

Land Sharing Pilot Scheme opens for applications tomorrow

The Development Bureau (DEVB) today (May 5) announced that the Land Sharing Pilot Scheme (LSPS) will open for applications tomorrow for a period of three years until May 5, 2023, subject to a cap of 150 hectares on the total area of private land to be approved.

In connection with the launch of the LSPS, the Chief Executive has appointed 10 members, coming from a wide spectrum of sectors, to a Panel of Advisors to offer independent opinions on the applications received and advise on the operation of the LSPS. Chaired by Dr David Wong Yau-kar, the Panel of Advisors will run for a term of 3.5 years with effect from May 1 this year.

The Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, said the LSPS aims to help unleash development potential of private land with consolidated ownership that is outside specified environmentally sensitive areas and not covered by the Government's development studies.

"While government-led planning and land resumption remains the mainstream and continues to dominate our land creation agenda, the LSPS seeks to complement such efforts by tapping into market resources and efficiencies to boost both public and private housing in the short to medium term," he said.

Under the scheme, the Government will facilitate infrastructural improvements that will enhance the development intensity of the private lots under application. In return, the LSPS applicants are required to hand over to the Government part of the lots they own in the form of formed land that is capable of delivering at least 70 per cent of the increased domestic gross floor area (GFA) for public housing or Starter Homes developments intended by the Government.

To ensure speedy delivery of the housing gains under the LSPS, the developer-lot owners will also be responsible for developing the necessary infrastructure and other community facilities to support the whole public and private housing development. The associated costs will be deducted from the land premiums charged at full market value after vigorous vetting by the Government to ensure necessity and cost-effectiveness.

Each project under the LSPS should be capable of delivering an increased domestic GFA of no less than 50 000 square metres in total and at least 1 000 additional housing units.

Under the three-stage implementation approach, the dedicated, multi-disciplinary Land Sharing Office set up under the DEVB will provide one-stop advisory and facilitation services to the LSPS applicants and vet the applications received. The Panel of Advisors shall advise on the

acceptability of these applications; only those cases receiving support from the Panel will be submitted to the Chief Executive in Council for endorsement in principle. The applications so endorsed will then enter into the next stage comprising statutory processes such as rezoning and gazettal of infrastructure works, as well as land administration procedures including premium negotiations. All established public participation channels under the applicable statutory processes will continue to apply.

"Time is of the essence. The Land Sharing Office will work under a highly compressed timetable, while statutory processes will be undertaken concurrently (rather than in sequence) as far as practicable to save time. We expect to conclude the lease modification process including premium negotiations within an 18-month time limit after rezoning, unless an extension is granted. Our target is to convert the agricultural lots into spade-ready sites ready for housing construction within four to 6.5 years from the time applications are received," Mr Wong said.

Mr Wong is thankful for the general support and valuable feedback offered by various stakeholders since the Government unveiled the proposed framework of the LSPS in the 2019 Policy Address. Suitable refinements to specific details have been made to address those comments while upholding the public interest enshrined in the LSPS.

The membership of the Panel of Advisors is as follows –

Chairman

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Dr David Wong Yau-kar

Members

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Ms Ada Fung Yin-suen
Professor Eddie Hui Chi-man
Professor Paul Lam Kwan-sing
Professor Jimmy Leung Cheuk-fai
Mr Timothy Ma Kam-wah
Dr Billy Mak Sui-choi
Professor Wong Sze-chun
Mr Marco Wu Moon-hoi
Mr John Yan Mang-yee

Details of the LSPS are set out in the Legislative Council Brief (Annex) issued today. These, together with information relating to the LSPS including the application form, guidance notes for applicants and operation of the Panel of Advisors have been uploaded to the DEVB's dedicated webpage (www.devb.gov.hk/en/issues_in_focus/land_sharing_pilot_scheme/index.html). To uphold transparency, regular updates will be published covering the gist of the applications received and progress of each case.