing agricultural land in the NT for housing developments. However, views differ on how to release the land. Some support the introduction of an open, fair and transparent PPP mechanism, under which the Government provides infrastructural facilities to facilitate higher-density development in the whole area; others suggest setting benchmarks for the quantity of public housing to be provided by private developers under PPP projects²¹, with the overall principle being that the investment of public money should correspond with the social gain (including the quantity of public housing provided on private land). In addition, there are views

²¹ Some suggest a minimum percentage of 50% for public housing, while some others call for a percentage of 60-70%.

saying that the PPP mechanism should allow all developers or individual land owners to apply to spur competition, and that applications should be vetted by an independent organisation.

5.27 On the other hand, quite a number of views oppose any form of PPP and emphasise that the current regime of resuming private land under the LRO for public purposes is effective; hence there is no need to complicate the situation by creating a new arrangement to replace the statutory land resumption mechanism. There are also suspicions of collusion between the Government and businesses over transfer of benefits through PPP. Some also suggest that land development should be led by planning and infrastructure provision; it should be the Government, instead of developers, taking the lead in this regard.

5.28 Others suggest going beyond the existing framework by adopting different approaches and methods to resume NT agricultural land from private owners, in order to unleash land potential sooner and consolidate such potential better to allow continuous development. These suggestions involve challenges on environmental, technical and financial aspects, as well as legal and political risks, which the Government should study carefully and take note of.

Task Force's Overall Considerations and Recommendations

5.29 As the Task Force has repeatedly emphasised in the PE Booklet and throughout the PE exercise, **the proposed PPP mechanism does not contradict the LRO, and there is no question of substituting the latter with the former or the Government relinquishing its public authority.** In fact, the Government has been resuming private land under the LRO for public purposes, including new town developments, public housing, infrastructural and community facilities such as roads, schools, parks, hospitals and welfare service complexes. The Government estimates that a total of about 500 ha of private land within the boundary of several large-scale land development projects will be resumed in the coming years, including Wang Chau Development Phase 1, KTN/FLN NDAs and the HSK NDA.

5.30 However, when triggering the LRO to resume private land, the Government is subject to legal constraints: before proceeding with such a move the Government is required to establish the “public purpose” for the proposed land to be resumed. It is not contentious to resume private land under LRO if the resumed land is to be used solely for public rental housing. However, society’s housing demand is not limited to public rental housing, and using all the land to develop public rental housing does not accord with the principle of good planning either. If land is resumed for comprehensive planning and development under the NDA or new town models, a longer lead time is required and thus land supply cannot be boosted in the short-to-medium run. Besides, such an approach will bring large additional population to the NT and create multi-faceted problems (e.g. overloading the transport infrastructures). For private land not yet covered by the Government’s planning and development schemes, **the PPP model can be a tool for optimising land resources, and is in line with the multi-pronged approach to increase land supply. Accordingly, the Task Force recommends the Government to formulate a detailed mechanism for PPP to realise the potential of private land in the NT as soon as possible.**

5.31 The Task Force recognises that without a substantive implementation framework, some people may have concerns about developing the private land through the proposed PPP model. Therefore, the Task Force considers that the Government should introduce **an open, fair and transparent PPP mechanism** to vet all applications submitted through open channels according to objective and consistent criteria; and an institution independent from the Government should perform the role of gate-keeping in the process to address public concerns over collusion between the Government and businesses. To expedite the implementation of PPP in order to increase land and housing supply in the short-to-medium term, the Task Force is of the view that, as long as the principles of openness, fairness and transparency are met, it may not be necessary for the Government to establish a new statutory body to handle PPP matters. However, to increase credibility of the mechanism, the Government should ensure that the gate-keeping institution is sufficiently representative and transparent. In addition, all currently applicable statutory procedures and land administration regimes, including submitting planning applications for approval, and land lease

modification and land premium payment, shall remain valid.

- 5.32 The Task Force is of the view that, as an essential element of PPP, the Government should ensure that public resources are invested to derive the greatest interest for the community. Given that the above-mentioned framework aims at releasing private land to expedite land and housing developments, and that the short-to-medium term supply of public housing unit is strained, there is strong public aspiration for the PPP mechanism to favour public housing. Therefore, **it is advisable for the Government to set specific benchmarks for the proportion of public housing in PPP projects, with the benefits accrued to the community being no less than the amount of public money invested by the Government in infrastructural upgrading for the subject projects, so as to accentuate the public interest under the PPP.**
- 5.33 Moreover, the Task Force considers it inappropriate for the Government to include agricultural land at ecologically sensitive areas or water catchment areas in PPP projects to avoid damaging or polluting the environment and ecology of such areas.
- 5.34 In the medium-to-long term, based on an open, fair and transparent PPP mechanism broadly accepted by the community, we can consolidate the practical experience gained in the short-to-medium term. This will facilitate continued release of more agricultural land in the NT to meet future demand for housing or land flexibly.
- 5.35 The Task Force notes that the Chief Executive proposed the Land Sharing Pilot Scheme (LSPS) in her 2018 Policy Address and asked the Secretary for Development to formulate a set of fair and transparent feasible arrangements for the LSPS along a number of principles²², so as to realise earlier, and make better use of, private land not covered by Government's planned development; this will meet the needs of both public and private housing in the short-to-medium term. The Task Force also notes that the Government will launch the LSPS in 2019 after making reference to this report.

²² For details, please refer to paragraphs 69 to 70 of the 2018 Policy Address.

Alternative Uses of Sites under Private Recreational Leases

- 5.36 At present, there are a total of 66 Private Recreational Lease (PRL) sites in Hong Kong, which occupy around 408 ha of land in total. Of these, 39 sites involving about 67 ha have been granted to social and welfare organisations, uniformed groups, national sports associations, district sports associations and civil service organisations. These 39 sites are operated in a “quasi-public” nature. The remaining 27 PRL sites, which occupy a total area of about 341 ha, are held by private sports clubs.
- 5.37 In balancing the contributions of individual sites towards sports development and the need to increase land supply, the Task Force suggested the community consider whether individual PRL sites could be released for other purposes. The Task Force has cited one of the sites, the Fanling Golf Course (FGC), the largest of the PRL sites, to illustrate the factors to be considered when developing PRL sites for other purposes, as well as the potential benefits and limitations of developments.
- 5.38 FGC has an area of 172 ha and its current lease will expire in 2020. Having conducted a broad assessment on the development potential of the site from a technical perspective, the consultant appointed by the Government put forward two development options for the site, namely the partial development option and the full development option. The partial development option involves development of the 32 ha of land to the east of Fan Kam Road (i.e. eight holes of the Old Course and the carpark of the golf club). Through limited upgrading of infrastructure including road interchange, sewerage, drainage and water supply, this option could provide land for housing development in the short-to-medium term, with an estimated flat yield of 4 600, while the remaining 140 ha (comprising two 18-hole courses and 10 holes of the Old Course) can still support the hosting of international golf tournaments. The full development option involves releasing the entire FGC site for housing purposes. The flat production under this option is estimated to be 13 000. Since substantial improvement to the strategic transport network and infrastructure is necessary, the government-appointed consultant has assumed that the full

development option would be taken forward together with the proposed NTN development, so it could only be a medium-to-long term land supply option.

Summary of Public Views

5.39 In terms of **quantitative analysis**, the respective percentage of support for alternative uses of sites under PRL as reflected from the results of our questionnaires and telephone survey are shown in the following table:

	All responses	Responses which could meet the land shortfall of at least 1 200 ha
Questionnaires	54%	54%
Telephone Survey	61%	62%

(Figure 1 on page 25)

5.40 In terms of **qualitative analysis**, most views are related to whether FGC should be resumed for other developments particularly housing; notably fewer people have expressed views on other PRL sites. Views on FGC are polarised, with resumption of entire FGC site on one extreme and opposition to resumption on the other.

5.41 Main arguments for resumption of FGC site are as follows –

5.41.1 In view of the existing shortage of housing land and that the FGC is close to existing transport infrastructure and developed areas, resumption of FGC site would release, within a short timeframe, a large piece of land for housing development, in particular public housing;

5.41.2 FGC is located on government land and the existing lease will expire in 2020. Comparing with other options involving private land, it would be a faster way to release FGC site for other developments; and

5.41.3 The demand for land remains strong, and PRL sites benefit only certain groups or sectors of the community. In view

of the shortage of land supply, the community's overall interest should override other considerations.

5.42 Main arguments against resumption of FGC site are as follows —

5.42.1 As the only venue in Hong Kong suitable for hosting large-scale international golf tournaments, FGC has been holding the Hong Kong Open annually since 1959. FGC is also the major training ground for local elite and young golfers, rendering great contributions towards Hong Kong's sports development and image as an international city;

5.42.2 There are trees, including potential old and valuable trees and protected species, as well as historical buildings, graves and urns scattered throughout FGC. Development of the site would adversely affect the trees, ecology, heritage and natural landscape therein. Moreover, the existing roads outside the site are narrow, and resumption of the site for high-density housing developments might overload the transport infrastructure of the entire North District of NT; and

5.42.3 The full development option involves significant infrastructural improvements, including widening of Fan Kam Road. Improvements and alterations of existing infrastructure take time to complete. Even if the site is resumed immediately, it would be difficult to release land for housing development in the near future.

5.43 Besides, some argue that the leisure and recreational functions of FGC should be retained with extended opening hours for public use to benefit more people. However, this is more a matter of PRL venue management and would not increase land supply per se.

Task Force's Overall Considerations and Recommendations

5.44 Uses of PRL sites are not only a land supply matter, but also touch upon policy areas concerning sports, recreation, ecological conservation, as well as the issue of whether the PRL sites should

be opened up further to the public. The Task Force has formulated its recommendations to the Government mainly from the perspective of increasing land supply.

5.45 Given the land area, lease expiry date and other factors, FGC has naturally become the centre of discussion among PRL sites. As mentioned above, public views are polarised and various sectors have put forth different viewpoints and arguments as to whether the FGC site should be resumed or retained.

5.46 Views collected during the PE show that many people support resumption of FGC site for alternative uses, particularly housing development. However, those from the sports and the business sectors point out that FGC, as the only venue in Hong Kong suitable for hosting large-scale international golf tournaments, is unique and important, and that the ecology, heritage conservation and landscape values of the site should not be simply neglected or denied. This option highlights the difficulties in balancing different development needs under the constraints of land shortage.

5.47 After considering the above views, **the Task Force considers that as far as the option of alternative uses of PRL sites is concerned, it is worthwhile for the Government to accord priority to studying and resuming the 32 ha of land of FGC to the east of Fan Kam Road under the partial option** for the following reasons –

5.47.1 The partial development option could in the short-to-medium term release 32 ha of government land adjacent to existing infrastructure and transport networks, thereby alleviating the acute shortage of land in the short-to-medium term;

5.47.2 It is believed that, under the partial option, the remaining 140 ha in the golf course could still support the hosting of international golf tournaments and training of golfers, thus balancing the needs for land and sports development and addressing the concerns in relation to the impact of resumption of the site on the image of Hong Kong as an international city; and

- 5.47.3 As compared to the full development option, any high-density development under the partial development option would be concentrated in the area currently used mainly as the car park of the Old Course. Such arrangement would have less impact on the ecology and conservation of the FGC site.
- 5.48 The Task Force recognises the general view in the community that if the FGC site is to be resumed, the land released should be used for public housing. Some also suggest that the development intensity and flat yield should be further increased for better site utilisation, whether it is under the partial development or the full development option. On the other hand, some argue that high-density public housing development at the site could only cater for certain needs, but the damages to the old trees and the precious ecology nurtured naturally around them over the years would be irreversible. It would also be a loss to society. Thus they say that, if the site is to be resumed under the partial development option, the existing landscape as well as the leisure and recreational functions of the site could be retained for public enjoyment. The Task Force is of the view that, should the partial development option be adopted, the Government should carefully consider and balance these views in the detailed preliminary studies (including technical and environmental impact assessments) and the planning stage in order to achieve the greatest benefits to society.
- 5.49 As to **whether the remaining 140 ha of land of FGC site should be further released for other developments in the longer run, the Task Force believes that the Government should consider identifying a suitable site to relocate the golf course, the lead time for relocation, impact on the ecology and conservation values of the site, as well as the necessary ancillary infrastructure to support other developments.** On the other hand, there are more options for increasing land supply in the medium-to-long term which can provide more land and planning flexibility than those in the short-to-medium term. When studying the feasibility, potential and pros and cons of different options, the Government should, based on objective data and scientific analyses, examine comprehensively the area of land to be provided under

each option, the constraints and lead time in development, land use compatibility and effectiveness, etc., and set priority for implementation of individual projects accordingly.

5.50 The Task Force acknowledges that the 67 ha of land occupied by the 39 sites held by social and welfare organisations and uniformed groups appear to have little development potential, as they are mostly located in the NT or rural areas and are fairly small in size. As for the 27 sites held by private sports club, after discounting the FGC site, the remaining 26 sites occupy a total area of 170 ha; some are located in urban areas. Most of these PRLs will expire in or after 2026. As mentioned above, discussion over PRL sites also touches upon sports policy and other subjects. In this regard, the public consultation on PRL policy conducted by the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) was concluded in mid-September 2018, and the Task Force notes that, upon receiving the recommendations of the Task Force, the Government will, taking into account the outcome of the policy review by HAB, consider the future use of individual PRL sites, including FGC, in a holistic manner.

Task Force's Recommendations on Medium-to-Long Term Options

- 5.51 There will be many hurdles to overcome, in terms of environment, technical, engineering and implementation, before the development scale and timeframe of the medium-to-long term options can be determined. There will also be uncertainties along the way. **To ensure a steady stream of land supply in the medium-to-long term, the Government should initiate studies and planning of various options immediately in order to meet the different land demands at different times in future.**
- 5.52 On the basis of the above and having examined the public views on the medium-to-long term options collected during the PE, **the Task Force recommends that the Government accord priority to studying and implementing five of the medium-to-long term options, namely “Near-shore Reclamation Outside Victoria Harbour”, “Developing the East Lantau Metropolis”, “Developing Caverns and Underground Space”, “More New Development Areas in the New Territories” and “Developing the River Trade Terminal Site”²³.** The Task Force will set out the basic facts concerning these options, give a summary of the public views and elaborate on the overall considerations and recommendations of the Task Force in the ensuing paragraphs. The option of “Developing Two Pilot Areas on the Periphery of Country Parks” will be discussed in Chapter 6.

²³ The discussion will also cover the conceptual option of “Developing the River Trade Terminal Site and its Surroundings in the Long Term”.

Near-shore Reclamation outside Victoria Harbour

5.53 Reclamation has long been a major source of land supply for Hong Kong in its transformation from a fishing village to an international city. Between 1985 and 2000, Hong Kong created over 3 000 ha of land through reclamation, i.e. an average of about 200 ha per annum. Over the 15-year period between 2001 and 2015, however, land created through reclamation (mainly in relation to infrastructure development) decreased to only about 690 ha, an average of some 40 ha per annum. This is a major reason for the drastic decline in land supply in recent years. The 650 ha of land being created through reclamation for the Three-Runway System project of the Hong Kong International Airport, and the 130-ha reclamation for the Tung Chung New Town Extension (TCNTE) commenced in end-2017, are already the largest reclamation projects for land creation and housing development in recent years.

5.54 Between 2011 and 2014, the Government conducted a study entitled “Enhancing Land Supply Strategy – Reclamation outside Victoria Harbour and Rock Cavern Development” (ELSS) to identify potential reclamation sites, covering a two-stage public engagement (PE) exercise. According to the results of the Stage 1 PE and broad technical assessments including environmental assessments, the Government has selected five near-shore reclamation locations at Lung Kwu Tan in Tuen Mun, Siu Ho Wan and Sunny Bay in North Lantau, Ma Liu Shui in Sha Tin, and Tsing Yi Southwest²⁴, for further discussion by the public in the Stage 2 PE. The proposed reclamation areas and their uses are as follows -

²⁴ Besides the five near-shore reclamation locations, another proposed reclamation location is the Central Waters between Lantau and Hong Kong Island; this will be elaborated in the chapter of “Developing the East Lantau Metropolis”.

