



OUR HONG KONG  
FOUNDATION  
團結香港基金

# Re-imagining Hong Kong with a Game-Changer

Enhanced East Lantau Metropolis

## Q&A Guide





# Hong Kong's LAND DEADLOCK

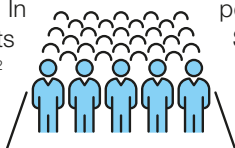
## 01 How **large** is Hong Kong compared to Singapore?

Hong Kong has a land area of 1,100 km<sup>2</sup>, in which **a quarter is developed** while the remaining is undeveloped land, including country parks and Green Belt sites. Meanwhile, Singapore has a land area of 720 km<sup>2</sup>, or only 65% of Hong Kong, but it has already developed 75% of its land (530 km<sup>2</sup>). Singapore's developed land is double that of Hong Kong.



## 02 How **crowded** is Hong Kong?

The **population density in Hong Kong far surpasses other metropolises – in each km<sup>2</sup> lives 27,400 people**, a ratio higher than that in Mumbai and two times that of Singapore. In some more crowded districts like Kwun Tong, the per km<sup>2</sup> population count can reach 59,400.



## 03 How **small** are Hong Kong's flats?

The **living space per person in Hong Kong is 170 square feet**, which is less than one and a half car parking space. The living space per person in Singapore and in Shanghai are both larger than Hong Kong by about 100 square feet.

## 04 How **expensive** are Hong Kong's flats?

If we divide Hong Kong's median property price of HK\$6.2 million in 2017 by its median household annual income of HK\$320,000, we get a median multiple of 19.4x. This means that in order to purchase a flat, an average household would need to save 19 years' worth of their income without other expenses. **Hong Kong ranks as the world's no. 1 city with the least affordable home prices for the eighth year in a row.**



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**EIGHTH YEAR  
IN A ROW**

## 05 How does Hong Kong's land shortage problem **put a strain** on our transportation system and environment?

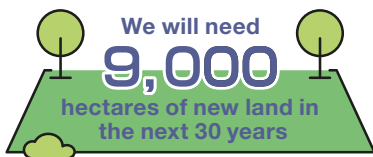
Firstly, commute time has increased. In 2016, the average car journey speed during peak hours was 20.2 km/h in Hong Kong Island, which is not much faster than the average cycling speed of 15.5 km/h. **Public transport congestion is also a severe problem** – the MTR's Tsuen Wan line was operating at its full capacity at a reading of 102% capacity in 2015 during its morning peak hours, assuming each m<sup>2</sup> has the capacity of four people.

Secondly, with **high population density and traffic congestion**, Hong Kong's air pollution causes 6,300 premature deaths and 45,000 visits to clinics every year.

Lastly, with a lack of recreational facilities, elderly facilities and community centres, Hong Kong's per capita community land is only 7 m<sup>2</sup>, making it hard to foster a sense of belonging towards the community.

## 06 How much more land do we need?

Our Hong Kong Foundation estimates that we will need 9,000 hectares of new land in the next 30 years to fulfil our development needs in accordance with our population growth.



## How could we acquire NEW LAND?

### 07 What are the suggestions for acquiring new land in Hong Kong?

The proposals can be divided into three categories: short-to-medium term options, medium-to-long term options and conceptual options.

### 08 What are the short-to-medium term options?

They include using brownfield sites, developing private agricultural lands in New Territories and recreational lease sites, and relocation of recreational facilities, among others.

### 09 What are the medium-to-long term options?

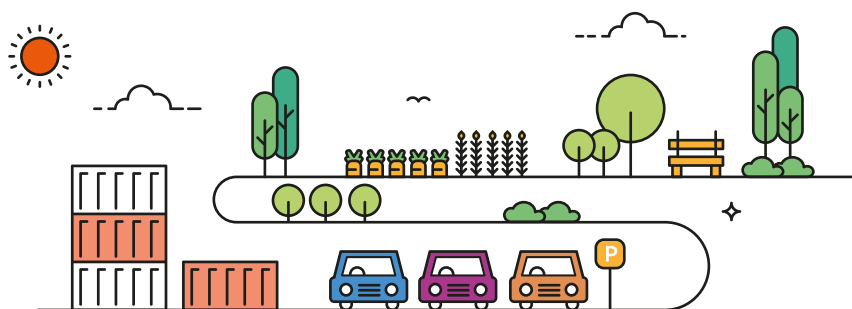
These include developing caverns and undergrounds, establishing new development areas in the New Territories, developing the River Trade Terminal sites, exploring the peripheries of country parks and reclaiming reservoirs, among others.

