

Planning Guidelines

Chapter 11



CHAPTER ELEVEN PLANNING GUIDELINES

1. Planning guidelines were sub-divided into five distinct categories, in keeping with the environmental assessments discussed in the foregoing Chapters. The purpose of including the Planning Guidelines as a separate performance measure is to highlight areas where the planning principles and standards are not achieved. Reference should be made to the caveat made in Chapter Two in which it was stated that the environmental standards and criteria included in Chapter 9 of the HKPSG should be applied with a degree of flexibility and not in isolation. Similar caution must be applied to the Planning Guidelines defined in the following paragraphs.

Water Quality Guidelines

2. Many of the residential developments do not comply with the water quality guidelines as they are located in areas without sewage treatment and disposal facilities. According to the strategic growth forecasts some of the existing sewage treatment facilities will be unable to accommodate the additional effluent flows generated under both options.

Air Quality Guidelines

3. The Air quality guidelines which were proposed at the commencement of the TDS Review have been adhered to in as much as the location of industrial areas has avoided air pollution blackspots and interfaces with residential uses. Location of the port developments to the west of the Territory also achieves the fundamental aims of the Planning Guidelines for Air Quality.
4. However in terms of emissions from traffic, the guidelines cannot be achieved if the traffic demand is to be accommodated as the strategic roads are routed through air sheds which are defined as being confined to varying degrees. The results of the air pollution modelling indicates that at least 50% of the NO₂ emissions in each air control zone (from 2001 onwards) are due to goods vehicle traffic. Consideration should be given to targeting these areas for early action in connection with reduction in air pollution.

Waste Management Guidelines

5. Access routes and proximity of waste arisings to the disposal facilities have been addressed in the solid waste assessments. Not too much emphasis on the disposal mechanisms have been given at this stage in the Study process. Potential problem areas have been identified, such as rural NWNT, on account of the fragmented collection system, the number of vehicles involved (generating noise and air pollution) and the possible congestion of local roads.

Noise Guidelines

6. Consideration was given to the potential increases in baseline conditions and interface problems arising from development of the road and rail proposals and the interfaces between industrial and residential developments. It is apparent that ambient noise levels are forecast to increase, especially in the NT, with the extent of development proposed under the two Refined Preferred Options. These issues need to be addressed in terms of on-site and off-site impacts and should be studied at both the local, district and the sub-regional levels.

Ecology

7. Compensatory areas for wetlands or other areas of ecological significance were not identified herein as the implementation of the Refined Preferred Options does not involve removal of any of these areas. The Deep Bay Buffer Zone I was also preserved with no developments proposed within the designated area. The proposal under Scenario B to develop the Route Y concept has the potential to incur severe ecological damage and will require extremely detailed engineering, environmental and especially ecological assessments to be carried out to ascertain whether it is acceptable or otherwise.

8. As noted earlier and reiterated herein, cognisance should be given to developing an ecology/conservation strategy and defining areas which are less significant in terms of the habitat they support and which could be sacrificially developed in order to preserve areas of particular significance. The development of the Ordinance Survey Maps by the World Wide Fund for Nature for the territory represent a significant first step in mapping out the ecology of the territory. These OS maps could be further developed using GIS or similar techniques to provide a factual baseplan which would readily accessible for consultation in connection with any development proposals.