Location	Preliminary proposed reclamation area (ha)	Preliminary proposed uses
Lung Kwu Tan in Tuen Mun	220 – 250	Industrial and other uses, including special industries
Siu Ho Wan in North Lantau	60 – 80	Residential and education facilities
Sunny Bay in North Lantau	60 – 100	Leisure, sports, recreation, entertainment and tourism
Ma Liu Shui in Sha Tin	60	High technology and knowledge-based industries, housing and other uses
Tsing Yi Southwest	Subject to review	Subject to review

Summary of Public Views

5.55 In terms of **quantitative analysis**, the respective percentages of support for near-shore reclamation outside Victoria Harbour as reflected from the results of our questionnaires and telephone survey are shown in the following table:

	All responses	Responses which could meet the land shortfall of at least 1 200 ha
Questionnaires	49%	58%
Telephone survey	61%	68%

(Figure 2 on page 26)

5.56 In terms of **qualitative analysis**, a considerable number of members of the public, grassroots representatives, businesses and professional sectors support near-shore reclamation outside Victoria Harbour. Their main reasons are that reclamation can provide a sizeable piece of new land for comprehensive planning and does not usually involve resumption of private land nor many rehousing and compensation issues. Also, reclamation would not affect existing land uses and thus allow better control. Whilst reclamation is not

an instant solution to our burning issues, society in general agrees that the land shortage today is, to a great extent, attributable to the lack of major reclamation projects in Hong Kong over the past decade or so. It would be difficult to break the current stalemate if we do not commence related studies and resume reclamation as soon as possible. In addition, creating land through reclamation will help develop a land reserve for Hong Kong. Quite a number of professional bodies and practitioners consider that, with Hong Kong's wealth of experience in creating land through reclamation and the advance in reclamation technology nowadays, the impact to the environment can be minimised by necessary mitigation and compensation measures. The lead time for reclamation works can also be shortened by applying modern technology. There are views that near-shore reclamation has cost advantages over off-shore reclamation in that lower costs would be required for infrastructures. On the other hand, some groups and individuals supporting reclamation have suggested locations other than the five proposed sites, including Tolo Harbour, Tseung Kwan O, Sai Kung and Tuen Mun (including Castle Peak Bay); there are also calls for exploring reclamation within Victoria Harbour, Southern District and the outlying islands.

5.57 The opposing views can be grouped into two broad categories. The first group comes mostly from online signature campaigns initiated by green groups. Their viewpoints are that reclamation will irreversibly damage the environment and maritime ecology. Compared to other feasible options targeting existing developed land such as brownfields, reclamation should be a last resort. Some doubt the effectiveness of reclamation as a solution to the problem of land shortage since reclamation takes time. There are also views that only the sites at Ma Liu Shui and Siu Ho Wan, amongst the five proposed near-shore reclamation locations, can be used for residential developments, meaning that the reclaimed land cannot help solve the shortage of housing land at all. The other group of opposing views focuses on individual reclamation locations; the Ma Liu Shui project attracts more vocal opposition from mainly local communities in Sha Tin and Ma On Shan. The residents are particularly concerned about the insufficient carrying capacity of the district's transport infrastructure to cater for the additional population brought about by reclamation, as well as the adverse

environmental impact on water flow, sea level and climate. The neighborhoods near Lung Kwu Tan reclamation, including residents of Lung Kwu Tan Village, oppose the project. They consider that obnoxious facilities in the area such as landfill, sludge incinerator and special industries have already led to deterioration in air quality and affected the health of residents. Therefore, there should be no more reclamation in the area that provides industrial sites, so as to prevent an additional burden on existing transport infrastructures and further worsening of the natural and rural environment of the Lung Kwu Tan area.

5.58 Fishermen groups and representatives also express grave concerns over reclamation. They say that the fishery sector has been struggling for its survival in recent years due to the frequent maritime projects and development of marine parks that limit the sector's growth. Hence, the Government should carefully consider the impact on the development of the fishery industry when it takes forward reclamation projects; fishermen should receive reasonable compensation in such cases. For example, the loss of fishing grounds or waters due to reclamation should be compensated by the same amount of area. In addition, from the angle of fishery policy, the Government should devise suitable measures to ensure the sustainable development of the fishery industry, such as facilitating development of aquaculture and promoting leisure fishing.

Task Force's Overall Considerations and Recommendations

5.59 Near-shore reclamation is not new to Hong Kong, and has been an established and proven way to provide land for our city. At present, about 7 000 ha of land in Hong Kong was formed by reclamation, representing 25% of the developed area or about 6% of Hong Kong's total land area. The reclaimed land is accommodating about 27% of Hong Kong's total population and 70% of our commercial activities. Among the nine existing new towns in Hong Kong, six were built on reclaimed land. Reclamation not only provides large land parcels for residential and commercial uses; it is also a major source of land to support transport infrastructure and other major facilities, including the Hong Kong International Airport, the cross-boundary facilities of Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao

Bridge and the West Kowloon Cultural District. The community at large has a fair understanding and experience with near-shore reclamation; thus many of the general public support the implementation of more near-shore reclamation projects.

5.60 New land formed by reclamation offers greater flexibility for planning that allows the Government to review the different demands for land from a macro perspective and hence facilitate comprehensive planning. Among the 18 land supply options and those land supply suggestions from the community, basically only the reclamation-related options (including near-shore reclamation outside Victoria Harbour and developing the East Lantau Metropolis) can provide additional land, instead of changing existing land uses or increasing density to meet the requirements. As such, **reclamation can help put an end to the current land supply stalemate of “zero-sum game”. Since the reclaimed land will be under Government’s ownership, it would give the Government full control in the supply and usage of land that would eradicate the land supply problem in due course. Therefore, the Task Force supports in principle the five proposed near-shore reclamation projects.**

5.61 Indeed, the public is mostly concerned about shortage of housing land; not all of the five proposed locations for near-shore reclamation are suitable for housing development. Nonetheless, the land shortage that Hong Kong is facing not only concerns housing but also space for economic and community facilities. Even if the land formed through certain near-shore reclamation projects is less suitable for housing development due to its remote location or incompatibility with nearby land uses, this reclaimed land can provide extra room to consolidate or relocate non-residential facilities in other areas, so as to vacate those developed land for housing or other purposes. The Lung Kwu Tan reclamation is a case in point: although the proposed location might not be suitable for large-scale housing, the land formed by reclamation can be used for accommodating industries, special industries and more regularised brownfield operations in Tuen Mun West and other areas, thereby realising the potential of those areas for housing and other developments.

5.62 The Task Force understands the grave concerns expressed by the green groups, certain neighbourhoods and members of the public on the impact of reclamation on the environment. As mentioned in Chapter 1 and this chapter of the report, while the Government should pay heed to the key principle of sustainable development when pursuing development proposals, environmental conservation and development are not in opposition. Public concerns over the environment and ecology are not confined to reclamation alone. The Government should handle such views proactively; a major task is to provide sound data and scientific analyses to explain to the public the pros and cons and the specific proposals of individual sites. Modern reclamation technology might also relieve the impact on the environment by minimising the environmental pollution caused by the removal of seabed sludge. Artificial “eco-shoreline”, where feasible, can also enhance the biodiversity in affected area.

5.63 As for near-shore reclamation, **the Government should carry out thorough preliminary studies and planning, as well as conduct environmental impact assessment according to the statutory mechanism. Appropriate measures should be devised to mitigate the impact of reclamation works on the environment and ecology.** The Government should also critically consider the views of other stakeholders (including fishermen groups) and make appropriate responses and compensation, so that a balance between the overall quest for increasing land supply and the concerns of individual stakeholders can be struck to serve the best interests of society.

5.64 One of the advantages of near-shore reclamation is better cost efficiency by utilising and increasing, as appropriate, the capacities of existing community facilities and infrastructure. However, the closer a reclamation site is to an existing community, the stronger the reaction is from local residents over the near-shore reclamation project. The Task Force considers that, when making plans on the overall strategy and programme for individual near-shore reclamation projects, the Government should **provide more information and analyses to address the concerns directly relevant to local residents, especially those relating to whether the carrying capacity of existing transportation infrastructure is**

sufficient, with the aid of feasibility and planning studies. As part of the land supply strategy in the medium-to-long term, the Government should also continue to explore, with a scientific and fact-based approach, other locations of near-shore reclamation suggested by certain members of the public.

Developing the East Lantau Metropolis

- 5.65 As mentioned in the section of “Near-shore Reclamation Outside Victoria Harbour”, between 2011 and 2014, the Government conducted the ELSS study to identify potential reclamation sites. Apart from the five near-shore sites, the study also proposed development of artificial islands in the Central Waters between Lantau and Hong Kong Island. Subsequently, “Hong Kong 2030+” proposed constructing artificial islands in the Central Waters (near Kau Yi Chau and Hei Ling Chau) for the development of “East Lantau Metropolis” (ELM) as one of the strategic growth areas to promote the long-term development of Hong Kong.
- 5.66 It is estimated that the ELM could provide about 1 000 ha of land, which could support the development of a new town and the third Central Business District (CBD) of Hong Kong, accommodating a population of 400 000 to 700 000 and providing 200 000 job opportunities. The ELM would adopt innovative urban planning and design concepts to build a smart, liveable and low-carbon community. In addition, through the construction of new strategic transport infrastructure (including the Northwest New Territories (NWNT)-Lantau-Metro Transport Corridor), the ELM would improve connectivity between the urban area, Lantau and NT West, and provide an alternative transport link to the Hong Kong International Airport.
- 5.67 Based on the development parameters of the ELM artificial islands proposed under Hong Kong 2030+, the Task Force consulted the public on the ELM as one of the medium-to-long term land supply options.

Summary of Public Views

- 5.68 In terms of **quantitative analysis**, the respective percentage of support for the development of ELM as reflected from the results of our questionnaires and telephone survey are shown in the following table:

	All responses	Responses which could meet the land shortfall of at least 1 200 ha
Questionnaires	62%	78%
Telephone Survey	58%	68%

(Figure 2 on page 26)

5.69 In terms of **qualitative analysis**, since the development of the ELM is essentially a large-scale reclamation project, many views on this option are similar to those in relation to “Near-shore Reclamation Outside Victoria Harbour”, and thus will not be repeated here. There are also views about the methods of constructing artificial islands and their pros and cons.

5.70 Quite a number of people who are positive towards “Near-shore Reclamation Outside Victoria Harbour” also support “Developing the ELM”. Those in support consider that, in comparison with near-shore reclamations, the creation of artificial islands could better meet the development needs of Hong Kong as it could provide more land and allow more spatial planning and flexibility for accommodating more types and amount of housing units, economic land uses and community facilities. Besides, development of the artificial islands would not give rise to any interface issue concerning land use compatibility with neighbouring areas. Many professional organisations and members from the political and business sectors point out that the proposed development at Central Waters has strategic significance. Being close to the traditional CBD in Central and strategic infrastructures like the airport and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge on Lantau Island, the Central Waters are capable of utilising the development opportunities in Hong Kong and the neighbouring economies, including the Greater Bay Area. As regards impact on the environment and ecology, they believe that the Central Waters is relatively less ecologically sensitive, and the impact on the environment and water flow could be minimised by breaking down the whole area of artificial islands into a few smaller pieces (instead of one big island), which would indeed be more desirable for urban design and landscape. Besides, those who have been following the developments in the NT support the ELM, in particular the associated new strategic transport infrastructure which is expected

to alleviate the pressure on the existing transport network between NWNT and the metro areas. Moreover, some think tanks and other professionals consider that from the perspectives of resolving the problem of land shortage and ensuring cost-effectiveness, the size of the artificial islands should be bigger than the 1 000 ha as proposed under “Hong Kong 2030+”, or even double.

- 5.71 Views against “Developing the ELM”, many of which come from online signature campaigns initiated by green groups, are similar to the arguments against “Near-shore Reclamation Outside Victoria Harbour”. Some point out that the ELM involves large-scale reclamation, and the reclamation works (including the use of huge amount of marine sand) would cause greater damages to the marine environment and ecology. Some say that large-scale reclamation projects would accelerate the rise of sea level and climate change. As extreme weather conditions such as super typhoons in recent years are expected to become more prevalent, they worry that the artificial islands in the Central Waters could hardly withstand the huge waves that might arise. Besides, quite a number of groups and individuals are skeptical of the need to create land by large-scale reclamation. They are also concerned about the high costs of developing the artificial islands and major infrastructure, and argue that this option is not cost-effective as it is more costly and time-consuming than near-shore reclamation or other options. Moreover, it cannot provide immediate relief to the problem of land shortage. In their view, from the angle of cost-effectiveness, the Government should first pursue those options which involve developed land, for instance developing brownfield sites. Furthermore, similar to the option of “Near-shore Reclamation Outside Victoria Harbour”, fishermen groups are very concerned about the impact on the fishing industry caused by large-scale reclamation projects like ELM.

Task Force’s Overall Considerations and Recommendations

- 5.72 **Developing the ELM would bring a number of potential benefits, especially in terms of increasing land supply.** As mentioned in the section of “Near-shore Reclamation Outside Victoria Harbour”, the public in general is familiar with reclamation

as a way of creating land. Compared with near-shore reclamation, development of the artificial islands is subject to fewer constraints caused by nearby facilities or existing land uses. It can also provide much more land and offer greater flexibility for planning. It is also one of the few options which can form a vast area of land within a controlled timeframe.

5.73 **The Task Force recognises the strategic importance of the ELM artificial islands.** In respect to planning, the area near Kau Yi Chau and Hei Ling Chau, mid-way between the existing CBD and Lantau Island and just a few kilometres from the western side of Hong Kong Island, is positioned to link up our existing and future economic powerhouses. Upon development into a new town and the third CBD, the artificial islands in the Central Waters would help rationalise the current uneven distribution of population and jobs, and reduce undue reliance on housing developments in the NT to accommodate our growing population. Moreover, it could provide more decanting space to facilitate urban renewal on a larger scale. As regards transport infrastructure, the new strategic transport infrastructure, especially the “NWNT-Lantau-Metro Transport Corridor”, would provide a more direct and convenient route from the Hong Kong Island to the airport and the NWNT. It also makes possible the expansion of transport network between the NWNT and the metro areas, thereby relieving significantly the congestion on Tuen Mun Road and the West Rail, instead of further burdening the existing transport system. In addition, given its close proximity to the airport and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, the artificial islands could capitalise on the myriad opportunities from the growth of the Greater Bay Area. Other land supply options such as developing brownfield sites could hardly generate such strategic benefits, in particular the third CBD development and expansion of the transport network.

5.74 The Task Force believes that **developing the ELM is key to breaking the stalemate of land shortage.** Compared with other options, artificial islands development offers better control in terms of delivery timing, as it does not involve land resumption or reprovisioning arrangements. Even if the project is to be taken forward in phases, the artificial islands once decided for implementation can deliver new land masses more steadily vis-à-vis

other options involving existing land. Moreover, given the vast amount of new land to be created, the artificial islands project stands out from others in terms of increasing land supply and building a land reserve. From a strategic perspective, a massive potential land supply and an abundant land reserve will enable the Government to dominate land sources and control how much and how fast land should be sold in the market with adjustments in line with our latest socio-economic development needs and objectives.

5.75 The scale of ELM has been a main concern to quite many people and green groups. The Task Force notes that the opposing views or reservations concerning ELM have centered on **the impact on the marine environment and ecology; costs and time involved; and whether the artificial islands could stand up to the impact of climate change and extreme weather conditions.** The Task Force agrees that **these are issues that the Government should address and handle with caution**, and information published at the moment is far from complete. It is true that reclamation will impact the environment; yet, it can be backed by objective and scientific data analyses that such impact can be mitigated through the scrutiny of robust statutory and established vetting procedures including consultation with relevant committees, technical assessments and statutory environmental impact assessments (EIAs). Whilst people nowadays are increasingly concerned about climate change, society at large does not have full knowledge of the construction techniques, planning and design considerations, potential impact of developing the artificial islands, as well as the management of risks and costs for large-scale infrastructure projects. The Government should give particular attention to these areas and explain to the public when taking forward the artificial islands project. The Government should also provide justifications and formulate mitigation measures for the works and reclamation in order to minimise impact and enhance the overall capacity of the environment, for instance by designating marine parks and constructing eco-shorelines. Quite a number of professional institutes have also made suggestions on various cutting-edge technologies and methods of constructing artificial islands based on principles of sustainable development.

