

LCQ15: Land Sharing Pilot Scheme

Following is a question by the Hon Wilson Or and a written reply by the Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, in the Legislative Council today (January 6):

Question:

The Land Sharing Pilot Scheme (LSPS), which is implemented by the Development Bureau, has been open for application since May 6, 2020. The LSPS aims to unleash the development potential of the following private lands: lands with a size of no more than 150 hectares and consolidated ownership which are situated outside specified environmentally sensitive areas and not covered by the Government's development studies. The work flow for processing the LSPS applications is divided into three stages: (1) vetting of applications by the Land Sharing Office, (2) giving of advice by a Panel of Advisors, which is appointed by the Chief Executive, on the applications and submission of those cases the Panel supports to the Chief Executive-in-Council (CE-in-C) for consideration, and (3) in respect of those applications which have been endorsed in principle by the latter, proceeding of the relevant statutory processes and land administration procedure. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the number of the LSPS applications received to date, and set out in Table 1 a breakdown of such number by (i) the District Council (DC) district where the lands involved in the applications are located and (ii) the stage at which the applications are;

Table 1

DC district	Number of applications	Stage 1		Stage 2		Stage 3	
		Under vetting	Approved	Under vetting	Endorsed in principle	Statutory processes in progress	Land administration procedure in progress

(2) of the following information on the projects which have been endorsed in principle by the CE-in-C;

Table 2

Project name	DC district	Increased domestic floor area proposed	Proportion of the increased gross floor area that should be applied to the public and private housing portions		Number of housing units that can be delivered
			Public	Private	

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(3) whether there is any application in respect of which the three stages of the work flow for processing have been completed; if so, of the average, shortest and longest time taken to process such applications; and

(4) whether it has projected the number of applications approved and the total area of the lands involved upon the completion of the three-year LSPS; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

To unleash the development potential of private lots outside specified environmentally sensitive areas and not covered by the Government's development studies, thereby boosting both public and private housing supply in the short and medium term, the Development Bureau (DEVB) has launched the Land Sharing Pilot Scheme (LSPS) since May 2020 for three years. The Land Sharing Office (LSO) under the DEVB has commenced operation simultaneously to provide one-stop consultation and facilitation services for the relevant project proposals, including processing applications, coordinating the Government's views or advice on the proposals, as well as facilitating the vetting of applications and the subsequent statutory and land administration procedures. In the past few months, the LSO had also visited various institutions to introduce and promote the LSPS to them. Besides, a Panel of Advisors (the Panel) comprising solely non-official members has been set up to offer impartial advice to the Government on the LSPS applications. For details of the LSPS and the relevant application procedures, please refer to the DEVB's webpage

www.devb.gov.hk/en/issues_in_focus/land_sharing_pilot_scheme/index.html).

Upon receipt of a formal LSPS application, the LSO will vet the application in consultation with the departments concerned. Applications fulfilling the specified criteria, including those on scale of development, public/private housing mix, provision of infrastructure and public facilities as well as the associated financial arrangements, proof of land ownership, etc., will be submitted to the Panel for consideration. Proposals supported by the Panel will be submitted to the Chief Executive in Council (CE-in-C) for in-principle endorsement. For applications endorsed by the CE-in-C, the relevant statutory procedures (such as rezoning and gazettal of infrastructure works, which normally take 12 to 18 months to complete) and land administration procedures may commence. Our target is to complete these procedures within three to four years upon receipt of application, such that the applicant may commence the construction works in a timely manner (taking into account the time required for the applicant to carry out site formation works, it is our target to provide formed sites ready for housing construction within four to six and a half years upon receipt of application).

A formal LSPS application has to be submitted in conjunction with a comprehensive development plan including, among others, schematic designs,

technical assessments, cost estimations and proof of land ownership. Although formal application is yet to be received, the LSO has received a number of enquiries since its launch and has initiated dialogue with some potential applicants to elaborate the requirements and application procedures of the LSPS. Some of these enquiries and initial dialogues involve projects with preliminary development proposals (about 10 cases). These potential projects, from developers of different business scales and concerning mainly sites located in the New Territories, are capable of providing over 1 000 to a few thousands flats according to the developers' proposals. Some enquirers have indicated that they are preparing the formal application including the schematic design and technical assessments. Upon receipt of an application, the LSO will publish its information on the relevant webpage. We expect that the first LSPS application could be submitted to the Panel for consideration early this year, and to CE-in-C for consideration subsequently in order to enable its timely implementation.

As the LSPS is voluntary in nature, and whether a project will be approved is subject to the details of the development proposal (such as size of developable land, development intensity, magnitude of increase in domestic Gross Floor Area, etc.), we cannot estimate at this juncture the total number of projects and land area that will be approved eventually.