

Land Use and Urban Planning in the Year 2000

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Sustainable Development in the New Millennium

Sustainable development means -

- finding ways to increase prosperity and improve the quality of life while reducing overall pollution and waste;
- meeting our own needs and aspirations without doing damage to the prospects of future generations; and
- reducing the environmental burden we put on our neighbours and helping to preserve common resources.

Today, I would like to demonstrate how the concept of sustainable development can be applied to land use and urban planning.

Population Growth

In an area of about 1,095 square kilometres (of which three-quarters is of hilly terrain), Hong Kong currently has a population of about 6.8 million.

According to our estimates, Hong Kong's population will increase by another one and a half million to reach 8.3 million in 2011.

There is an ever-growing demand for more land for housing, employment, community and other supporting facilities for the additional population.

New Town Development and Urban Renewal

In terms of land use and planning, the two key drivers of sustainable development are the development of next generation new towns and urban renewal.

I will show you how these two drivers will take us forward in the future development of our city.

Next Generation New Towns

Let us first look at the development of new towns of the next generation.

We have adopted three key planning concepts in planning future new towns -

- People-Oriented Living Environment;
- Environmentally Friendly Transport; and
- Heritage Conservation.

New Development Areas

We have planned to accommodate the increased population through the development of Strategic Growth Areas in South East Kowloon, Tsuen Wan Bay, Kennedy Town, Tung Chung/Tai Ho, NENT and NWNT.

We have embarked upon two major studies in 1998 to explore new opportunities in NWNT and NENT to develop our next generation new towns.

Among the 18 potential development areas identified throughout the NT, we have shortlisted three in the first stage of our work. They are Fanling North, Kwu Tung North and Hung Shui Kiu.

Rail Based

Railway will in future be the backbone of our mass transport system and these three future new towns have been planned along East Rail, and the committed Lok Ma Chau Spur Line and West Rail Phase I.

新發展區 New Development Areas



Minimise Impact of Roads

The main trunk roads to and from the new town will be planned along its periphery to divert traffic away from residential areas.

Within the new towns, our design concepts will be such that open roads would be reduced as far as possible, and their impact on the environment minimised.

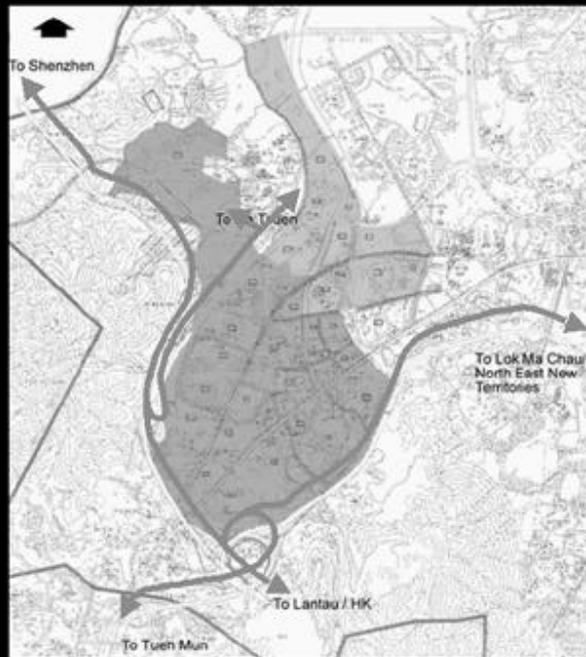
沿鐵路發展 Rail Based



A good example could be found in Hung Shui Kiu where the main distributor road through the town centre will be sunken along the railway line to minimise the environmental impact of through traffic.

減低道路影響 Minimise Impact of Roads

周邊道路
Periphery
Distributor
Roads
洪水橋
Hung Shui
Kiu



Environmental - Friendly Transport

More extensive use of travellers would be explored as both an alternative form of feeder service and convenient

connections between mass transportation systems, such as between the West Rail and Light Railway Transit (LRT) in Hung Shui Kiu.



Economic Opportunities

Integrated land-use and transport planning is the most effective way of cutting down on home-to-office journeys. We have therefore reserved in our new towns land sufficient for creating a critical mass for business and commercial uses.

Link-up with Cultural Heritage

Within and near-by our proposed new towns, there are plenty sites of great historical values, such as walled villages, ancient Chinese study halls and ancestral halls, etc. As part of our new town design, we will build good pedestrian connections to link up these heritage trails, such as the Lung Yeuk Tau and Peng Shan Heritage Trails to facilitate visits by both local residents and tourists.