5.76 To address the above views, the Government should go through

objective and robust studies, assessments and vetting procedures before it is in a position to respond fully to the public concerns about the impact and costs of the reclamation works. The Task Force understands the views of some people that developing artificial islands only boosts land supply in the medium-to-long term and can hardly ease the problem we are facing. However, the Task Force has been emphasising that a multi-pronged approach should be adopted to increase land supply; for those options which receive relatively more support, we should waste no time in commencing studies and planning as soon as possible. **The Task Force considers that developing the ELM artificial islands is a key initiative to resolve the problem of land shortage in the medium-to-long term. The Government should commence the preliminary studies and planning as soon as possible to collect more information and data for deciding the next step.**

- 5.77 The Task Force notes that the “Lantau Tomorrow Vision” proposed in the Chief Executive’s 2018 Policy Address covers the artificial islands in the Central Waters, as well as re-planning and reclamation projects on the northern side of the Lantau Island and the coastal areas of Tuen Mun, to be supported by a new transport network connecting all areas. The Government is expected to seek funding approval of the Legislative Council (LegCo) in the first or the second quarter of 2019 to kick-start the preliminary studies. Spanning over two to three decades, the Lantau Tomorrow Vision recommends reclamations in the Central Waters to form land of some 1 700 ha. In the first phase, the Government will focus on the studies of developing the artificial islands of about 1 000 ha near Kau Yi Chau. As for the remaining artificial islands of about 700 ha near Hei Ling Chau and the waters south of Cheung Chau, the Task Force notes that the Government has no concrete implementation timetable at the moment, but the said studies will collect basic technical data on these areas for future reference in long-term planning. The Government will take into account this report before finalising details of the proposed studies. The ultimate extent of reclamation will be subject to findings of the studies conducted by the Government.

Developing Caverns and Underground Space

- 5.78 In view of the shortage of developable land, hidden land resources such as rock caverns and underground space can offer room to accommodate suitable public or infrastructural facilities, and to support the relocation of above-ground facilities and reduce the amount of land occupied by them.
- 5.79 Hong Kong's hilly terrain and strong rock formations make it highly suitable for developing **rock caverns**, particularly on the urban fringes. The relocation of suitable existing government facilities to caverns can on one hand release above-ground sites for housing and other uses, and on the other hand relocate facilities which do not need to be above-ground and are incompatible with the surrounding environment and land uses nearby. Existing government facilities built in rock caverns such as the Stanley Sewage Treatment Works, Island West Transfer Station, Kau Shat Wan Government Explosives Depot and Western Salt Water Service Reservoirs, demonstrate that developing rock caverns is technically viable. The Government has prepared a territory-wide Cavern Master Plan²⁵ which delineates Strategic Cavern Areas that are physically well placed for cavern development, so as to guide and facilitate wider application of cavern development in Hong Kong. The Government has also identified existing sewage treatment works and service reservoirs in Tsuen Wan, Sha Tin and Kowloon areas to study the feasibility of relocating them to caverns nearby and carry out the necessary works; upon implementation, such projects can release some 40 ha of above-ground sites. Among these, in October 2018 the Finance Committee of the LegCo approved funding for the first stage of the construction works for the relocation of 28-ha Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works to caverns.
- 5.80 Hong Kong has been using **underground space** for accommodating commercial, community and transport facilities for many years. Such underground space is usually located in built-up areas and implemented under individual projects such as basement car parks,

²⁵ Please refer to the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) website - <https://www.cedd.gov.hk/eng/cavern/index.html>.

shopping arcades, subways, railway stations and tunnels. Most such projects have not been planned with an overall consideration of utilising underground space and enhancing connectivity. The Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) and the Planning Department (PlanD) have commissioned a “Pilot Study on Underground Space Development in Selected Strategic Urban Areas”²⁶. Four strategic urban areas, namely Tsim Sha Tsui West, Causeway Bay, Happy Valley and Admiralty/Wan Chai, have been selected for further study with a view to evaluating the overall merits of developing underground spaces and identifying the key issues involved; formulating Underground Master Plans for these areas; and drawing up suitable conceptual schemes.

Summary of Public Views

5.81 In terms of **quantitative analysis**, the respective percentages of support for developing caverns and underground space as reflected from the results of our questionnaires and telephone survey are shown in the following table:

	All responses	Responses which could meet the land shortfall of at least 1 200 ha
Questionnaires	43%	45%
Telephone survey	66%	68%

(Figure 2 on page 26)

5.82 In terms of **qualitative analysis**, views supporting the use of caverns and underground space consider that developing caverns and underground space has less impact on the environment and space for citizens’ daily activities; they also provide space to accommodate certain existing facilities with environmental impact and release above-ground sites for other uses. As caverns are generally located far away from residential areas and community facilities, the public is not resistant to the idea of cavern development. As for underground space, quite a number of views note that other metropolises (e.g. Tokyo and Seoul) also have extensive

²⁶ Please refer to the Study website <https://www.urbanunderground.gov.hk>.

development of underground space: besides providing more public space and commercial facilities, such underground space also provides alternative walking routes in addition to those on the surface, hence enhancing connectivity within the city; the idea is worthy of support. Views opposing or having reservations about the use of caverns and underground space are mainly concerned about the high costs and longer lead time, and that the land or space derived cannot be used directly for housing development, making the idea not necessarily cost-effective.

Task Force's Overall Considerations and Recommendations

- 5.83 **The Task Force considers that the option of using caverns and underground space has a smaller impact on the environment and local communities.** Developing caverns can achieve twin objectives: on one hand, in view of the shortage of developable surface land, caverns can provide space to accommodate facilities which do not need to be located above-ground or are unpopular with local people or even obnoxious, for example maintenance depots, sewage treatment works and columbaria. The option can also resolve the problem of incompatible land uses. On the other hand, relocating such facilities to more remote caverns **can release precious surface land in closer proximity to the urban area for housing purposes or meeting the demands for other community facilities.** In addition, caverns are suitable for accommodating facilities that need a stable and secure underground environment (e.g. archives, warehousing, laboratories and data centres). Examples of developing caverns and relocating suitable facilities to caverns can be found in quite a number of other cities; this has been proven to be a feasible way to optimise land and enhance overall environmental quality.
- 5.84 **Underground space development can enhance connectivity and improve the above-ground pedestrian environment in congested districts through building underground linkage networks.** For instance, public parks and recreational spaces close to MTR stations in urban areas would offer the opportunity to develop the shallow underground spaces beneath them. This can create additional walking space, enhance connectivity between different areas (e.g.

connection to transportation facilities, commercial facilities and public walkways) and help alleviate road congestion. Sound underground planning and effective use of underground space can also enhance the connectivity with the surroundings, improve urban environment, create space for commercial and public facilities, and optimise overall the development potential of scarce land resources.

5.85 Costs and development lead time are undoubtedly issues for both cavern and underground space development. The development cost of individual cavern projects may vary, depending on many factors including topographical and geotechnical conditions, and environmental considerations of specific sites. If the geotechnical conditions of a site are more complicated with more environmental constraints, construction cost may be higher to allow for reinforcement works and environmental mitigation measures. In addition, the height, size and structural layout of rock caverns will depend on the facilities moving into them. This will have direct implication on the structure of the cavern and tunnels, as well as the construction cost of the facilities and building service equipment within the caverns. Accordingly, developing caverns is very likely to be more costly than other medium-to-long term options. As rock cavern developments will likely involve EIAs and fall within country park areas, statutory approval procedures related to urban planning and EIA are required. Together with the construction and associated engineering works which may vary with project scale and technical complexity, a cavern development project may take a lead time of over 10 years from concept to realisation. This has yet to account for future developments of the relevant site after the facilities on the particular site have moved into the cavern. As regards underground space, the development cost is also high in general. Compared with above-ground structures and facilities, the operation, management and maintenance costs of underground structures and facilities are bound to be higher. Developing underground space is time-consuming as well: the development process is usually limited by various constraints arising from the built environment, while construction works may need to be phased to minimise the possible impact on existing above-ground and underground facilities.

5.86 In spite of these constraints, as mentioned above, developing caverns and underground space can provide more space and vacate suitable sites for other developments, thereby indirectly increases land supply, as well as serving other specific functions such as improving community environment, providing suitable environment for special facilities, enhancing connectivity of pedestrian facilities, and diverting pedestrian and vehicular flow and relieving congestion in the urban area. Such benefits cannot be measured in quantifiable terms. The Task Force is of the view that in evaluating the cost-effectiveness of this option, we should take such social benefits into account, rather than focusing on the question of “how much it costs to develop a square metre”. To conclude, **under the multi-pronged strategy to increase land supply, the Task Force supports the Government to continue its efforts to identify caverns and projects suitable for underground space development and to proceed with the necessary studies and planning, bearing in mind the cost-effectiveness of the projects and the interests of the community.**

More New Development Areas in the New Territories

5.87 To ensure a steady and sizeable supply of land in the medium-to-long term, the Government has been implementing and planning several NDAs in the NT, including KTN/FLN NDAs, HSK NDA and YLS development; altogether they will provide some 940 ha²⁷ of developable land, constituting a major source of land supply for Hong Kong in the medium-to-long term. The three NDA projects involve no reclamation but utilise existing land, including 340 ha of brownfield sites. Through comprehensive and integrated planning, NDA projects can optimise the use of land resources, promote high-density development, help rationalise land use incompatibility in the rural NT, and improve the rural environment.

5.88 NTN is one of the two Strategic Growth Areas beyond 2030 proposed under the Hong Kong 2030+²⁸. The “Preliminary Feasibility Study on Developing the New Territories North” has identified three areas with development potential, namely the development node at San Tin/Lok Ma Chau; logistics corridor at Man Kam To; and the NTN new town comprising Hung Lung Hang, Heung Yuen Wai, Ping Che, Ta Kwu Ling and Queen’s Hill. They altogether provide a total developable area of **around 720 ha**²⁹, including 200 ha of brownfield sites.

Summary of Public Views

5.89 In terms of **quantitative analysis**, the respective percentages of support for more NDAs in the NT as reflected from the results of our questionnaires and telephone survey are shown in the following

²⁷ In making the land supply projections for the next 30 years, Hong Kong 2030+ study has taken into account the supply from the above-mentioned NDA projects.

²⁸ The East Lantau Metropolis is the other Strategic Growth Area.

²⁹ Given that the exact development scale is to be further studied, the 720 ha of land under the NTN development is not included in the land supply estimate of 3 600 ha under Hong Kong 2030+.

table:

	All responses	Responses which could meet the land shortfall of at least 1 200 ha
Questionnaires	61%	75%
Telephone survey	78%	88%

(Figure 2 on page 26)

5.90 In terms of **qualitative analysis**, some of those supporting consider that developing more NDAs will facilitate holistic planning for land scattered in different areas in the NT and rationalise the haphazard ones, and thus unlock the potential of land including brownfields for housing and other developments. Some note that developing NDAs involve extensive land resumption, and the associated compensation and relocation issues, if not handled properly, will hold up the project. A small number of people point out that more NDAs would further weaken the rural character of the NT, as well as disturb development of agriculture and existing communal bonding.

Task Force’s Overall Considerations and Recommendations

5.91 Hong Kong society is not unfamiliar with new towns or NDA development. At present, people living in the nine new towns make up almost half of Hong Kong’s population (about 3.5 million). **Developing larger areas through the new town or NDA model can support integrated community planning based on the most up-to-date policies and guidelines, and allow appropriate and flexible deployment of land uses, taking into account the territory-wide development strategy as well as district characteristics and needs.** These uses include housing, economic and community facilities. More space is also available for enhanced provision of community facilities such that the living environment of existing residents would be improved while accommodating the additional population. When taking forward NDA developments, the LRO will be invoked to resume some of the land, including agricultural and brownfield sites, for “public purpose” to dovetail with the overall scheme. This can also respond to the calls from the community to facilitate better

development of brownfield sites and agricultural land in the NT.

5.92 Notwithstanding this mainstream consensus over **implementation of NDA projects, this option faces numerous challenges**. The first issue is timing. NDA projects involve large-scale re-planning of existing land uses that needs to be backed up by the conduct of detailed planning and engineering studies, as well as rounds of community engagement. The entire planning and development process takes a long lead time to complete, from conducting studies to devising outline zoning plans; gazettal procedures for works and land resumption; funding applications; land resumption, clearance and rehousing of residents; site formation and infrastructure developments; construction of houses; and first population intake. Taking the KTN/FLN NDAs as an example, more than 10 years have passed since the planning reactivated in 2008, but large-scale resumption has yet to start formally pending funding approval for construction works. The second challenge is project complexity. Squatter households, industrial, commercial and brownfield operators as well as farmers will need to be relocated from existing land within the NDA area. To reduce resistance during land resumption and clearance, the different demands and interests of the stakeholders should be properly addressed. As such, time is required for the Government to refine current policies including those on compensation and rehousing arrangements. Sorting out the many views and even conflicts can be a lengthy process. Extra public spending may also be incurred and original development scale or parameters revised.

5.93 In spite of all these difficulties, NDA projects is a major source of housing supply in the medium-to-long term; therefore **the Task Force finds it necessary for the Government to take forward the planned NDA projects as soon as possible**, including the KTN/FLN and HSK NDAs which are advancing to the funding and land resumption stage, as well as the preliminary studies and planning for the NTN project. The Government should also **adopt a “people-oriented” and “policy-led” approach when exploring how to enhance implementation measures on NDAs**, so as to minimise resistance during the process. To this end, the Task Force notes that the Government introduced, in May 2018, measures to revise the ex-gratia compensation and rehousing arrangements for

domestic households or business operators affected by the Government's development clearance exercises; the proposal was approved by the LegCo. In the long run, the Government may further explore the feasibility of developing more NDAs in suitable locations in the NT by way of strategic planning and creating capacity for transport infrastructures.

Developing the River Trade Terminal Site (Including the options of “Developing the River Trade Terminal Site” and “Developing the River Trade Terminal Site and its Surroundings in the Long Term”)

5.94 The River Trade Terminal (RTT) in Tuen Mun West, occupying 65 ha, is a privately-run terminal with 49 berths along a 3 000 metres-long quay front. It primarily handles and consolidates containers and cargos shipped from the Pearl River Delta region prior to dispatch to the Kwai Tsing Container Terminals (KTCTs) and other port facilities in Hong Kong for onward shipment and vice versa. In recent years, due to the rapid development of port facilities in the Pearl River Delta region, the RTT’s cargo handling volume has been dwindling. In 2017, the utilisation rate of the RTT berths was only 24% of its capacity. Discounting the throughput from double handling, the RTT only handled roughly 3% of Hong Kong Port’s total container throughput. If the RTT site is to be released for other developments, and with completion of all necessary procedures for the relevant sites and subject to upgrading of other port facilities if required, there is a possibility that the throughput of the RTT can be absorbed by other port facilities such as KTCTs, Public Cargo Working Areas and midstream sites, without giving rise to new land requirements. Accordingly, there is room for the community to discuss whether the RTT site should be developed for other uses.

5.95 The RTT site is located within Tuen Mun West which is predominantly industrial in character³⁰. Taking into account the compatibility with the adjoining uses, if developed on its own, the RTT site is not suitable for housing development; however, it can be used to accommodate industrial and brownfield-related operations, including logistics, vehicle repair workshops, environmental industry, etc. to release brownfield sites in the NT for housing and other developments. Should we consider re-planning of the industrial sites in the entire coastal area of Tuen Mun West, which includes the RTT site and the new land to be formed by the proposed

³⁰ Please refer to Chapter 5.7 (page 65) in the PE Booklet for the industrial uses in the vicinity of RTT.

Lung Kwu Tan reclamation³¹, the feasibility of using the RTT site together with the adjoining land for housing development can be explored through relocating those incompatible industrial uses adjoining the RTT site to the Lung Kwu Tan reclamation site. Therefore, the Task Force proposed two options in relation to development of the RTT site, namely the option of a stand-alone development of the RTT site in the medium-to-long term, and the conceptual option of re-planning the RTT site, its surroundings and the entire coastal area of Tuen Mun West.

Summary of Public Views

5.96 In terms of **quantitative analysis**, the respective percentages of support for “Developing the River Trade Terminal Site” and “Developing the River Trade Terminal Site and its Surroundings in the Long Term” as reflected from the results of our questionnaires and telephone survey are shown in the following table; both options received similar level of support.

	All responses	Responses which could meet the land shortfall of at least 1 200 ha
<u>Developing the River Trade Terminal Site</u>		
Questionnaires	41%	46%
Telephone survey	65%	68%
<u>Developing the River Trade Terminal Site and its Surroundings in the Long Term</u>		
Questionnaires	47%	Not applicable ³²
Telephone survey	67%	

(Figure 2 on page 26 and Figure 3 on page 27)

³¹ For information and public views on Lung Kwu Tan reclamation, please refer to the section of “Near-shore Reclamation outside Victoria Harbour”.

³² As “Developing the River Trade Terminal Site and its Surroundings in the Long Term” is conceptual with no assumption of the potential land supply attached to the option, there is no separate analysis of those responses that meet the shortfall of at least 1 200 ha.

