

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HPLB(PL)009

Question Serial No.

1409

Head : 138 Government Secretariat:
Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau
(Planning and Lands Branch)

Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : (2) Buildings, Lands and Planning

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands
(Planning and Lands)

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question : Concerning “preparing for a public consultation on the review of the Urban Renewal Strategy” in Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2006-07 under this Programme, can the Government inform us as to:

- (a) the details of the work, its expenditure and the manpower involved;
- (b) whether there would be relaxation of the rule that developers have to acquire 90% of the property interests before an application can be made for compulsory sale of the remaining interests?

Asked by : Hon. FUNG Kin-kee Frederick

Reply :

- (a) In 2006-07, the Government will work closely with the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) to prepare for the public consultation on the review of the Urban Renewal Strategy (URS).

Since its establishment in 2001, the URA has been guided by the new legal framework to gradually roll out its holistic “4R” programme on urban renewal, i.e. redevelopment, rehabilitation, preservation of buildings with architectural or historical significance, and revitalization of old districts. A redevelopment project which involves an interactive and consultative planning process, property acquisition, rehousing and land resumption normally takes several years to complete. As the URA has accorded priority to the former Land Development Corporation projects, redevelopment projects under the new legal framework have only recently been commenced. Besides, the URA’s building rehabilitation programme, which provides technical and financial assistance to eligible owners to undertake building maintenance, has been launched only for a relatively short period. We need to allow more time for the URA to accumulate adequate operational experience to enable us to fully understand the implementation aspects and effects of its urban renewal programme and carry out the URS review effectively. Urban renewal is a complex subject involving a great number of stakeholders. As part of the review exercise, the Government and the URA will consult different sectors of the community with a view to ensuring that our urban

renewal efforts will better meet the community's aspirations.

The URS review will be handled by existing manpower resources in the relevant departments and the Bureau.

- (b) To further facilitate private redevelopment efforts so as to arrest the aggravating problem of building deterioration, we have published for public consultation in early March detailed proposals. We have proposed to make use of the existing mechanism under the Land (Compulsory Sale for Redevelopment) Ordinance (Cap. 545) to specify three classes of lots to enjoy a threshold of not less than 80% when applying to the Lands Tribunal for a compulsory sale of the whole lot for the purpose of redevelopment. In drawing up the proposals, we have sought to maintain a careful and delicate balance between facilitating private redevelopment efforts and protecting private property rights. The consultation exercise will last until the end of May 2006. Subject to the community's consensus on the proposals, we intend to take forward the subsidiary legislation in the 2006/07 legislative session.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Mrs Rita Lau

Post Title _____ Permanent Secretary for Housing,
Planning and Lands (Planning and Lands)

Date _____ 11 March 2006

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