Urban Renewal

The concept of sustainable development should not only be applied to new town development but should also be applied to urban renewal.

Urban Decay

Throughout the older parts of our urban area, dilapidated buildings, traffic congestion and poor environmental conditions can be found. These do not meet the demands and expectations of Hong Kong today.

We must apply the concept of sustainable development to rejuvenate our city and upkeep its vibrancy.

Nine Urban Renewal Target Areas

We are formulating a comprehensive urban renewal strategy under which we have identified 200 projects for priority redevelopment.

These 200 projects are clustered around nine urban renewal target areas, namely Ma Tau Kok, Tai Kok Tsui, Sham Shui Po, Yau Ma Tei, Yau Tong, Kwun Tong, Sai Ying Pun, Wan Chai and Tsuen Wan.

- Comprehensive actions will be taken within the target areas to renew the fabric of our city.

A Three-pronged Approach

- redevelopment of old and dilapidated buildings;
- rehabilitation of buildings not in good repair; and
- conservation of buildings of historical, architectural and cultural interest.

Redevelopment

Comprehensive Replanning and Restructuring

We will plan urban renewal and rehabilitation more comprehensively for larger areas, with a view to restructuring and replanning the old urban areas more effectively.

Replacing Run-down Areas with New Development

We will improve the standard of housing and the layout of urban areas by replacing old and run-down areas with new developments which are properly planned.

New developments will be provided with more effective and environmentally friendly transport network.

Residents, young and old, will be able to enjoy more open space and community facilities, particularly for recreation and leisure activities.

Environmental-Friendly Building Design - Buildings Meeting Full Criteria of Sustainable Development

In planning new buildings, we should adopt standards which meet the full criteria of sustainable development. The buildings must be designed with energy conservation and waste recycling as principal objectives.

Rehabilitation - Promotion of Proper Maintenance of Buildings

Urban renewal is not just about the replacement of old buildings with new ones. Another important driver is to rehabilitate buildings to lengthen their useful lives.

Old buildings are not necessarily dilapidated. The main reason for urban dilapidation is the absence of regular maintenance and repairs.

We will introduce a statutory scheme of preventive maintenance of buildings to require property owners to properly maintain their buildings. The public will be consulted on the proposed scheme shortly.

Conservation - Preservation of Heritage Buildings

It is equally important to preserve buildings of historical, cultural or architectural interest. This not only accords with the objective of sustainable development but also facilitates the retention of the local characteristics of different districts and helps promote tourism.

Urban Renewal - a 'Win-Win-Win' Proposal

Our proposed urban renewal programme seeks to create a 'win-win-win' situation - the affected tenants, the property owners and the community of Hong Kong will all benefit.

1. Tenants

The tenants who are now living in dilapidated buildings will benefit. All tenants affected by redevelopment will be properly rehoused.

The Urban Renewal Authority will work closely with the Housing Authority and Housing Society to ensure that affected tenants will be properly rehoused.

2. Owners

The property owners will also benefit. Owner-occupiers affected by urban redevelopment are eligible for statutory compensation plus an ex-gratia allowance to enable them to purchase a replacement flat of a similar size of about ten years old in the same locality.

3. The Community

The new urban renewal programme will improve the entire urban district of Hong Kong. The district will be replanned and restructured and more open space and community facilities will be provided.

Residents who live in buildings not redeveloped, and all people living in Hong Kong as a whole, will benefit as a result of a much improved and more environmentally friendly neighbourhood and the rejuvenation of our city.

Our Home, Our Future

Since its establishment in 1973, the Housing Authority has made significant achievements in improving the housing conditions and providing quality homes to about half of our population. The Authority has provided public rental flats to people in genuine need, and subsidised home ownership opportunities to middle-income families. The Housing Authority is continuing to improve the living conditions of residents.

The success of sustainable development for Hong Kong in the next millennium depends largely on the co-operation of the different sectors of the community. We are working not only to improve the living standards of our generation, but also the quality of life of the next generation.

We welcome new ideas and suggestions for the planning and renewal of our city. A public consultation on the Urban Renewal Authority Bill is being launched until 31 December this year. Comments on the White Bill are most welcome.

I am sure we will all work together to create a better home in the new millennium.

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