5.97 In terms of **qualitative analysis**, fewer responses have been received for these two options. Supporting views mainly point to optimising land use, noting that the data shows a declining usage of the RTT and that other port facilities are able to absorb its current throughput; thus it is only natural to consider releasing the land for other uses. As the general public is more concerned about the shortage of housing supply and there are already quite a number of industrial sites in the vicinity of Tuen Mun West, using the RTT for housing development is more preferred; as such, there are more views supporting comprehensive planning and development of the RTT site and its surrounding sites in the long term to improve the surrounding environment, rather than stand-alone development of the RTT site for industrial use. On the other hand, some from the logistics sector object to developing the RTT site. They consider that the utilisation rate of berths alone does not reflect the RTT's actual utilisation (which also includes, for instance, the overland container handling and empty container storage on the RTT site), and that the Government should contemplate the reprovisioning arrangements if the RTT site were to be developed for other uses. Separately, some residents worry that developing the RTT and its surrounding sites for residential purpose will aggravate the burden on the transport network of the NWNT.

Task Force's Overall Considerations and Recommendations

5.98 Given the tight land supply, **the community generally endorses the principle of land use optimisation. The Task Force considers that the proposal of developing the RTT site for other uses is in line with this principle.** In fact, with the development of Hong Kong, Mainland and other nearby cities and the changes in external environment, the original uses and functions of some developed sites are in fact diminishing; there is room and need to seriously review and examine whether those sites should be converted to other uses. The RTT is a case in point: in light of the competitions from port facilities in the Pearl River Delta region, the utilisation rate of the RTT has fallen sharply; the remaining throughput can be absorbed by other port facilities in Hong Kong. Accordingly, **the Task Force supports re-planning of the RTT site for other uses.**

5.99 As to whether a stand-alone development of the RTT site or its comprehensive development together with the surrounding sites in the longer term is more desirable, the Task Force believes that developing the RTT site on its own would be more constrained in terms of land use; the RTT site alone can only be used for industrial purpose, against the backdrop that there is already a fair supply of industrial land in Tuen Mun West at present and in the future; the 220 ha of land to be formed by the proposed Lung Kwu Tan reclamation would be mainly for industrial uses as well. Noting that the Government is planning and implementing several large-scale transport infrastructure projects involving the NWNT, including the Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Link under construction and Route 11 under study, these would further enhance the transport network of Tuen Mun West and the entire NWNT; these will facilitate the long-term development of these areas. In view of the above, **the Task Force considers that, from the perspective of comprehensive planning, it is more preferable to consider holistically the land uses of the entire coastal area of Tuen Mun West (including the RTT site, the Lung Kwu Tan reclamation site as well as the industrial and special industrial facilities nearby) and examine rationalisation and realignment of operations on different sites, so as to increase planning flexibility.** Such a more thorough approach will achieve better economies of scale for the development of the RTT and its surrounding sites, while addressing the problem of land use compatibility, creating possibility of planning for non-industrial uses (including housing), and providing more room for better planning of the local community. Moreover, by re-planning the whole of Tuen Mun West, the Government could make plans on the transport infrastructure at a more strategic level by increasing the capacity of existing infrastructures and expanding the entire transport infrastructure network as necessary to render support to the development of the RTT area and the NWNT. Strategic projects like the NWNT-Lantau-Metro Transport Corridor proposed under the HK2030+ study may seize the opportunity provided by the re-planning of Tuen Mun West as well as the development of artificial islands in the Central Waters; providing another strategic route to link up the NWNT and the urban area can also relieve the congestion on the existing roads and railway networks in the NWNT.

- 5.100 The above-mentioned integrated approach to develop the RTT site will indeed take a longer time than a stand-alone development for industrial use – hence the categorisation of the former as conceptual and the latter a medium-to-long term option. This notwithstanding, taking into account the clear advantages of comprehensive planning for Tuen Mun West, the Task Force finds it worthwhile for the Government to study and consider this option.
- 5.101 The Task Force notes that the Chief Executive proposed the “Lantau Tomorrow Vision” in her 2018 Policy Address, which covers the artificial islands in the Central Waters, developments at North Lantau as well as the coastal areas of Tuen Mun including the RTT after re-planning and Lung Kwu Tan, to be supported by a new transport network connecting all areas. The Task Force hopes that such initiative will help realign the land uses at the coastal area of Tuen Mun West to facilitate development that will better meet the overall needs of society.

Chapter 6 Other Views on Land Supply

Views on Other Options

6.1 Apart from the land supply options mentioned in Chapter 5, there were relatively less discussion and views received on the other options identified by the Task Force during the PE. Some of these options did not solicit general support of society at this stage, probably due to the complexities involved that made it difficult to ascertain the feasibility or land supply potential of the options. Therefore, **the Task Force considers that these options should be accorded a lower priority than those mentioned in Chapter 5. However, the Government may consider in the long run whether to further examine the feasibility as well as the pros and cons of these options. It may take into account the actual circumstances and the Task Force's recommendations on individual options, in order to provide more information for further discussion in society.** The Task Force will set out the basic facts concerning these options, give a summary of the public views and elaborate on the overall considerations and recommendations of the Task Force in the ensuing paragraphs.

Relocation or Consolidation of Land-Extensive Recreational Facilities

- 6.2 “Land-extensive” sports and recreational venues generally refer to those occupying an area of 3 ha or more each managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD). A total of 95 public sports and recreational venues are considered land-extensive. They can be broadly divided into four categories: sports grounds and stadiums; parks; holiday camps, picnic areas and water sports centres; outdoor swimming pools, as well as recreational and sports centres. The 95 sports and recreational venues are distributed throughout the territory and are generally well-utilised by the public.
- 6.3 Given the high utilisation of these public sports and recreational facilities, closing them and resuming the land thereon would have an impact on the general public, hence it is undesirable. To achieve more optimal site utilisation, the Task Force suggested that the community might consider the feasibility of relocating or consolidating individual facilities. For example, there have been suggestions that the Tuen Mun Recreation and Sports Centre, which occupies 12.5 ha and comprises a golf driving range, a riding school, an archery range and an adventure park, could be relocated to other sites not required for development, thereby releasing the existing site for alternative uses. In addition, there are views that there may be room for redeveloping the 3.5-ha Tuen Mun Swimming Pool into a multi-storey complex, with some indoor pools, for better use of the site. Restored landfills are sites which might be suitable for reprovisioning these facilities.

Summary of Public Views

- 6.4 In terms of **quantitative analysis**, the respective percentage of support for the relocation and consolidation of land-extensive sports and recreational facilities as reflected from the results of our questionnaires and telephone survey are shown in the following table:

	All responses	Responses which could meet the land shortfall of at least 1 200 ha
Questionnaires	33%	34%
Telephone Survey	23%	24%

(Figure 1 on page 25)

6.5 In terms of **qualitative analysis**, the responses received are relatively fewer than those on the other three short-to-medium term options, with the majority being negative. These opinions suggest that public sports and recreation facilities are of much importance to the community. Any changes to such facilities, be they relocation or closure temporarily or permanently, would affect the local residents, reduce space for public activities, and worsen the quality of life. There are also views that making changes to the facilities is not conducive to the promotion of sports in the community. Some supporting the option, however, consider that given the current land shortage, any options especially those in the short-to-medium term should not be easily given up.

Task Force’s Overall Considerations and Recommendations

6.6 As reflected from all the views received, the Task Force considers that **relocation and consolidation of land-extensive sports and recreational facilities does not gain general support from the community**. The main reason is that these public sports and recreational venues are widely used and have become part of the life of the general public. It has a certain role to play in the balanced development of society and maintaining people’s quality of life. Even though the option does not per se suggest removing the facilities or taking away the site, most in the community do not agree to using these sites as the main option to tackle the land shortage problem. In fact, as pointed out by Task Force in the questionnaire, since this option would involve relocation or consolidation of facilities, and taking into account the constraints in the process including site search and lead time for relocation and ensuring seamless transition between old and new facilities, the potential of this land option is relatively small compared to other short-to-medium term options.

6.7 Whilst it may not be worthwhile to accord priority to this option, the Task Force considers that, if the Government, after conducting detailed studies on the feasibility, cost-effectiveness and development lead time, identifies individual sites of land-extensive sports and recreational facilities that carry potential for relocation or consolidation under the “single-site, multiple use” model so as to increase usable space and release other sites for more gainful uses, it should explain clearly to the local community the overall benefits of the projects. To solicit support of the community for individual projects, the Government should explain whether existing facilities will be enhanced and if more facilities could be provided for public use, and what transitional arrangements would be made, when the site is redeveloped for better utilisation.

Developing Areas on the Periphery of Country Parks (Including the options of “Developing Two Pilot Areas on the Periphery of Country Parks” and “Developing More Areas on the Periphery of Country Parks”)

- 6.8 There are currently 24 country parks in Hong Kong, covering about 40% of Hong Kong’s total area. Country parks, with great social and ecological values, are precious asset of Hong Kong as a liveable city. In his Policy Address announced in January 2017, the then Chief Executive stated that the Government would commence work on designating the 500 ha-Robin’s Nest as a new country park, and that the Government would actively explore feasible ways to achieve long-term conservation of Sha Lo Tung. That Policy Address also stated that, while increasing the total area of ecological conservation sites and country parks and enhancing their recreational and educational value, society should also consider allocating a small portion of the land with relatively low ecological and public enjoyment value on the periphery of country parks for purposes other than real estate development such as public housing and non-profit-making elderly homes.
- 6.9 In May 2017, the last-term Government invited the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS) to undertake ecological and technical studies on the land on the periphery of country parks to provide objective analysis to facilitate rational deliberations by society. The scope of studies covered two pilot areas (each of about 20 ha) in Tai Lam and Shui Chuen O, on the periphery of Tai Lam and Ma On Shan Country Parks respectively. In addition to these two pilot areas, some in the community say that consideration should be given further to the development of other areas with relatively low ecological and public enjoyment value at the fringe of country parks. Therefore, the Task Force proposed two options concerning the development of areas on the periphery of country parks, namely a medium-to-long term option focusing on the two pilot areas, and a conceptual option covering the other areas.

Summary of Public Views

6.10 In terms of **quantitative analysis**, the respective percentages of support for “Developing Two Pilot Areas on the Periphery of Country Parks” and “Developing More Areas on the Periphery of Country Parks” as reflected from the results of our questionnaires and telephone survey are shown in the following table:

	All responses	Responses which could meet the land shortfall of at least 1 200 ha
<u>Developing Two Pilot Areas on the Periphery of Country Parks</u>		
Questionnaires	28%	34%
Telephone Survey	53%	57%
<u>Developing More Areas on the Periphery of Country Parks</u>		
Questionnaires	33%	Not applicable ³³
Telephone Survey	48%	

(Figure 2 on page 26 and Figure 3 on page 27)

6.11 In terms of **qualitative analysis**, many opinions, coming mostly from the online signature campaigns initiated by green groups, oppose developing the areas on the periphery of country parks. They stress that country parks are natural assets of Hong Kong and perform important functions in the conservation of ecology and biodiversity. Some argue that the periphery, which lacks any scientific definition, is in fact part of the country parks. Some suggest that the periphery serves as a buffer between the core part of country parks and built-up areas. Hence, developing the periphery areas will increase the risks of pollution and damages to the ecology of country parks (including water catchment areas and reservoirs). From the perspective of public enjoyment, quite a number of responses express that country parks are the “back gardens” of the Hong Kong people providing pleasant recreational space for free, and thus they oppose a reduction of the country park areas. As far as the two pilot areas are concerned, some worry that development of the two pilot areas, once pursued, would set

³³ Since “Developing More Areas on the Periphery of Country Park” is a conceptual option with no projection for the area of potential land supply, the percentage in the responses to meet the shortfall of at least 1 200 ha of land is not available.

an undesirable precedent and the Government might consider developing more areas in the country parks. In order to ensure that the total area of country parks will not be reduced when developing land on the periphery, some suggest a compensation mechanism to include land parcels with ecological value resulting in “no net loss” in return. However, those against the development of country park periphery argue that the compensation system could not address the loss of integrity of the country parks, and argue that any site suitable for being part of country parks should in principle be incorporated as soon as possible, not as compensation.

6.12 Quite a number of those in support of developing areas on the periphery of country parks come from grassroots groups, the general public, business and industry organisations, as well as district-based bodies. They argue that, given the dire shortage of housing land and the vast area of country parks, and in view of the lack of robust or scientific assessment of the ecology when the country park boundaries including the periphery were delineated, society should not completely rule out the possibility of using a small part of the country park periphery for the development of public housing or other public uses. Some support the introduction of the compensation mechanism mentioned above to ensure that the total area of the country parks will not be reduced, even if areas on the periphery are used for other developments. They point out that as a matter of fact, notwithstanding the serious shortage of developable land, the total area of the country parks has been on the rise over the years.

Task Force’s Overall Considerations and Recommendations

6.13 As the Task Force has emphasised in the PE Booklet, whether individual sites with relatively low ecological and public enjoyment value on the periphery of country parks should be developed for public housing and other public purposes depends on the findings of many studies and assessments on the ecology, environment, development feasibility and development potentials. When considering whether any part of a country park should be converted as a possible land supply option, society should balance the needs for development and conservation in a prudent manner. Even if it was decided eventually that part of the country park areas could be released as a land supply

option, development of such areas would be subject to a series of stringent criteria under laws, including those relating to country parks, town planning, environmental impact and infrastructural works. The Government would also need to consult relevant committees and other stakeholders.

6.14 **Notwithstanding the fact that the option of “Developing Two Pilot Areas on the Periphery of Country Parks” was supported by over half of the respondents in the telephone survey, this option, together with the other option “Developing More Areas on the Periphery of Country Parks”, garnered obviously less support in the responses collected through alternative channels (including questionnaires), and the responses reflected mainly objections in principle.** This might be due to the lack of sufficient objective data at present to enable the public to better grasp the concept or extent of developing the periphery of country parks, e.g. absence of a database on the ecology of various country parks and precise information about the areas within the country parks of relatively lower public enjoyment value. As a result, the public are unwilling to alter the country park resources which are currently enjoyed by the community, or to sacrifice the vital values of nature conservation. Moreover, the principle that no development of any kind should take place in the country parks is deep-rooted in society. The public also have aspirations for conserving the natural environment, and generally believes that there are other land supply options, especially those involving developed land. There is insufficient information at this stage to convince people into accepting the use of country parks as an option.

6.15 As a matter of fact, any option involving development of land within the country parks, regardless of size, must undergo assessments on the ecological, environmental and recreational values to ascertain whether the site is suitable for development. Any change to the designated boundary of country parks must first go through the statutory procedures under the Country Park Ordinance (Cap. 208) and the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499), including consultations with the Country and Marine Parks Board and the Advisory Council on the Environment, and obtaining the consent of the Country and Marine Parks Authority before change can be made. Although there are precedents where country park areas were required for developments, it is by no means easy to fulfill the statutory

requirements and convince the said bodies that there is no better choice than the development of the areas on the periphery of the country parks. Besides, all the works relating to site formation, infrastructure and construction must go through the environmental assessment procedures before any work can begin. As regards the statutory environmental assessments, detailed ecological investigations, including seasonal investigations, will be conducted to make sure that each individual project is acceptable from the angle of nature conservation/ecology. The whole ecological investigation, covering both the wet and dry seasons, would take at least 12 to 18 months to complete. **Compared with the other medium-to-long term options, developing areas on the periphery of country parks involves more issues, hurdles and complexity. Moreover, the possibility of legal challenges throughout the process should not be underestimated. In considering holistically the pros and cons and the relative priority of this option, the Government should draw on sound and solid scientific analyses, make reference to findings of the studies being conducted by HKHS, and consider whether a compensation mechanism should be devised.**

Increasing Development Intensity of “Village Type Development” Zones

- 6.16 At present, there are around 700 “Village Type Development” (“V”) zones as stipulated in statutory town plans. Among them are a total of 642 recognised villages mostly in the NT. “V” zones, covering a total area of around 3 380 ha, are primarily intended for development of small houses by indigenous villagers. The development intensity of “V” zones is by nature low.
- 6.17 There have been suggestions to optimise the use of land in “V” zones, including allowing high-rise small house developments to increase their development intensity. In this way, the same area of surface land may provide more residential units to alleviate the pressure of housing supply shortage.

