

LCQ2: Provision of facilities at Hong Kong Port of Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge for visitors to Hong Kong

Following is a question by the Hon Michael Tien, and a reply by the Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, in the Legislative Council today (December 12):

Question:

In 2015, the Government commissioned a consultant to conduct a Planning, Engineering and Architectural Study for Topside Development at Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities Island of Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB), and expected that the study would be completed by February 2017. However, the said study is expected to complete in 2019, as currently shown on the Planning Department's website. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the reasons why the completion of the aforesaid study needs to be deferred to 2019, and the latest progress and outcome of that study;

(2) whether the facilities recommended for construction in the consultant's latest proposal include a large entertainment centre providing shopping, catering, cinema and other diversified indoor entertainment facilities with characteristics, so as to attract visitors coming to Hong Kong through HZMB on one-day tours to stay in the Hong Kong Port area for spending, thereby alleviating the current situation of an excessive number of visitors flocking to Tung Chung; if so, whether those facilities will be provided outside or within the closed area of the Hong Kong Port; if not, whether the Government will request the consultant to conduct a study in this regard; and

(3) whether it has, by drawing reference from the HZMB Macao Port Park-and-Ride Scheme, examined the provision of car parks at the closed area of the Hong Kong Port for inbound private cars, so that visitors to Hong Kong may, after parking their cars, change to public transport for entering the urban areas of Hong Kong together with other passengers in their cars, thereby alleviating the traffic burden on the road networks?

Reply:

President,

After consulting the Transport and Housing Bureau, my reply to various parts of the question is as follows:

The Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities Island of Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (BCF Island) is located at the landing point of the Hong Kong-

Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB). It is close to the Hong Kong International Airport and is a key gateway for Hong Kong to connect the Pearl River Delta and the rest of the world. To explore the optimum utilisation of the 150-hectare BCF Island, the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) and the Planning Department (PlanD) commissioned the "Planning, Engineering and Architectural Study for Topside Development at the Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities Island of Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge" in January 2015. The initial concept of the study was to develop economic industries such as tourism, retail, creative industries, exhibition tourism, commercial and professional services as well as logistics on the BCF Island.

To consult public views on the initial development concept, the CEDD and PlanD conducted a community engagement exercise in mid-2015. The public generally welcomed conducting studies for the topside development, supported the strategic goal of "capitalising on the bridgehead economy" and agreed to the topside development of diversified economic industries. At the same time, the public also proposed that traffic connection between the topside development and the other districts and provision of adequate parking spaces for local and incoming vehicles should be considered in detail in the study. Some views also suggested the study team comprising the relevant departments and consultants to consult the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) for coordination of proposed developments on the Airport Island and the BCF Island with a view to enhancing Hong Kong's role as a regional trans-shipment centre. Based on the recommendations and opinions collected in the community engagement exercise, the study team reviewed the planning proposals and implementation plans for different land uses (including the inbound private carpark) and conducted relevant technical feasibility assessments (e.g. traffic impact assessment, environmental impact assessment, etc.) and financial viability assessment. The study process needs to take into account various factors, including the development constraints of the BCF Island and the development opportunities of the adjacent Airport Island.

In terms of constraints, since most of the land in the BCF Island falls within the closed area, except the development projects for the closed area, the topside development and its access must be segregated from the closed area due to security requirements. We also need to ensure that the development proposal will not affect the daily operation as well as the security requirement and arrangement for the customs/quarantine clearance of the crossing boundary point. Since the BCF Island is in proximity to the Airport, the building height on the island is subject to airport height restrictions. The planning of the BCF Island also needs to consider factors such as noise impacts. The above constraints will affect the topside development of the BCF Island, such as the inappropriateness for residential development due to aircraft noise. On the other hand, the above constraints will affect the development costs of the topside development of the BCF Island. If individual land use proposal involves conversion of most or even the whole part of the closed area into non-closed area for development, we need to construct large-scale platforms and elevated transport infrastructure to segregate the topside development from the closed area. In addition, to ensure the 24-hour normal and safe operation of the boundary control point, construction works need to be carried out in phases, and sufficient temporary

traffic, security and safety protection measures should be provided during the construction period. Therefore, as compared with conventional land development projects, the topside development would involve higher development costs. All these will affect the technical and financial viability of different land use proposals.

As for the adjacent Airport Island, the AAHK is actively promoting a number of large-scale development projects in recent years. Among them, construction works for the SkyCity's hotel project with more than 1 000 rooms commenced in 2017 for completion in 2020 and 2021. In addition, the development and management rights of the SkyCity's integrated retail, dining and entertainment facilities with an area of 350 000 square metres were granted in April 2018 for completion in phases from 2023 to 2027. Compared with the existing Cityplaza shopping mall with an area of about 100 000 sq m and the Harbour City shopping mall of about 200 000 sq m, the SkyCity will become the largest retail, dining and entertainment complex in Hong Kong upon completion. It will provide facilities such as transport interchange and at least 2 800 parking spaces to meet the needs of visitors. In June 2018, the AAHK also granted the development and management rights of a high-end logistics centre covering an area of approximately 5.3 hectares at the southern cargo area of the Airport. The logistics centre is expected to be in operation in 2023 and would further strengthen the leading position of the Hong Kong International Airport as an international aviation and cargo hub. Besides, the Government will discuss with the AAHK on the second phase expansion plan of the AsiaWorld-Expo.

The above-mentioned latest developments on the Airport Island cover a wide range of airport-related industries such as hotels, retail, dining, entertainment, logistics and exhibitions. To ensure synergy be created between the BCF Island and the development on the adjacent Airport Island, the Chief Executive announced in this year's Policy Address that the Government would invite the AAHK to submit a development proposal for the topside development of the BCF Island. The government's vision is that the topside development of the BCF Island, together with the Airport's Three-runway System, the high-end logistics centre, the SkyCity development project and the future development of the AsiaWorld-Expo on the Airport Island, will turn Lantau into an "Aerotropolis" connected to the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and the world. After announcement of the Policy Address, the Government formally issued an invitation letter and received a reply from the AAHK last month agreeing to submit a proposal which includes exploring the feasibility of providing an inbound private carpark at the topside development. The development proposal will cover the entire BCF Island including the closed area on the Island.

After completion of the study and submission of development proposal by the AAHK, the Government will carefully consider relevant recommendations before finalising the development plan for the topside development of the BCF Island and will consult the public in due course. Although the study on the topside development of the BCF Island will be extended as a result, this arrangement will facilitate the long-term development of the BCF Island. It will also help create an "Aerotropolis" with high economic efficiency and

diversified employment opportunities to consolidate and enhance Hong Kong's position as an international business centre.

On the other hand, although the topside development of the BCF Island is still under study, the Government has been monitoring closely the influx of visitors into Tung Chung and other areas since commissioning of the HZMB and has held a number of inter-departmental meetings. Working with bus companies and local tourism trade, a number of measures have been implemented to divert the flow of visitors within a short period of time. These measures include actively arranging for setting up temporary small-scale shops in the passenger clearance building of the HZMB BCF, launching an online pre-booking system for coaches to improve the queuing and boarding arrangement for feeder bus at the boundary control point. In the medium term, we believe that the large-scale retail, dining and entertainment complex of the SkyCity, which are expected to be opened in phases from 2023, would help divert visitors.

Thank you, President.