

4 Way Forward

The proposed relocation of the STSTW to caverns is an innovative approach to supply land to support the long-term social and economic development of Hong Kong as well as to benefit the community and improve the environment of Sha Tin. Odour management of the relocated STSTW could be enhanced with caverns as a natural barrier. Meanwhile, opportunity could be taken to review if more advanced technologies would be adopted for the sewage and sludge treatment facilities to further improve the sewage treatment service.

We conducted a two-stage PE exercise under the feasibility study to seek the views and concerns of the public and stakeholders and work with them to improve the relocation project together. We carried out a wide range of PE activities, including a media briefing, roving exhibitions, visits to the Stanley Sewage Treatment Works (an existing cavern sewage treatment works), three focus group meetings with professional and environmental organizations, three community group meetings mainly for Sha Tin residents, a public forum, etc.. There was also extensive media coverage on the relocation project.

Through a series of PE activities in the Stage 1 and 2 PE, a general consensus supporting the relocation project was achieved. According to the questionnaires collected during the roving exhibitions under the Stage 1 PE, about 72% of 1 318 interviewees agreed that relocating the STSTW to caverns could benefit the community and enhance the environment in Sha Tin as a whole, especially in the aspects of odour and visual impacts. According to the questionnaires collected during the visits to the Stanley Sewage Treatment Works under the Stage 2 PE, about 67% of 115 interviewees agreed that relocating the STSTW to caverns could benefit the community and enhance the environment in Sha Tin as a whole after experiencing the surrounding environment and the operation of a sewage treatment facility in caverns.

During the PE exercise, we collected the public's concerns on the relocation project through various channels. Some residents near the proposed relocation site expressed concerns about the blasting vibration during the cavern construction, traffic impact in the construction stage and odour impact in the operation stage. We completed the relevant preliminary technical assessments to address these concerns and shared the results and recommendations with the public and stakeholders in the Stage 2 PE. The results showed that better odour management would be achieved with the relocated STSTW fully enclosed in caverns and implemented with appropriate odour control measures. Moreover, by proposing suitable control and mitigation measures, possible traffic and blasting vibration impacts would be reduced to acceptable levels in compliance with the relevant standards. DSD would continue to consider the concerns of the residents

near the proposed relocation site and propose appropriate measures to address their concerns in the future stages of the relocation project. These aspects would be further reviewed when conducting the investigation and design in the next stage.

During the PE exercise, we also received some suggestions from the public and stakeholders to further improve the relocation project, such as on-site measurement of wind direction and speed at the proposed relocation site for odour impact assessment, enhancing the proposed temporary traffic management scheme and facilitating stakeholders to participate in monitoring the relocation project in future. These suggestions would be further considered when conducting the investigation and design in the next stage.

We consulted the H&EC of the STDC on the findings and recommendations of the feasibility study on 7 November 2013. The H&EC of the STDC in general supported the proposal to proceed with the investigation and design for the relocation project so as to commence the construction works as soon as possible, in order to release the existing STSTW site to meet the long-term social and economic development of Hong Kong and enhance the community and environment of Sha Tin.

Similar to the feasibility study, we recommend conducting public engagement exercise to work with the public and stakeholders to further improve the relocation project together when conducting the investigation and design in the next stage.