Summary of Public Views

- 6.18 In terms of **quantitative analysis**, the respective percentages of support for increasing development intensity of “V” zones as reflected from the results of our questionnaire and telephone survey are shown in the following table:

	All responses
Questionnaires	45%
Telephone survey	54%

(Figure 3 on page 27)

- 6.19 In terms of **qualitative analysis**, quite a number of responses agree in principle that the current fixed height of three storeys for NT small houses is not in line with the principle of optimising land use. Therefore they support exploring the idea of allowing higher-rise small house developments. Meanwhile, some argue that part of the increased residential floor area should be used for public housing to benefit society as a whole. Some members of the public and NT groups support the proposal of allowing “high-rise” small house developments, and suggest implementing it first in “V” zones close to the developed areas of higher density and transport infrastructure (e.g.

“villages in towns” in areas such as Sha Tin, Tai Wai and Yuen Long). There are even a few people who advocate the development of “small house buildings” as high as 10 storeys or more.

6.20 On the other hand, some point out that there are over 900 ha of unleased and unallocated government land within “V” zones, and the development potential of some of those land parcels that are not fragmented should not be overlooked. On the other hand, some express concerns over the further increase in development intensity in rural environs which may affect the traditional village setting and cultural heritage in the NT. A number of people also call on the Government to undertake an overall review of the Small House Policy to abolish the right to build small houses or draw a line for such a right, so as to release the land within “V” zone for more housing developments of higher density in the long term.

Task Force’s Overall Considerations and Recommendations

6.21 In considering how to optimise the use of land within “V” zones as an option, the Task Force focuses on the following three aspects of the public views: firstly, whether unleased and unallocated government land within “V” zones possesses development potential; secondly, whether the proposal of allowing “high-rise” small house developments is feasible and desirable; and thirdly, whether reviewing the Small House Policy and abolishing the right to develop small houses is an effective way of increasing land supply.

6.22 At present, there are over 900 ha of unleased and unallocated government land within “V” zones³⁴ scattered across over 600 recognised villages in the territory. On average, each recognised village has some 1.4 ha of unleased and unallocated government land, of which a considerable portion involves gaps or passageways between existing small houses, slopes and other fragmented or irregular land parcels. Even if individual land parcels are relatively more complete in shape, their development potential may be limited by factors such as geography and environment of the area and infrastructural constraints,

³⁴ According to statistical information on unleased and unallocated government land compiled by the Government in 2012.

making them unsuitable for large-scale development. Therefore, this is not a land supply option that offers great development potential.

6.23 Allowing “high-rise” small house developments may in principle facilitate better use of the same amount of land, while achieving the policy objective of addressing the needs of indigenous villagers. However, the development of land within existing “V” zones for higher-density housing, be it the addition of more storeys or full redevelopment, would be subject to the provision of infrastructure in the area, impact on the environment and the planning principle of “urban-rural integration”. It would not be easy to find a “one-size-fits-all” arrangement. Moreover, **any proposals concerning the Small House Policy relate to a series of legal, planning, housing, environment, cultural and historical matters; all these must be handled with care.**

6.24 Whether to allow “high-rise” developments or abolish the right to develop small houses, certain fundamental policy and legal issues will be involved and may trigger heated debates and disputes that would take a long time to settle. **Considering the various issues involved and the development potential of the land in “V” zone, the Task Force finds it difficult to accord priority to this option for implementation.** Nonetheless, from the perspective of optimising land use, the Government may consider if there is room to review the Small House Policy upon conclusion of the judicial review proceedings in relation to this subject.

Topside Development of Existing Transport Infrastructure

6.25 Transport infrastructure includes trunk roads, major road interchanges, public transport interchanges, railway stations and railway maintenance depots. Some have suggested that the space and development potential of transport infrastructure sites should be better utilised to increase land supply. One suggestion is to carry out housing development above the transport infrastructure.

6.26 There are examples of such topside developments at transport infrastructures for the provision of housing and other facilities in Hong Kong, including the commonly seen topside property projects at railway stations. In general, the planning, the design and construction of transport infrastructure are taken forward in tandem with topside housing development to better integrate the functional uses and minimise interface issues of housing and infrastructure developments. In contrast, the transport infrastructure in operation after some years would pose considerable constraints to the planning, design and construction of subsequent topside buildings; hence, topside development afterwards will be more complicated than cases involving comprehensive planning in the initial stage. In addition, the impact of topside development on the transport infrastructure operating underneath would need to be carefully examined.

Summary of Public Views

6.27 In terms of **quantitative analysis**, the respective percentage of support for topside development of existing transport infrastructure as reflected from the results of our questionnaires and telephone survey are shown in the following table.

	All responses
Questionnaires	49%
Telephone survey	57%

(Figure 3 on page 27)

6.28 In terms of **qualitative analysis**, responses in favour of this option were mainly directed at the topside development above railway stations. Quite a number of people argue that there are quite a number of large-scale comprehensive topside developments at railway stations in Hong Kong, accommodating residential buildings, shopping arcades and offices. These developments capitalise on the convenience and efficiency brought by the railway and fully utilise the topside space to increase supply of housing and other facilities. Comparatively fewer responses touch on the feasibility, as well as the pros and cons of topside development above roads. As for the people who have reservations or are against this option, their main concern is the compatibility of the topside development (particularly housing) with transport infrastructure, for example whether the noises from the roads and railways would affect the residents. In addition, some point out that as no consideration was given for topside development when the existing transport infrastructure was designed and built, there might be concerns over the loading to the existing transport infrastructure and other technical, planning and environmental issues.

Task Force's Overall Considerations and Recommendations

6.29 Topside development of housing and other facilities above transport infrastructure is nothing new in Hong Kong. Apart from railway stations, there are quite a number of cases of comprehensive topside developments over large bus termini and railway maintenance depots. The Task Force put forward this option mainly in a bid to facilitate society's discussion on the feasibility of further developments over **existing** transport infrastructure, including topside development above trunk roads and major road interchanges as suggested by some in the community.

6.30 **The Task Force considers that there would be more technical and planning challenges to overcome to implement topside development at existing transport infrastructure in operation.** Since no consideration for topside development was given during the design stage, such development would be subject to constraints posed by the existing transport infrastructure. There are precedents of decking over transport infrastructure for housing development after it had been completed, showing that the concept is not technically infeasible. But,

existing transport infrastructure would restrict the planning, design and construction of topside development; it would be more complicated than cases involving comprehensive planning in the initial stage; the costs would also be higher. On the technical side, there would be issues like viability of constructing an elevated platform and its supporting structure. On planning and land use, the issues involve compatibility of land uses, visual impact, air ventilation, environment and transport facilities, as well as the ownership of the topside housing development. In view of the scale and complexity of building an elevated platform and its associated structure, a longer construction period would be required and the overall cost higher. Since some of the transport infrastructure serve as major roads, long-spanned elevated platforms over the roads might be needed. Moreover, some of the major roads in the urban areas help improve ventilation, bring natural sunlight and disperse pollutants to a certain extent; thus, topside development along these roads might affect such functions, as well as the view of the buildings nearby.

- 6.31 Therefore, **the Task Force endorses the direction of utilising the topside space of transport infrastructure for other developments, but it would be more desirable to consider holistically the need and the feasibility to do so alongside the planning of the transport infrastructure, so as to handle the planning and design of different facilities at the same time, better integrate the functional uses of both developments, and minimise complex interface issues.** This recommendation echoes the concept of 3D planning and “single site, multiple uses” advocated by the Task Force in paragraph 5.8.5 of this report. Even when the construction of topside development does not start and complete simultaneously with the transport infrastructure, the necessary space and enabling hardware to support topside structures in future could still be reserved in designing and constructing the transport infrastructure. The Government should conduct detailed studies and identify suitable sites, as well as consult the local community and other stakeholders, if it plans to take forward topside development above existing transport infrastructure.

Utilising the Development Potential of Public Utilities Sites

6.32 Some members of society suggested the better utilisation of the space and development potential of public utilities sites to increase land supply. One idea is to undertake topside development at public utilities sites to provide housing. In general, when reviewing the land leases of these public utilities sites before their expiry in accordance with the existing mechanism, the Government will examine whether there is a need to retain the site for its original use. The Government will also review as appropriate the development potential of individual sites (especially relatively large ones at good locations), including the potential for topside development, with reference to relevant planning studies for that area.

6.33 Telephone exchanges are examples of public utilities. Currently, there are 81 sites used for this purpose.³⁵ These sites are scattered in various districts, covering a total area of 17.4 ha. Most of the telephone exchange sites are relatively small in size, with only two of over 4 000 square metres and located in urban areas. Among the 81 sites, 49 are holding a lease which will expire in or before 2025. The Government is now reviewing and considering the future use of these sites, against a host of factors including policy objectives and individual site specifics.

Summary of Public Views

6.34 In terms of **quantitative analysis**, the respective percentages of support for “Utilising the Development Potential of Public Utilities Sites” as reflected from the results of our questionnaires and telephone survey are shown in the following table.

³⁵ The 81 sites for telephone exchange and related use were granted between the 1950s and the 1990s. Typically, the relevant land grant was executed through the Conditions of Grant by Private Treaty (PTG) with the public utilities companies concerned paying full market value premium. In most of these leases, the user clause generally restricts the use of the sites to “telephone exchange” or “telecommunication(s) related use”. In some cases, other uses are also allowed, such as ancillary office and quarters. Since the full liberalisation of the telecommunications market in 2003, the Government has not granted any new site by way of PTG to licensees for telecommunications-related purposes.

	All Responses
Questionnaires	42%
Telephone survey	67%

(Figure 3 on page 27)

6.35 In terms of **qualitative analysis**, fewer responses have been received for this option. Supporting views mainly draw on the perspective of optimising land use, noting that the Government should consider resumption of public utilities sites at an appropriate time or non-renewal of the leases, if their original purposes are no longer required. For those sites which are still discharging their functions as required by society or individual industries, the Government should study whether they can be consolidated or whether the principle of “single site, multiple use” can be adopted, including exploring the feasibility of topside development. Some respondents express concern that topside development of public utilities sites might lead to visual impact or air ventilation problems. In addition, as with the other options which involve increasing development intensity, some citizens were concerned whether local transport networks can cope with the additional traffic and pedestrian flow if topside housing development is pursued.

Task Force’s Overall Considerations and Recommendations

6.36 Since the conceptual option of utilising public utilities sites does not mention specifically any development direction, approach or possible locations, there is less public discussion on the pros and cons of this option, and therefore not many views have been received. The Task Force opines that the size of public utility sites is generally small. The 81 sites of telephone exchanges, for example, occupy a total area of 17.4 ha only; the development potential is limited. However, as society evolves with the advancement of technology and policy changes, one should not preclude the potential of individual sites for other purposes. **The Task Force considers that, under the principle of optimising land use, the Government should review in due course whether individual public utilities sites are still performing their original functions, and whether certain sites carry the potential for development (including topside development), particularly the reasonably large sites in the urban areas.**

Kwai Tsing Container Terminals Sites (Including the options of “Relocation of Kwai Tsing Container Terminals” and “Topside Development of Kwai Tsing Container Terminals”)

6.37 The KTCTs are the major port facilities of Hong Kong. Located on the waterfronts of Kwai Chung, Tsing Yi and Stonecutters Island, and taking up 279 ha of land altogether, KTCTs comprise nine terminals which are run by five private operators under separate land leases. In the immediate vicinity of KTCTs, another 100 ha of land is primarily used for port back-up facilities. This land is mainly let out on short term tenancies (STTs) to operators for container vehicle parking and container storage/cargo handling to support the terminal operations.

6.38 There have been suggestions that the KTCTs should be relocated from the urban area to other parts of the city to offer a chance to modernise and upgrade the port infrastructure, while freeing up the land currently occupied by the terminals and the port back-up facilities (totally 380 ha) for other purposes. Besides, there are suggestions that housing units can be built above the terminals by constructing elevated platforms, so that existing port operations can be maintained while increasing housing supply at the same time. The Task Force therefore raises two conceptual options, namely relocation of KTCTs and topside development of KTCTs, for consideration by the public.

Summary of Public views

6.39 In terms of **quantitative analysis**, the respective percentage of support for the relocation of KTCTs and the topside development of KTCTs as reflected from the results of our questionnaires and telephone survey are shown in the following table.

	All responses	
	Relocation of KTCTs	Topside Development of KTCTs
Questionnaires	44%	37%
Telephone survey	52%	44%

(Figure 3 on page 27)

6.40 In terms of **qualitative analysis**, there are more responses showing concerns about the technical feasibility, economic benefits and development lead time of the two options. In relation to relocation of the terminals, considering that the terminals cover a vast stretch of land, and the effective operation of the terminals must be surrounded by waters deep enough and supported by efficient transport infrastructure, quite a number of responses express worries over the possibility of finding a suitable site to relocate the terminals, and the huge development costs involved. There are also views questioning why the relocation site, if so identified, is not used for housing or other purposes to start with. Apart from these, some views from the relevant sectors point out that KTCTs play a crucial role in the operation of the logistics, maritime and ports industries, and KTCTs is now operating round-the-clock and all year round. It would be of paramount importance to ensure a seamless transition of the new and old terminals in the relocation process, such that port operations would not be compromised. Regarding topside development, those in the sectors express similar concerns as to whether operations of KTCTs would be disrupted during the construction period, while a number of people are concerned about the compatibility of topside development with the neighbouring environment, and the impact on traffic, environment (including air, noise and glare) and visual setting. Quite a number of responses indicate that both the relocation and the topside development options would involve lots of technical and planning problems, which would take a long lead time to study and resolve. Even if the options were eventually confirmed to be feasible, it could only be implemented in the longer run; these options therefore could do little to alleviate the land shortage problem in the short-to-medium, or even the medium-to-long term.

6.41 On the other hand, some in favour argue that, from the perspectives of architectural design and engineering, most of the technical problems could be overcome, noting that the option of topside development might even have the potential to provide additional land in the medium-to-long term. In addition, a phased approach for the relocation or topside development of KTCTs could minimise the impact on the operations of the terminals. These responses point out that, before any detailed study is carried out, options with huge land potential should not be easily given up.

Task Force's Overall Considerations and Recommendations

6.42 The Task Force notes that, while both options cover the site of KTCTs, public concerns over the two are different. In the case of relocation of KTCTs, there are more supportive responses and the concerns are mainly about the replacement site, process and the impact throughout the relocation. The Task Force believes that, if these problems can all be addressed, relocating the terminals would undoubtedly release sizeable urban land of 380 ha without any issues about incompatibility between the site and housing. After relocation, the terminals would also be upgraded to keep up with the continuous development of the trade and economy of Hong Kong. Relocation of the Hong Kong International Airport from Kai Tak to Chek Lap Kok in 1998 proved that relocation of mega-scale infrastructure is feasible, and the long-term economic benefits thus arising are also obvious. However, relocation of the terminals would require substantial work and a long lead time for planning, design and implementation. In addition, while releasing urban site, the relocation option would not bring a net increase in land in overall terms³⁶. It is also not an easy task to identify a suitable location with seafront for the relocation. As regards topside development of the terminals, apart from the various engineering and technical problems, the Task Force believes that the public have considerable reservation about housing development atop a container terminal which operates round-the-clock, and the issues of compatibility and environmental impact in particular which all take time to study and address. This is probably one of the main reasons for the relatively low level of support for the option of topside development over the terminals, as compared with that of relocation. **On the whole, the Task Force considers that relocation of the terminals is relatively more preferable.**

6.43 Notwithstanding that the two options could hardly contribute to resolving the land shortage in the short-to-medium and medium-to-long run, **the Task Force considers that, for the long-term development, the Government may explore whether it is worthwhile to study the relocation option, taking into account the latest developments in the logistics, maritime and ports industries in Hong Kong, the**

³⁶ This is based on the assumption that the new terminals would have the same scale and size as those of KTCTs after relocation.

Mainland (especially the Greater Bay Area) and the whole region, the needs of Hong Kong Port, as well as the overall land demand and supply situation in Hong Kong.

Reclaiming Part of Plover Cove Reservoir for New Town Development

6.44 Located in Tai Mei Tuk in Tai Po, Plover Cove Reservoir (PCR) is Hong Kong's second largest reservoir in terms of storage capacity. With an area of about 1 200 ha, PCR represents about half of the total area covered by all the reservoirs and amounts to about 2.8% of the total area covered by country parks in Hong Kong. Its key functions include collecting and storing rainwater, acting as a buffer or transient storage for Dongjiang water, regulating water supply to major water treatment works, and providing a strategic reserve. Accounting for about 40% of Hong Kong's total storage capacity, the PCR plays an important strategic role in the water supply of Hong Kong.

6.45 There has been a suggestion from the community to reclaim around 600 ha of land of the PCR for developing a "Plover Cove New Town". It is suggested that 300 000 units could be built on the reclaimed land to house 0.8 to 1.2 million people, while the remaining area would be used for open space and water storage purposes. The suggestion also involves building two more desalination plants with capacity similar to the desalination plant in Tseung Kwan O, which is now at the planning stage.

