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for advice

Report of the EIA Subcommittee : the 17th Meeting on 29 January 1996

The Subcommittee elected the Chairman of the Subcommittee and considered two EIA reports at its meeting on 29 January 1996.

Selection of Chairman of the Subcommittee

2. Dr Lam Kin-che was elected Chairman of the Subcommittee.

Environmental Impact Assessment for Backfilling of South Tsing Yi and North of Lantau Marine Borrow Areas

3. Sand from Marine Borrow Areas south of Tsing Yi and north of Lantau has been excavated for various infrastructure projects. These sand resources have now been exhausted. In accordance with the policy of the Fill Management Committee, it is proposed that the two Marine Borrow Areas be backfilled to restore the originally muddy seabed to pre-dredging conditions as far as possible. The benefits of restoration include potential reinstatement of the natural hydrodynamic regime, and provision of routine and emergency ship anchorage.

4. An EIA was carried out to design an operational plan for the proposed backfilling at the South Tsing Yi and North Lantau Marine Borrow Areas, and to evaluate the nature and extent of environmental impacts and any cumulative effects arising from the backfilling projects and potentially concurrent activities.

5. The EIA concluded that, in the absence of other concurrent dredging or filling activities in the study area, the operational plan when implemented with additional mitigation measures would keep the impacts to sensitive receivers to within established limits and criteria. A cumulative effects assessment manual was also developed to identify specific impacts arising from backfilling of the two Marine Borrow Areas together with other dredging operations in the study area. The manual would direct suitable changes to the operational plan and the environmental monitoring and audit manual to reduce such impacts to acceptable levels.

6. Members accepted the conclusion of the report and welcomed the development of the cumulative effects assessment manual. They were keen about the possibility of applying this rather innovative approach to other future projects if it worked well in this project.

7. Members agreed to recommend to the Council the endorsement of the EIA.

Improvements to Ying Yip Road and Silverstrand Beach Road at Junctions with Hang Hau Road and Clear Water Bay Road Environmental Impact Assessment Study

8. As part of the improvement scheme of the road network for the Tseung Kwan O New Town, Territory Development Department proposed to realign a section of Ying Yip Road and Silverstrand Beach Road, and to construct a roundabout at the junction of these two roads with Clear Water Bay Road and Hang Hau Road.

9. The EIA concluded that the primary environmental impact was excessive road traffic noise generated from the road improvement scheme. Both direct and indirect mitigation measures would be required to reduce the noise to acceptable levels. It was concluded that a 1 metre and a 2 metre high vertical barrier for the buildings of Villa Pine and PIME House respectively should be built. Indirect technical remedies in the form of window insulation and air conditioning should be applied to redress the residual impact of the proposed road network. However, one of the seven sensitive receivers affected would not be eligible for indirect technical remedies.

10. Members enquired the possibility of providing indirect technical remedies to the sensitive receiver which was not eligible. Nonetheless, it was noted that under existing policy, direct technical remedies would be provided before resorting to the use of indirect remedies and that only sensitive receivers which met the objective and established criteria were entitled to indirect remedy. There was no scope for discretion.

11. Members agreed with the conclusion of the report and recommended the report to the Council for endorsement.

Advice Sought

12. Members are requested to consider the recommendations of the Subcommittee:

- (a) endorsement of the environmental impact assessment for backfilling of South Tsing Yi and North of Lantau Marine Borrow Areas (paragraph 7 refers); and
- (b) endorsement of the improvements to Ying Yip Road and Silverstrand Beach Road at junctions with Hang Hau Road and Clear Water Bay Road (paragraph 11 refers).

Planning, Environment and Lands Branch
February 1996