

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

HPLB(PL)010

Question Serial No.

0836

Head : 138 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau 000 Operational expenses
(Planning and Lands Branch)

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 :

In the 2006-07 Estimates, there was a mention of “ preparing for a public consultation on the review of the Urban Renewal Strategy ” in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2006-07 under Programme (2) Buildings, Lands and Planning, could the Government inform us of the following:

- (a) implementation details of the above review in 2006-07; findings of the review and the expenditure involved; and
- (b) the resources, manpower arrangement and targets involved in the work related to the Urban Renewal Strategy in 2007-08?

Asked by : Hon. KWOK Ka-ki

Reply :

The Urban Renewal Authority (URA) is a statutory body established under the Urban Renewal Authority Ordinance. The Ordinance provides a legal framework for the URA to undertake urban renewal in a comprehensive and holistic manner, covering redevelopment, rehabilitation, revitalisation and preservation with buildings of architectural and historical values within its urban renewal projects. The Urban Renewal Strategy (URS), formulated after extensive public consultation, provides broad guidelines to steer the URA's urban renewal work. Similar to other policies, the URS will be reviewed at an appropriate time in order to improve the relevant work continuously. As the Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands has explained in answer to a Legislative Council question on 7 February 2007, the Government has to consider some important issues to ensure that the review of the URS can be conducted effectively.

Over the past few years, the URA has been giving priority to implement the former Land Development Corporation projects not yet completed. In general, these projects were implemented in accordance with the Land Development Corporation Ordinance. As a result, there are so far only a few new projects commenced under the Urban Renewal Authority Ordinance. Considering that it usually takes years to complete the procedures of implementing a redevelopment project, including consultation, planning and design, property acquisition, rehousing and land resumption, and that the URA has not had the chance to accumulate sufficient experience in the other aspects of its “4R” initiatives including rehabilitation and revitalisation, the Government considers it necessary to allow more time for the URA to accumulate practical experience to ensure a solid basis for a comprehensive and effective review of the URS.

Upon that time, we will widely consult the public and ensure that the views of the stakeholders concerned will be fully taken into account in the URS review.

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

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	_____ Mrs Rita Lau _____
Post Title	_____ Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (Planning and Lands) _____
Date	_____ 15 March 2007 _____

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