Summary of Public Views

6.46 In terms of **quantitative analysis**, the respective percentage of support for "Reclaiming Part of Plover Cove Reservoir for New Town Development" as reflected from the results of our questionnaires and telephone survey are shown in the following table. This option is the least preferred one among the 18 options.

	All responses
Questionnaires	16%
Telephone survey	23%

(Figure 3 on page 27)

6.47 In terms of **quantitative analysis**, a majority of respondents oppose this option. They are especially concerned that any developments on the PCR would affect the stability and reliability of water supply, and may even lead to water pollution and affect public health. Some are concerned that the proposal which involves enlarging the scale of water desalination to maintain sufficient water supply may cause other environmental issues, such as significant increase in energy consumption and more carbon emission. In addition, the PCR is located at areas of relatively high ecological and conservation value within a country park. People are gravely concerned that reclaiming part of the PCR may lead to irreversible impact to the ecology, habitats as well as landscape and visual settings in the vicinity. While the majority of society are against reclaiming the reservoir as a land supply option, the Advisory Committee on Water Supplies has also formally expressed their strong objection.

Task Force's Overall Considerations and Recommendations

6.48 **The Task Force considers that the option of reclaiming part of the PCR for new town development would cause many potential impact and risks on various fronts.** It is noted that the community generally agrees that water is a strategic resource, and the supply, storage and collection of water must be properly safeguarded. The general public has serious doubts on whether one could ensure no damage or disruption to the operation of the reservoir after it is partly reclaimed.

6.49 Moreover, as the PCR falls within the country park area, the statutory procedures and considerations in connection with developing the country parks are also relevant to the suggestion of reclaiming a part of the PCR. As mentioned in the section of developing areas on the periphery of country parks set out in this report, there are quite a number of opposing voices in the community against the option of increasing land supply by developing the periphery of country parks. Public support is therefore even lower for reclaiming part of the PCR, which is located at areas of relatively high ecological and conservation value within a country park, and is of both landscape and recreational value. Furthermore, it is expected that reclaiming part of the PCR would involve very high construction costs to carry out works such as water supply works and infrastructure required to compensate for the

impact of reclamation of the reservoir. These include for example the construction of additional desalination plants or the additional intake of the Dongjiang water supply; the reconfiguration of a substantial part of Hong Kong's water supply network, and necessary measures to mitigate the impact on neighbouring country parks and other environmental impact.

6.50 Based on the public views and the abovementioned considerations, **the Task Force does not recommend reclaiming part of the PCR as a land supply option.**

Enhancing Current and Ongoing Land Supply Initiatives

6.51 The options proposed in Chapter 5 would help increase land supply, but they are unable to resolve our severe land shortage immediately. Therefore, **the Task Force considers that the Government should press ahead with the implementation of the various ongoing land supply initiatives**, with a view to narrowing the gap between land supply and demand and avoid aggravating the land shortage problem.

6.52 The Task Force is pleased to note that the Chief Executive in her 2018 Policy Address mentioned that a number of ongoing initiatives will be maintained, strengthened and enhanced. As set out in Chapter 3 of the PE Booklet, the Task Force has examined the ongoing initiatives for increasing land supply pursued by the Government. The following are ideas more frequently raised in the PE exercise and the Task Force's suggestions on enhancing the initiatives. However, the Task Force must emphasise that the following initiatives would not boost land and housing supply to a great extent; quite a number of these would actually further intensify development in existing built-up areas and exert more pressure on the existing provision of community and infrastructural facilities. Therefore, in the Task Force's view, these initiatives cannot resolve the shortage problem once and for all. **In the long term, expanding the sources of land supply is the only way to continuously meet the demand for land to sustain the development of Hong Kong.**

Increasing Development Intensity

6.53 While Hong Kong's urban areas are fully developed with very high living density, there are views that the development intensity in the NT is lower for historical reasons and due to insufficient transport infrastructure in the past. Following the enhancement and upgrade of various infrastructural facilities, the Government may consider increasing the development intensity at appropriate areas in the NT to yield more additional floor space more quickly and relieve in particular the pressure of public housing shortage, without causing excessive impact on the surrounding environment.

6.54 The Task Force agrees that increasing the development intensity of existing land as appropriate is a feasible way to increase housing supply and other usable space in the short term. It also aligns with the principle of optimising land use. The Task Force notes that the Government has, since 2014, implemented a policy to allow the development intensity of residential sites to be increased by up to 20% as far as practicable. Some of the more recent and major beneficiaries of such policy initiatives are the Kai Tak Development Area and the eight public housing sites in the KTN/FLN NDAs. On the premise that the increase in development intensity is technically viable in various aspects such as infrastructure capacity, environment and ecology, and that such increase is not unacceptable from the perspectives of planning and urban design, the Task Force believes that the Government may explore whether the development intensity of individual sites should be further increased.

Optimising the Use of Vacant/Short-term Sites

6.55 There are quite a number of views that the Government has yet to make best use of the vacant government sites (VGSs) or sites granted by way of STT and temporary government land allocation (TGLA) for various uses, and that the Government should convert these sites to long-term uses such as housing or social welfare facilities, including transitional housing. There are also views that the Government should provide assistance to NGOs interested in making better use of VGSs through the provision of more information, support and streamlined procedures for the benefits of society.

6.56 The Task Force considers that the community should not overestimate the development potential of the three above-mentioned types of land. Many vacant government sites are small in size, while STT and TGLA sites are currently occupied by different uses (including works sites for infrastructures, social welfare uses and car parks) and one could not assume that such uses can be terminated any time without the need for reprovisioning. However, under the principle of optimising land use, the Task Force recognises that the use of these three types of land should be optimised as far as possible, and there should be regular dissemination of information to address certain short-term or transitional needs for land. The Task Force notes that the Government

is actively assisting non-profit-making organisations to explore the feasibility of constructing pre-fabricated modular housing for transitional use on idle private and government sites. In addition, the Government has set aside \$1 billion for a funding scheme to support gainful uses of vacant sites by NGOs for non-profit-making community purposes. The Task Force also notes that a list of government sites available for application by NGOs for green or community uses has been uploaded onto the LandsD's website for public viewing.

Optimising the Use of Vacant School Premises (VSPs)

6.57 There are suggestions that the Government should expedite the conversion of VSPs, in particular sites in the urban area which are accessible or larger in size, for residential uses, transitional housing or provision of community facilities. The Task Force agrees that the Government should continue to review the long-term planning of VSPs and expedite the use of VSPs for other uses that better meet the needs of the community. The Task Force is aware that certain VSPs which are better located and larger in size are already used or planned for public housing or other community facilities purposes. As for the remaining VSPs, especially those more remotely located or smaller ones pending long-term development, the Government will garner "community wisdom" to explore possible land use proposals by publishing regular updates of the list of VSPs available for application by NGOs. The above-mentioned funding scheme for vacant government sites is also applicable to VSPs.

Revitalising Industrial Buildings (IBs)

6.58 There are views from the business and industrial sectors that the Government should facilitate the conversion and redevelopment of aged IBs to meet the operational needs of the modern and emerging industries on the one hand, and to revitalise the conventional IBs with more permitted uses and streamline approval procedures on the other hand. For example, one suggestion is to explore the possibility of providing transitional housing in converted IBs.

6.59 The Task Force agrees that use of aged IBs should be further optimised taking into account relevant fire and building safety considerations. In this regard, the Task Force notes that the Government will soon re-launch measures to revitalise IBs, in response to the ardent aspirations of the business and industrial sectors and the community. As for converting IBs into transitional housing, the Task Force is apprised of the Government's initiatives to exercise flexibility in respect of the planning and building design requirements, and that applicants will be charged a nil waiver fee for the specific use of transitional housing.

Streamlining Development Procedures

6.60 Quite a number of professionals and practitioners in the respective sectors find the existing control procedures of land development complicated and tedious, which slow down the progress of development projects.

6.61 The Task Force agrees that, by streamlining the procedures of land development control, the supply of land and housing could be expedited and uncertainties in the development process reduced. In this regard, the Government should review and streamline the approval procedures, as well as cutting red tape by consolidating and rationalising the standards and definitions adopted by various departments in scrutinising the development proposals. The Task Force notes that the Development Bureau has set up a steering group in 2017 to focus on streamlining the procedures of development approval by departments under its purview, including rationalising the approval of building height, greening coverage and landscape requirements. The new arrangements will be introduced progressively over the coming year. In addition, the steering group will further review the areas on calculation of Gross Floor Area, building setback and building separation in the Sustainable Building Design Guidelines, and whether approval or consent under the lease will be subject to premium.

Expediting Urban Renewal

6.62 There are suggestions to expedite urban renewal, including the redevelopment of public housing estates and buildings developed under the Civil Servants' Co-operative Building Society Scheme. Some also suggest that certain redeveloped sites should continue to be used as or converted to public housing. Given the need to rehouse the affected residents, urban renewal would rather increase the demand for housing in the short term. Moreover, as the entire redevelopment process would be lengthy, the potential of the relevant sites would be frozen during the course of redevelopment and relocation. Furthermore, as most of the sites with high redevelopment value have already been redeveloped in the past decades, there is a trend of diminishing plot ratio gains upon the redevelopment of old buildings. Therefore, redevelopment of old buildings does not necessarily result in a substantial net gain in the number of new flats. Nevertheless, urban renewal has its important functions to address the problem of urban decay and improve the living environment of residents in ageing urban areas. Society also has strong aspirations for the continuous process of urban redevelopment. Significant increase in land supply can meet the prerequisite of finding sufficient decanting sites for affected residents, and thus help to expand the scope of urban renewal, shorten the lead time of redevelopment, and arrest the continual urban decay.

Other Views

6.63 During the PE, the Task Force has received quite a number of suggestions related to land supply other than the 18 land supply options and ongoing land supply initiatives. Matters that have attracted relatively more discussion can be grouped into the following few areas. As some involve a number of planning, land administration, legal and financial issues, the Task Force does not find it appropriate to come to a view at the moment. The Government may make reference to these views and consider whether they should be examined further. For the remaining opinions on land supply, they are compiled in **Appendix III**³⁷ due to limited space of this report.

³⁷ Available for downloading on website of the Task Force.

Land Administration

- 6.64 Several organisations have put forward proposals in relation to the **consolidation of land**. The suggestions are largely about setting up a comprehensive and transparent mechanism to enable land owners to assemble their land parcels that are fragmented or irregularly shaped, with a view to facilitating more holistic and sizeable developments. Some ideas propose the exchange of private lands with the development rights for land in an area that has undergone replanning by the Government. There is also suggestion to require firm commitment from the land owners to render a certain proportion of land to the Government for public housing or public uses, and to pay the full land premium in accordance with the established mechanism.
- 6.65 **“Tso/Tong” land** in general refers to those land collectively owned by traditional organisations in the NT and it does not belong to any single person as a matter of law. Under the New Territories Ordinance (Cap. 97), the consent of the District Officer, on behalf of the Secretary for Home Affairs, is required before a registered manager of the concerned “Tso/Tong” may sell any land registered in the name of such “Tso/Tong”. In considering whether such consent should be given, the District Officer will normally consider whether unanimous consent of the members of the concerned “Tso/Tong” has been obtained. There are views that the criteria on the sale of “Tso/Tong” land are too stringent as it is not unusual for the members of the Tso/Tong to fail to reach a unanimous consent; this in effect freezes the development potential of such land. Therefore, there are suggestions that the restrictions on the sale of “Tso/Tong” land be amended or relaxed, or that other different measures such as the PPP model should be considered to release “Tso/Tong” land in the short term for other purposes.
- 6.66 There is even suggestion that the Government should, upon expiry of the leases of agricultural land, refrain from renewing the leases in order to resume the absolute right in determining land supply in the NT, thereby releasing a large quantity of agricultural land for development.

Better Use of Existing Land

6.67 There are quite a number of suggestions for the Government to consider optimising the use of rural areas as well as the land close to the border or the Loop; levelling of hills; and relocation or removal of facilities that occupy large sites so as to release land for other uses. The site reserved for Phase Two development of the Hong Kong Disneyland, facilities of the disciplinary forces and correctional services, university campuses and large parks are the more cited examples.

Land Financing

6.68 There is suggestion on the **land bond**, which is somehow similar to the “Letters A/B” in the 1960s to 1980s. The idea is that land owners may choose to exchange their land located in planned development zones for other government land, including new land to be formed or land created by reclamation. The project proponent considers this a tool of trading latent and more remote land resources with readily developable land in the short term.

6.69 Some argue that in order to be free from the influences of the economic cycles, the Government should better use the Hong Kong’s fiscal surplus for land development. There are suggestions that the Government may consider setting aside part of the government surplus for a **Land Fund**, through injecting money as capital into a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) which is specifically authorised by the Government to take charge of the development and supply of land in Hong Kong to meet the policy objectives of land supply in the long run.

Conclusion

Land shortage is a long-standing, huge and formidable problem that has plagued Hong Kong for a long time. Obvious signs of the problem include unaffordable property prices, soaring rents and a shortage of public housing. The land shortage has also caused more deep-rooted issues such as less upward mobility for our young people; less graceful ageing for our retired seniors; and a more difficult environment for businesses and start-ups. The high prices and rents of retail space, offices and logistics facilities directly or indirectly weaken the competitiveness of Hong Kong and raise the cost of living to the detriment of our people. We can neither afford such property prices nor such a protracted land shortage; unless we take prompt action soon, Hong Kong will continue to suffer and can hardly move forward.

Land supply concerns you and me. It involves the interests of many and a series of complex implementation issues. The work of the Task Force is not only about raising awareness in the community on the dire land shortage and the pros and cons of various options through the PE exercise. More importantly, the Task Force aims to spread the key message that there is no painless option, and society together must strike a balance, make trade-offs and prepare for the future. This would ensure that the initiatives on increasing land supply are taken forward comprehensively, swiftly and sustainably.

The Task Force feels honoured to have contributed to the process of resolving the land shortage in a joint effort with the community. Since the establishment of the Task Force, Members have spearheaded the PE exercise with a humble heart. In this brief spell of five months, the Task Force is relieved to see that all sectors of the community responded to our call “Land for Hong Kong: Our Home, Our Say” by participating actively in PE activities, completing questionnaires and putting forth many insightful opinions. The outcome of the PE has far exceeded Task Force’s expectation. As the Task Force has emphasised, listening itself is an option. In preparing this report, the Task Force has reflected the mainstream views in the community without disregarding the voices and concerns of the minority and individual stakeholders. The report is based on solid public opinion and the diverse wisdom of the community. The Task Force is confident that the report represents and shows truthfully society’s mainstream opinions and consensus on land supply issues.

The work of the Task Force will come to an end following the submission of this report. It is also the time to put aside controversy over land supply issues and move forward. The Task Force hopes that the Government would consider the recommendations in this report in detail and take forward in a steadfast manner the land supply strategy and various land supply options endorsed by the majority in society. Meanwhile, the Task Force appeals to all sectors of society to join hands and strive for a multi-pronged supply of land by putting into action the mainstream choices and supporting initiatives on increasing land supply, with a view to alleviating the shortage in the near future and eradicating the problem in the long run. Hopefully, we will soon be clear of the affliction of the land shortage and bring new hopes for our next generation.

**Membership and Terms of Reference
of the Task Force on Land Supply**

Membership List

Non-official members

Mr Stanley Wong Yuen-fai, S.B.S., J.P. (Chairman)

Ir Dr Greg Wong Chak-yan, B.B.S., J.P. (Vice-chairman)

Professor Chau Kwong-wing

Mr Cheung Hok-ming, G.B.M., G.B.S., J.P.

Mr Simon Fung Shing-cheung

Mr Ho Hei-wah, B.B.S., J.P.

Ms Iris Hoi

Professor Lam Kin-che, S.B.S., J.P.

Mr Lau Chun-kong, J.P.

Professor Jimmy Leung Cheuk-fai, S.B.S.

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Mr Jasper Tsang Yok-sing, G.B.M., G.B.S., J.P.

Ir Wai Chi-sing, G.B.S., J.P.

Mr Wong Kit-loong

Mr Wong Kwun, B.B.S., M.H.

Mr Stephen Wong Yuen-shan

Professor Anthony Wu Ting-yuk, G.B.S., J.P.

