

OUR LIVING HARBOUR

Past



- Hong Kong's rugged, mountainous terrain and small area have always been a natural constraint on the amount of land suitable for development. That is why, since the mid-19th Century, reclamation has proved one of the best ways to meet the economic, transport, housing and social needs of the community. This, in turn, has significantly contributed to the development of Hong Kong as Asia's world city.

- Hong Kong has benefited greatly from reclamation. Most of the Central Business District and Tsim Sha Tsui East, as well as much of our essential infrastructure – roads and railways, convention and exhibition facilities, hotels and commercial offices and the former Kai Tak Airport – have been built on reclaimed land.



Former Kai Tak Airport



New Star Ferry Pier

Present



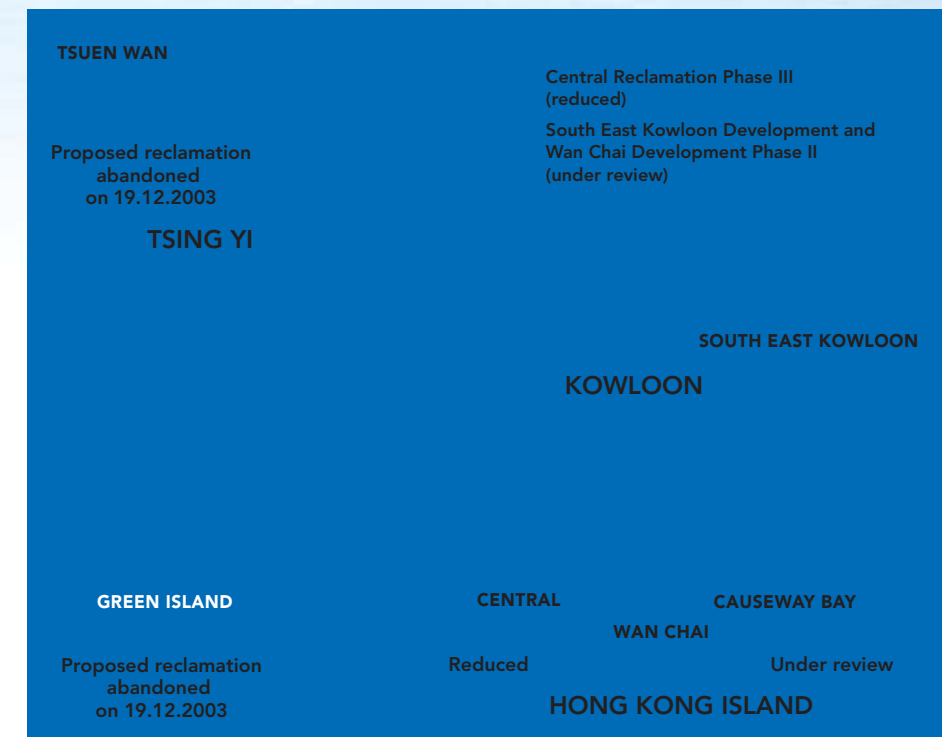
- Community aspirations change. In recent years there have been strong calls from the community to protect Victoria Harbour.
- The Government shares this view and is committed to protecting and preserving Victoria Harbour as a special public asset and a vital part of our natural heritage.
- The Government strongly supports the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance (PHO). Indeed, it was the Government that took the initiative in 1999 to amend the Ordinance to extend its coverage from the Central harbour area to the whole of Victoria Harbour.
- The Government is committed to transforming Victoria Harbour into a harbour for the people – a harbour full of life and activity and easily accessible for the enjoyment of all.
- To achieve this goal, the Government has:
 - Undertaken that apart from Central Reclamation Phase III (CRIII) and the proposals for Wan Chai Development Phase II (WDII) and Kai Tak (South East Kowloon), there will be no more reclamation within the harbour;
 - Abandoned previously proposed reclamations at Kowloon Point and Tsim Sha Tsui East;
 - Deleted proposed reclamations at Tsuen Wan Bay and off Green Island and amended the relevant outline zoning plans accordingly;
 - Pledged to abide by the PHO and comply with the 'overriding public need' test stipulated by the Court of Final Appeal (CFA) in January 2004* for all remaining reclamation projects; and

* 'Public needs' include the economic, environmental and social needs of the community. A need should only be regarded as 'overriding' if it is compelling, present and cannot be met by another reasonable alternative. The extent of the reclamation should not go beyond the minimum of that required by the overriding need.

- Established, in May 2004, the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee (HEC) with broad-based community representation to advise the Government on planning, land use and development along the existing and planned harbour-front.

Central Reclamation Phase III (CRIII)

- In light of the CFA ruling, the CRIII project has been reviewed. The study, completed in April 2004, showed that CRIII met the 'overriding public need' test laid down by the court.
- CRIII is needed to provide essential transport infrastructure. It has undergone thorough scrutiny. At just 18 hectares – reduced from 32 hectares – the scope of reclamation has been kept to the minimum.



Development proposals involving reclamations in the Harbour

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Wan Chai Development Phase II (WDII) and Kai Tak Development

- The Government will conduct comprehensive planning and engineering reviews of the WDII and Kai Tak proposals to ensure full compliance with all legal requirements.
- The proposed WDII will provide land for a new trunk road comprising the Central-Wan Chai Bypass and the Island Eastern Corridor Link to alleviate traffic congestion along the busy northern shore of Hong Kong Island.
- Kai Tak Development is needed to revitalise the area left vacant by the old airport at South East Kowloon.
- To provide advice on the two studies, the HEC has set up sub-committees for the WDII Review and the Kai Tak Development Review. Enhanced public engagement will be part of the review process for both studies.

Future

- The Government, in partnership with the HEC, will continue to reach out to the community. Our goal is to transform the harbour-front into a world-class attraction to be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.
- We will abide by the PHO and the CFA ruling on all reclamation matters.
- We will listen to public views and engage different sectors of the community to determine the best ways to preserve Victoria Harbour through a balanced and focused approach.



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Our
Living Harbour

