

# Lands Department's response on short term tenancy information on the GeoInfo Map

In response to media reports on short term tenancy (STT) information on the GeoInfo Map, the spokesman for the Lands Department (LandsD) gave the following reply today (December 28):

The LandsD announced yesterday (December 27) that it uploaded information on those STTs granted since January 1, 2018, and those with rent reviewed during the same period, onto the GeoInfo Map, with updates on a quarterly basis. This initiative supports a major direction of the Development Bureau in recent years to gradually enhance the transparency of land information, and is also a continuation of a number of initiatives adopted by the LandsD in recent years to open up information access (including the online promulgation in 2017 of the list of vacant school premises and vacant government sites available for letting).

Currently, there are around 5 500 valid STTs with a total area of approximately 2 500 hectares. In terms of area, around 90% of the STTs are being used for public, community and commercial purposes to meet the various needs of the society, including works sites or works area for projects such as railway, public housing and airport construction works; commercial uses such as carparks and workshops; non-profit-making uses such as social welfare and religious uses; and public utilities related uses. Relatively speaking, the around 1 950 tenancies for private garden use account for less than 2% (around 43 hectares) of the total area of all STTs.

The LandsD has all along considered STT applications in accordance with the established mechanism, including STT applications for private garden use. Applications for STT involving private garden use must fulfill certain basic criteria, including that the subject government land can hardly be leased on its own to persons other than the applicant due to factors such as its location, topography, area, planning use, etc., and that the government land does not have any other use in the short term. By letting out such vacant government land, the Government can optimise the utilisation of land resources on one hand and save public resources for managing this type of vacant land on the other. When considering an STT application, the LandsD does not take account of the applicant's background.

Applicants with STT granted have to pay full market rent, which will be assessed by professional surveyors of the LandsD who will make professional consideration of factors such as land use, location, topography, area, and market demand and supply. As this type of garden tenancy sites can only be used for garden purpose and have limited development potential, their rental assessment is not the same as that of general residential sites, rendering a direct comparison between the two inappropriate.