Mr Ricky Yu Wai-yip

Official members

Secretary for Development or representative

Secretary for the Environment or representative

Secretary for Transport and Housing or representative

Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands) or representative

Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) or representative

Director of Civil Engineering and Development or representative

Director of Lands or representative

Director of Planning or representative

Secretary

Principal Assistant Secretary (Planning and Lands), Development Bureau

Terms of Reference

- (1) To take stock of the demand and supply of land resources;
- (2) To review and recommend enhancement to the implementation of land development measures for the short, medium and long term already promulgated, and taking into account these measures to review and evaluate other land supply options and their relative priorities;
- (3) To raise public awareness of the facts and constraints in land supply;
- (4) To engage the public in thorough discussions on the pros and cons of different land supply options and facilitate consensus-building on the preferred options and their priorities; and
- (5) To come up with a broad framework recommending enhancement to the overall land supply strategy and prioritising different land supply options for further consideration by the Government.

The 18 Land Supply Options ³⁸

**I. Short-to-medium term Options
(with potential to provide additional land in around 10 years' time)**

Option	Estimated Area of Short-to-Medium Term Land Supply (ha)	Estimated Area of Medium-to-Long Term Land Supply (ha)	Note
Developing Brownfield Sites	110	220	There are about 760 ha of brownfield sites which are not covered in the New Development Areas in the New Territories (NT). As the study conducted by the Government on these brownfield sites are ongoing, detailed estimation on the area of land which can be released for other developments cannot be made at the moment. If we simply adopt 15% of the above-mentioned land area as a rough basis of estimation for the short-to-medium term, about 110 ha of land can be released for other developments. Assuming double amount (i.e. 30%) of land can be released in the medium-to-long term, additional 220 ha of land can be released.
Tapping into Private Agricultural Land Reserve in the New Territories	150	300	According to information available in the public domain, major developers are believed to be holding no less than 1 000 ha of agricultural land in the NT*. As the Government has not conducted studies on the distribution and development potential of these agricultural land, nor has formulated a mechanism of the proposed public-private partnership, detailed estimation on the area of land which can be released for other developments cannot be made at the moment. If we simply adopt 15% of the above-mentioned land area as a rough basis of estimation for the short-to-medium term, about 150 ha of land can be released for other developments. Assuming double amount (i.e. 30%) of land can be released in the medium-to-long term, additional 300 ha of land can be released. * Some of them may overlap with New Development Areas or brownfield sites, hence the amount of potential new land supply could be lower.

³⁸ The figure underneath each option is the Task Force's estimation of the potential additional land yield (i.e. not included in the expected 3 600 ha of land supply in the "HK2030+" study) of the respective option, some of which involves rough estimation and assumptions. For details, please refer to the note of individual options. The Task Force has provided these figures in the questionnaire and the telephone survey for the reference of the public.

Option	Estimated Area of Short-to-Medium Term Land Supply (ha)	Estimated Area of Medium-to-Long Term Land Supply (ha)	Note
Alternative Uses of Sites under Private Recreational Leases	60	120	There are a total of 66 Private Recreational Lease (PRL) sites with a total area of about 408 ha. As the lease terms of these PRL sites are different and the Government is conducting a review of the PRL policy, the Government has not conducted detailed studies on the development potential of these PRL sites. In this regard, detailed estimation on the area of land which can be released for other developments cannot be made at the moment. If we simply adopt 15% of the above-mentioned land area as a rough basis of calculation for the short-to-medium term, about 60 ha of land can be released for other developments. Assuming double amount (i.e. 30%) of land can be released in the medium-to-long term, additional 120 ha of land can be released.
Relocation or Consolidation of Land-Extensive Recreational Facilities	3	14	There are a total of 95 land-extensive sports and recreational facilities managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department. Each of these facilities generally occupy a land area of 3 ha or above. In this regard, the total area of these sites will be no less than 285 ha. As these recreational and sports facilities are for public use and the utilisation rate is high, taking into account the considerable constraints on relocation or consolidation, it is roughly assumed that only 1% (or 3 ha) and 5% (or 14 ha) of the above-mentioned land can be released in the short-to-medium and medium-to-long term respectively.

II. Medium-to-Long Term Options (with potential to provide additional land in around 10 to 30 years' time)

Option	Estimated Area of Short-to-Medium Term Land Supply (ha)	Estimated Area of Medium-to-Long Term Land Supply (ha)	Note
Near-shore Reclamation Outside Victoria Harbour	0	450	It is estimated that the five proposed near-shore reclamation locations, namely Lung Kwu Tan, Siu Ho Wan, Sunny Bay, Ma Liu Shui and Tsing Yi Southwest, can provide some 450 ha of land in total.
Developing the East Lantau Metropolis	0	1000	The East Lantau Metropolis is one of the two Strategic Growth Areas beyond 2030 proposed in the "Hong Kong 2030+" study. It involves the construction of artificial islands in the Central Waters between Lantau and Hong Kong Island that can provide over 1,000 ha of land.

Option	Estimated Area of Short-to-Medium Term Land Supply (ha)	Estimated Area of Medium-to-Long Term Land Supply (ha)	Note
Developing Caverns and Underground Space	0	40	The Government has identified some existing sewage treatment works and service reservoirs for exploring the feasibility of relocating them to caverns. The relocations may release around 40 ha of land in total.
More New Development Areas in the New Territories	0	720	New Territories North is one of the two Strategic Growth Areas beyond 2030 proposed in the “Hong Kong 2030+” study with developable area of around 720 ha, of which 200 ha are brownfield sites.
Developing the River Trade Terminal site	0	65	The River Trade Terminal sites occupying an area of 65 ha may be released to accommodate industrial and brownfield-related operations.
Developing Two Pilot Areas on the Periphery of Country Parks	0	40	The Hong Kong Housing Society is conducting ecological and technical studies on developing two pilot areas on the periphery of country parks to investigate the feasibility for developing public housing and other non-profit-making facilities. The two pilot areas cover Tai Lam and Shui Chuen O with a total area of 40 ha.

III. Conceptual Options

(Unable to confirm when and how much additional land can be provided for the time being)³⁹

- Developing the River Trade Terminal Site and its Surroundings in the Long Term
- Developing More Areas on the Periphery of Country Parks
- Increasing Development Intensity of “Village Type Development” Zones
- Topside Development of Existing Transport Infrastructure
- Utilising the Development Potential of Public Utilities Sites
- Relocation of Kwai Tsing Container Terminals
- Topside Development of Kwai Tsing Container Terminals
- Reclaiming Part of Plover Cove Reservoir for New Town Development

³⁹ There is no estimation of potential land yield for conceptual options.

**Public Engagement of the Task Force on Land Supply
Land for Hong Kong: Our Home, Our Say!**

Disclaimer:

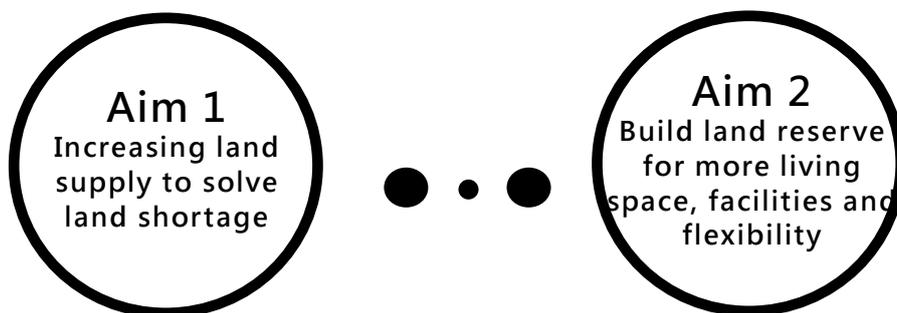
Individuals or organisations who have provided views and suggestions to the Task Force on Land Supply (Task Force) during the public engagement exercise will be seen as consenting to allow the Task Force to publicise some or all of the content of their views (including names of individuals and organisations). If you do not agree with such arrangement, please indicate when providing your views and suggestions.

Background:

According to the “Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030” (Hong Kong 2030+) study, Hong Kong will face a land shortfall of at least 1,200 hectares (ha), which is equivalent to the area of more than 60 Victoria Parks. The Task Force is of the view that the actual shortfall should be much higher than 1,200 ha since many factors have not been fully taken into account, including public aspiration for improvement in average living space per person; faster-than-expected growth in the demand for healthcare and welfare services arising from an ageing population; possible need to speed up urban renewal; land requirements of certain industries, etc. Further, if there is any delay or reduction in scale of development for projects in progress or planned projects (including rezoning and New Development Areas (NDAs)), the problem of land shortage will aggravate.

Land development takes time. There is no single solution to solve the land supply problem, nor is there a perfect option. A multi-pronged approach is the only direction to pursue. The community as a whole has to balance the overall benefits and costs, the time required to provide land and other underlying issues pertinent to each land supply option.

With the below two aims in mind, the Task Force cordially seeks views of the public on the 18 land supply options.



Estimation of Overall Land Supply and Demand until 2046			
	Shortfall until 2026 (Short to Medium Term) (Minimum)	Shortfall in 2026-2046 (Medium to Long Term) (Minimum)	Total Shortfall (Minimum)
Minimum Shortfall	-815 ha (about -800 ha)	-391 ha (about -400 ha)	-1,206 ha (about -1,200 ha)

Source: Planning Department's "Hong Kong 2030+" Study



Public Engagement of the Task Force on Land Supply Land for Hong Kong: Our Home, Our Say!

Main questions

(Please fill in the circle completely with a ball pen or pencil)

Please select the land supply option(s) that is/are acceptable to you.¹

The Task Force encourages citizens to choose more options to meet the minimum target of 1,200 ha or more of additional land so as to solve the problem of land shortage and build land reserve.

Short-to-medium term Options (multiple selection allowed)

(with potential to provide additional land in around 10 years' time; these 4 short-to-medium term options also have the potential to provide more lands in the medium-to-long term)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p><input type="radio"/> Developing Brownfield Sites
Estimated additional land area: 110 ha</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Alternative Uses of Sites under Private Recreational Leases
Estimated additional land area: 60 ha</p> | <p><input type="radio"/> Tapping into Private Agricultural Land Reserve in the New Territories
Estimated additional land area: 150 ha</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Relocation or Consolidation of Land-Extensive Recreational Facilities
Estimated additional land area: 3 ha</p> |
|--|---|

(1) Total additional land area for your selected short-to-medium options: _____ ha*

**The minimum shortfall in the short-to-medium term is over 800 ha. Since land production takes time, even if all short-to-medium term options are in place, the land shortage in the short-to-medium term cannot be completely solved.*

Medium-to-long term Options (multiple selection allowed)

(with potential to provide additional land in around 10 to 30 years' time)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p><input type="radio"/> Developing Brownfield Sites
Estimated additional land area: 220 ha</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Alternative Uses of Sites under Private Recreational Leases
Estimated additional land area: 120 ha</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Near-shore Reclamation outside Victoria Harbour
Estimated additional land area: 450 ha</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Developing Caverns and Underground Space
Estimated additional land area: 40 ha</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Developing the River Trade Terminal Site
Estimated additional land area: 65 ha</p> | <p><input type="radio"/> Tapping into Private Agricultural Land Reserve in the New Territories
Estimated additional land area: 300 ha</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Relocation or Consolidation of Land-Extensive Recreational Facilities
Estimated additional land area: 14 ha</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Developing the East Lantau Metropolis
Estimated additional land area: 1,000 ha</p> <p><input type="radio"/> More New Development Areas in the New Territories
Estimated additional land area: 720 ha</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Developing Two Pilot Areas on the Periphery of Country Parks
Estimated additional land area: 40 ha</p> |
|--|---|

(2) Total additional land area for your selected medium-to-long term options: _____ ha

Total additional land area for all your options: (1)+(2)= _____ ha*

***If the total additional land area is less than 1,200 ha, please consider choosing more land supply options.**

Conceptual Options

(unable to confirm when and how much additional land can be provided for the time being)

Please select the following conceptual option(s) that is/are acceptable to you. (Multiple selection allowed)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p><input type="radio"/> Developing the River Trade Terminal Site and its Surroundings in the Long Term</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Increasing Development Intensity of "Village Type Development" Zones</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Utilising the Development Potential of Public Utilities Sites</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Topside Development of Kwai Tsing Container Terminals</p> | <p><input type="radio"/> Developing More Areas on the Periphery of Country Parks</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Topside Development of Existing Transport Infrastructure</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Relocation of Kwai Tsing Container Terminals</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Reclaiming Part of Plover Cove Reservoir for New Town Development</p> |
|---|---|

¹ The figure underneath each option is the Task Force's estimation of the potential additional land yield (i.e. not included in the expected 3,600 ha of land supply in the "HK2030+" study) of the respective option, some of which involves rough estimation and assumptions. For details, please refer to Annex.



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Other questions

1. Do you have any other opinion in regard to the 18 land supply options identified by the Task Force?

2. Apart from the 18 land supply options identified by the Task Force, do you have other suggestions to increase land supply?

3. Please share your suggestions or comments on the arrangement of this public engagement exercise.

4. Do you have any other land supply-related opinion?

Demographics

Age group: Under 18 18-30 31-59 60 or above

Housing status:

You own the property you live in You are the tenant (Private residential flat)

You are the tenant (Public housing flat) Your household member owns the property you live in

Your household member is the tenant (Private residential flat) Your household member is the tenant (Public housing flat)

Others (please specify):

Residential District:

Central & Western Eastern Southern Wan Chai

Kowloon City Kwun Tong Sham Shui Po Wong Tai Sin Yau Tsim Mong

Islands Kwai Tsing North Sai Kung Sha Tin

Tai Po Tsuen Wan Tuen Mun Yuen Long

Others (please specify):

Please submit this questionnaire on or before 26th September 2018 by post (or use the web based tool instead²)

Post: Social Sciences Research Centre
The University of Hong Kong
Room 815, 8/F., The Jockey Club Tower
Centennial Campus,
Pokfulam, Hong Kong

Enquiry The Secretariat, Task Force on Land Supply

Tel: 3509 7737

Emai: tfls@devb.gov.hk

Thank you!

² The web-based tool will be launched in June 2018. Please check www.landforhongkong.hk for details.

Annex: Note on Land Supply Figure

Short-to-Medium Term Options

Options	Short-to-medium term (ha)	Medium-to-long term (ha)	Note
Developing brownfield sites	110	220	<p>There are about 760 hectares (ha) of brownfield sites which are not covered in the New Development Areas in the New Territories. As the study conducted by the Government on these brownfield sites are ongoing, detailed estimation on the area of land which can be released for other developments cannot be made at the moment. If we simply adopt 15% of the above-mentioned land area as a rough basis of estimation for the short-to-medium term, about 110 ha of land can be released for other developments. Assuming double amount (i.e. 30%) of land can be released in the medium-to-long term, additional 220 ha of land can be released.</p>
Tapping into private agricultural land reserve in the New Territories	150	300	<p>According to information available in the public domain, major developers are believed to be holding no less than 1,000 ha of agricultural land in the NT¹. As the Government has not conducted studies on the distribution and development potential of these agricultural land, nor has formulated a mechanism of the proposed public-private partnership, detailed estimation on the area of land which can be released for other developments cannot be made at the moment. If we simply adopt 15% of the above-mentioned land area as a rough basis of estimation for the short-to-medium term, about 150 ha of land can be released for other developments. Assuming double amount (i.e. 30%) of land can be released in the medium-to-long term, additional 300 ha of land can be released.</p> <p>Note 1: Some of them may overlap with New Development Areas or brownfield sites, hence the amount of potential new land supply could be lower.</p>
Alternative uses of sites under Private Recreational Leases	60	120	<p>There are a total of 66 Private Recreational Lease (PRL) sites with a total area of about 408 ha. As the lease terms of these PRL sites are different and the Government is conducting a review of the PRL policy, the Government has not conducted detailed studies on the development potential of these PRL sites. In this regard, detailed estimation on the area of land which can be released for other developments cannot be made at the moment. If we simply adopt 15% of the above-mentioned land area as a rough basis of calculation for the short-to-medium term, about 60 ha of land can be released for other developments. Assuming double amount (i.e. 30%) of land can be released in the medium-to-long term, additional 120 ha of land can be released.</p>

Options	Short-to-medium term (ha)	Medium-to-long term (ha)	Note
Relocation or consolidation of land-extensive recreational facilities	3	14	There are a total of 95 land-extensive sports and recreational facilities managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department. Each of these facilities generally occupy a land area of 3 ha or above. In this regard, the total area of these sites will be no less than 285 ha. As these recreational and sports facilities are for public use and the utilisation rate is high, taking into account the considerable constraints on relocation or consolidation, it is roughly assumed that only 1% (or 3 ha) and 5% (or 14 ha) of the above-mentioned land can be released in the short-to-medium and medium-to-long term respectively.

Medium-to-Long Term Options

Options	Short-to-medium term (ha)	Medium-to-long term (ha)	Note
Near-shore reclamation outside Victoria Harbour	0	450	It is estimated that the five proposed near-shore reclamation locations, namely Lung Kwu Tan, Siu Ho Wan, Sunny Bay, Ma Liu Shui and Tsing Yi Southwest, can provide some 450 ha of land in total.
Developing the East Lantau Metropolis	0	1000	The East Lantau Metropolis is one of the two Strategic Growth Areas beyond 2030 proposed in the "Hong Kong 2030+" study. It involves the construction of artificial islands in the Central Waters between Lantau and Hong Kong Island that can provide over 1,000 ha of land.
Developing caverns and underground space	0	40	The Government has identified some existing sewage treatment works and service reservoirs for exploring the feasibility of relocating them to caverns. The relocations may release around 40 ha of land in total.
More new development areas in the New Territories	0	720	New Territories North is one of the two Strategic Growth Areas beyond 2030 proposed in the "Hong Kong 2030+" study with developable area of around 720 ha, of which 200 ha are brownfield sites.
Developing the River Trade Terminal site	0	65	The River Trade Terminal sites occupying an area of 65 ha may be released to accommodate industrial and brownfield-related operations.
Developing two pilot areas on the periphery of country parks	0	40	The Hong Kong Housing Society is conducting ecological and technical studies on developing two pilot areas on the periphery of country parks to investigate the feasibility for developing public housing and other non-profit-making facilities. The two pilot areas cover Tai Lam and Shui Chuen O with a total area of 40 ha.

Questions Asked in Telephone Survey

【Self introduction】

“Hello, this is Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The Task Force on Land Supply is conducting a public engagement exercise on land supply issues of Hong Kong, with a view to resolving the problem of land shortage and developing a land reserve. On behalf of the Task Force, we are conducting a telephone opinion survey. Is it okay for us to start this survey?”

**** 【For Landline Survey: Ask CHERES to REPEAT1. For Mobile Survey: Ask CHKAGE to REPEAT2】**

【CHKRES to REPEAT1: For Landline Survey】

CHKRES “Is this a residential unit?” **【For Landline Survey only】**

- 0. Yes **【Press "0" then press ENTER to continue】**
- . No **【Press "CONTROL/END" to terminate】**

NMEMBERS “In order to avoid the sample being biased towards a certain type of person, we would like to conduct random sampling. NOT including foreign domestic helpers, how many family members aged 18 or above are currently living in the unit? That is, those who spend at least four nights or above a week in the unit” **【For Landline Survey only】**

- 1. Only one **【Skip to MOBILE】**
- 2. Two
- 3. Three
- 4. Four
- 5. Five
- 6. Six
- 7. Seven
- 8. Eight
- 9. Refused **【Skip to MOBILE】**

SEL_MEM “Because there is more than one eligible respondent in your household, we hope that all the eligible family members would have an equal opportunity to be selected. So among the ___ persons you just mentioned, could you please ask the one who will have the next birthday to answer the phone?” **【For Landline Survey only】**

- 0. Yes **【Press "0" then press ENTER to continue】**
- . No **【Press "CONTROL/END" to terminate】**

MOBILE “Do you have a local mobile phone number for telephone calls?”

【For Landline Survey only】

- 0. No 【Skip to GENDER】
- 1. Yes 【Skip to REPEAT1】

REPEAT1 “Have you been interviewed by us for this survey through mobile phone before?”

【For Landline Survey only】

- 0. No 【Skip to GENDER】
- 1. Yes 【End of Interview】

【CHKAGE to REPEAT2: For Mobile Survey】

CHKAGE “The targeted respondents of this survey are Hong Kong residents aged 18 or above.

Do you belong to this group?” 【For Mobile Phone Survey only】

- 0. Yes 【Press "0" then press ENTER to continue】
- . No 【Press "CONTROL/END" to terminate】

SCREEN1 “Are you the main user of this mobile phone number?”

【For Mobile Phone Survey only】

- 0. The person who answer the phone is the main user of this mobile phone number
【Go to LAND】
- 1. The person who answer the phone is NOT the main user of this mobile phone
number 【Go to SCREEN2】

SCREEN2 “May you please ask the main user of this mobile phone number to answer the phone”

【For Mobile Phone Survey only】

- 0. Main user answers the phone 【Press “ESC” to go back to “Self-introduction”】
- Main user is not available 【Temporarily ended --> Call Back】
- Main user refuses to answer 【Finish】

LAND “Do you currently have a landline at home?” 【For Mobile Phone Survey only】

- 0. No 【Skip to GENDER】
- 1. Yes 【Skip to REPEAT2】

REPEAT2 “Have you been interviewed by us for this survey through landline before?”

【For Mobile Phone Survey only】

- 0. No 【Skip to GENDER】
- 1. Yes 【End of Interview】

Q4 “Relocating or consolidating land-extensive government recreational facilities such as sports grounds and recreational centres. It is estimated that this option can provide about 3 hectares of land in the coming 10 years and about 14 hectares of land in the coming 10 to 30 years. Would you select this option?”

1. Yes

2. No

8. No comment / Did not know / Hard to tell

9. Refused to answer

“The Task Force has also identified six medium-to-long term measures, which have the potential to provide additional land in the coming 10 to 30 years. We would like to know if you would select the following options”

Q5 “Reclaiming near-shore sites outside Victoria Harbour, for example, Lung Kwu Tan in Tuen Mun, Siu Ho Wan and Sunny Bay in North Lantau, Ma Liu Shui in Shatin, and Tsing Yi Southwest. It is estimated that this option can provide about 450 hectares of land in the coming 10 to 30 years. Would you select this option?”

1. Yes

2. No

8. No comment / Did not know / Hard to tell

9. Refused to answer

Q6 “Constructing artificial islands in the waters between Hong Kong Island and Lantau Island to develop the “East Lantau Metropolis” as a new town and a core commercial district. It is estimated that this option can provide about 1,000 hectares of land in the coming 10 to 30 years. Would you select this option?”

1. Yes

2. No

8. No comment / Did not know / Hard to tell

9. Refused to answer

Q7 “Developing caverns and underground space to accommodate suitable government facilities, such as sewage treatment works and service reservoirs, to release more surface areas for other uses. It is estimated that this option can provide about 40 hectares of land in the coming 10 to 30 years. Would you select this option?”

1. Yes

2. No

8. No comment / Did not know / Hard to tell

9. Refused to answer

Q8 “Developing more New Development Areas in the New Territories, such as those areas in the New Territories North that have development potential. It is estimated that this option can provide about 720 hectares of land in the coming 10 to 30 years. Would you select this option?”

1. Yes

2. No

8. No comment / Did not know / Hard to tell

9. Refused to answer

Q9 “Releasing the River Trade Terminal site in Tuen Mun West to accommodate industrial and brownfield-related operations. It is estimated that this option can provide about 65 hectares of land in the coming 10 to 30 years. Would you select this option?”

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

- 8. No comment / Did not know / Hard to tell
- 9. Refused to answer

Q10 “Developing two pilot areas on the periphery of country parks of relatively low ecological and public enjoyment value in Tai Lam and Shui Chuen O respectively to build public housing units or non-profit-making elderly homes. It is estimated that this option can provide about 40 hectares of land in the coming 10 to 30 years. Would you select this option?”

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

- 8. No comment / Did not know / Hard to tell
- 9. Refused to answer

“The Task Force has also identified 8 conceptual options. Without detailed studies, the Task Force is unable to confirm when and how much additional land can be provided by these options at the moment, but the Task Force would still like to invite the public to express their views on these options. We would like to know if you would select the following options.”

Q11 “Apart from the two pilot areas in Tai Lam and Shui Chuen O, to explore the feasibility of developing other areas of relatively low ecological and public enjoyment value on the periphery of country parks. Would you select this option?”

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

- 8. No comment / Did not know / Hard to tell
- 9. Refused to answer

Q12 “Developing the River Trade Terminal site in Tuen Mun West and its surroundings in the long term, particularly the land provided by reclamation at Lung Kwu Tan next to the Terminal, to rationalise the land uses along the entire seafront area of western Tuen Mun and explore the feasibility of housing development in this area. Would you select this option?”

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

- 8. No comment / Did not know / Hard to tell
- 9. Refused to answer

Q13 “Increasing the development intensity of the “Village Type Development” zones, for example, to allow for development of higher-rise small houses. Would you select this option?”

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

- 8. No comment / Did not know / Hard to tell
- 9. Refused to answer

Q14 “Undertaking topside development of existing transport infrastructure, for example, to build houses above roads or railways. Would you select this option?”

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 1. Yes | 8. No comment / Did not know / Hard to tell |
| 2. No | 9. Refused to answer |

Q15 “Utilising public utilities sites such as telephone exchanges and depots, including changes in land use or topside development. Would you select this option?”

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 1. Yes | 8. No comment / Did not know / Hard to tell |
| 2. No | 9. Refused to answer |

Q16 “Relocating the Kwai Tsing Container Terminals to another place to free up the land for other purposes. Would you select this option?”

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 1. Yes | 8. No comment / Did not know / Hard to tell |
| 2. No | 9. Refused to answer |

Q17 “Constructing elevated platforms above the Kwai Tsing Container Terminals for topside housing development while allowing the Terminals to continue its operation. Would you select this option?”

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 1. Yes | 8. No comment / Did not know / Hard to tell |
| 2. No | 9. Refused to answer |

Q18 “Reclaiming part of the Plover Cove Reservoir to develop a “Plover Cove New Town”. Would you select this option?”

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 1. Yes | 8. No comment / Did not know / Hard to tell |
| 2. No | 9. Refused to answer |

Q19 “Which ONE of the following factors do you think should be considered first if Hong Kong needs to increase land supply?”

【Read out 1-6, only 1 answer allowed; Answer options are randomly displayed】

1. Land can be provided more quickly
2. More land can be provided
3. Relatively small impacts on the original land users or the community
4. Less impact on the natural environment
5. Less public funds are borne by the government
6. Others (specify)
88. No comment / Did not know / Hard to tell
99. Refused to answer

Q20 “Do you support the development of more land to develop a land reserve to improve living space and to cope with unforeseeable needs? Do you strongly support, support, not support, or strongly not support this option?”

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1. Strongly support | 8. No comment / Did not know / Hard to tell |
| 2. Support | 9. Refused to answer |
| 3. Not support | |
| 4. Strongly not support | |

Q21 “Have you ever heard of or watched the public engagement activities or the exhibitions held by the Task Force on Land Supply on TV, radio, newspapers, the Internet, or any other channels?”

- | | |
|--------|--------------------------|
| 1. Yes | 8. Forgot / Did not know |
| 2. No | 9. Refused to answer |

HOUSE1 “Is the flat that you are currently living in bought or rented?”

【Bought: including bought by yourself, jointly bought with others, bought by family members, relatives or friends; Rented: including the whole unit or part of the unit】

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Bought 【Continue to HOUSE2】 | 88. Did not know 【Skip to DIST】 |
| 2. Rented 【Skip to HOUSE3】 | 99. Refused to answer 【Skip to DIST】 |
| 3. Others (specify) 【Skip to DIST】 | |

【Only those respondents who said that their flat was bought will be asked.】

HOUSE2 “Was this flat bought by yourself or by your household member?”

【Bought by yourself: including jointly bought with others】

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Bought by yourself | 88. Did not know |
| 2. Bought by your household member | 99. Refused to answer |
| 3. Others (specify) | |

【Skip to DIST after this question is completed】

【Only those respondents who said that their flat was rented will be asked.】

HOUSE3 “Is this a public housing flat rented by yourself, a public housing flat rented by your household member, a private housing flat rented by yourself, or a private housing flat rented by your household member?”

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| 1. Public housing flat rented by yourself | 88. Did not know |
| 2. Public housing flat rented by your household member | 99. Refused to answer |
| 3. Private housing flat rented by yourself | |
| 4. Private housing flat rented by your household member | |
| 5. Others (specify) | |

DIST “Which of the 18 District Council Districts do you currently reside in?”

、 【No need to read out answer; only one answer allowed】

10. Hong Kong Island [Refused to indicate the exact district]
 11. Central & Western [HK Island]
 12. Wan Chai [HK Island]
 13. Eastern [HK Island]
 14. Southern [HK Island]
20. Kowloon West [Refused to indicate the exact district]
 21. Yau Tsim Mong [Kowloon West]
 22. Sham Shui Po [Kowloon West]
 23. Kowloon City [Kowloon West]
30. Kowloon East [Refused to indicate the exact district]
 31. Wong Tai Sin [Kowloon East]
 32. Kwun Tong [Kowloon East]
40. New Territories West [Refused to indicate the exact district]
 41. Tsuen Wan [NT West]
 42. Tuen Mun [NT West]
 43. Yuen Long [NT West]
 44. Kwai Tsing [NT West]
 45. Islands [NT West]
50. New Territories East [Refused to indicate the exact district]
 51. North [NT East]
 52. Tai Po [NT East]
 53. Shatin [NT East]
 54. Sai Kung [NT East]
77. Others (specify)
88. Did not know / Write down the answers if fail to classify
99. Refused to answer

“This is the end of the interview. Thank you for your time. Bye Bye.”

Task Force on Land Supply

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**GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO
REPORT OF TASK FORCE ON LAND SUPPLY**

Financial and Civil Service Implications

The recommended way forward as set out in the Government's response to the Report would not entail significant additional financial implications in the immediate term, as most of the follow-up actions to be taken by the Government concern ongoing initiatives or projects being pursued or planned for studies. The extent of additional costs involved in initiating further or expanded studies and taking forward individual development projects including related assessments, planning and works as set out in the Government's response would be subject to detailed studies and scrutiny when more details are available. Funding would be sought in accordance with the established mechanism at appropriate juncture.

2. Regarding civil service implication, there might be an increase in workload arising from the Government's response, which includes but does not limit to technical assessments/planning and/or engineering studies; town planning procedures; land administration including resumption and clearance; design and construction works; planning and provision of supporting infrastructure, etc.. The relevant bureaux/departments will regularly review the manpower situation. Additional resources will be sought with justifications in accordance with the established resource allocation mechanism as and when necessary and appropriate.

Economic Implications

3. The recommended way forward as set out in the Government's response would demonstrate the determination of the Government to increase land supply to meet the various socio-economic needs of Hong Kong, including housing and other economic uses. This would help expand the economic capacity of Hong Kong and enhance its long-term growth potential.

Environmental Implications

4. The implementation of various development projects to increase land supply would inevitably add to the burden on the environment to a certain extent. To ensure that the proposed developments would not bring insurmountable impact to the environment and that the environmental quality would not be compromised as a result of the increase in land supply, relevant environmental legislations, established guidelines and standards and statutory procedures would continue to apply, and that necessary measures will be put in place to avoid, minimise and mitigate any adverse environmental impacts so arising in taking forward the development projects. Detailed and site-specific environmental assessments or statutory environmental impact assessments should be conducted where necessary to confirm the environmental acceptability of the proposed developments before commencement of works. Besides, the implementation of certain land supply options, including development of brownfield sites, caverns or underground spaces would help improve the environment by rationalising land uses or removing some of the environmentally unfriendly activities on brownfield sites or at the surface level and providing enclosed or regularised areas to accommodate certain existing facilities with environmental impacts.

Sustainability Implications

5. The increase in land supply for housing and other developments would better meet the social, environmental and economic needs of Hong Kong. It is anticipated that various development projects would be conducive to the sustainable development of Hong Kong by improving the housing condition of many, enhancing economic competitiveness of Hong Kong, and raising the quality of living of citizens through better living environment and provision of more community and welfare facilities, particularly elderly facilities to tackle the ageing population. Relevant sustainability and technical assessments would be conducted under individual projects where appropriate. The concern of the public, in particular the sentiments of stakeholders, should also be handled with care.

Family and Gender Implications

6. The increase in housing land supply would help enhance and expedite the supply of public and private housing, which could in turn help improve the living condition of families. In particular, the increase in supply of public rental housing (PRH) units through provision of more housing land will help shorten the waiting time for PRH applicants and their family members, some of whom may be inadequately housed currently. To tie in with the increase in housing supply, we will ensure the timely provision of sufficient supporting facilities (e.g. social, recreational, community and utility) in tandem with the population intake. These will cater for the housing and socio-economic needs of family members and provide a family-friendly environment to better balance work, family and community commitments. The corresponding increase in the provision of social welfare facilities including but not limited to childcare and elderly services may also be conducive to enhancing support to women who are often primary caregivers.