### 10 What are the conceptual options?

Examples include enhancing the development intensity of village-type development zones, topside development of transportation infrastructure and relocating Kwai Tsing Container Terminals.

## 11 What is the current situation of our brownfields?

Brownfields are abandoned farmlands which now have other purposes, such as carparks, cargo sites and tyre collection points. At present, there are 1,300 hectares of brownfields scattered across the whole New Territories with varying sizes. About 760 hectares of brownfield have not yet been included in the current plans of development.



## 12 Should we prioritise the development of brownfields?

Brownfield-concentrated districts like Hung Shui Kiu, Yuen Long South, Kwu Tung North and Fanling North have already been included in upcoming development plans. Below are the four considerations relating to brownfield development.

**First**, the government must reserve relocating sites for decanting the existing brownfield businesses.

**Second**, as brownfields are mostly privately owned, developing them may incur considerable compensatory costs. Enforcing the Cap. 124 Lands Resumption Ordinance may lead to lawsuits that would delay our development timeline.

**Third**, as brownfields are sporadically distributed, it would be difficult for the government to conduct strategic town planning with adequate infrastructure and communal facilities.

**Fourth**, if we prioritise brownfield development as a land option, it may in some way incentivise people to convert more farmland into brownfields (i.e. rent-seeking). This may further reduce the proportion of farmland and green area in Hong Kong, which is a step backwards for environmental protection.

**The potential negative externalities of brownfields necessitate a thorough and comprehensive developmental plan, but we must acknowledge the fact that brownfields alone could not solve Hong Kong's land problem entirely. We must also consider other options to increase land supply in Hong Kong.**



## Specific RECOMMENDATIONS

### 13 What solutions do Our Hong Kong Foundation offer for the severe land shortage problem in Hong Kong?

Our Hong Kong Foundation has always advocated for a multi-pronged land supply strategy. Our key suggestion is to resume large-scale reclamation outside Victoria Harbour. **We propose to fulfil Hong Kong's long-term land needs with the Enhanced East Lantau Metropolis (EELM) plan, which is a 2,200-hectare man-made island between Lantau Island and Hong Kong Island.**



## MAN-MADE ISLAND

### 14 Is the EELM plan a completely new idea?

The EELM plan is based on the East Lantau Metropolis (ELM) plan laid out in the "Hong Kong 2030+" paper that the government has published. The ELM consists of three reclaimed islands with a total of 1,000 hectares. However, we regard the ELM plan as too conservative. **The EELM that we have proposed will have 2,200 hectares. It is equivalent to half of the size of Kowloon and can provide a large piece of land in one go.**



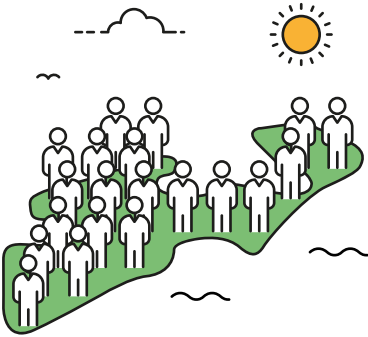
## 15 Is the EELM proposal **technically feasible**?

Our engineering consultant finds that **the site is suitable for reclamation in terms of technical requirements such as water depth and hydraulic condition**. The natural barriers around the proposed site will keep the wave height within a normal range seen in Hong Kong even during typhoons. **The EELM's territory has also been designed to bypass fairways such that sea vessel traffic will not be disrupted.**



## 16 How is the EELM plan **related to the general public**?

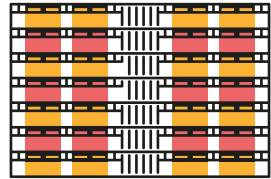
The large piece of land **can provide housing for 0.7 to 1.1 million residents**. The per capita living space can thus be increased, and the population density lowered.



Can provide housing for  
**0.7-1.1 MILLION**  
residents

## 17 Will the EELM plan **cater only to the rich**?

In terms of number of units, public housing typically accounts for about 50-80% of overall housing in our existing new towns. **We propose public housing to be at least 70% of the overall housing units on the EELM**, such that the aspiration of homeownership of the general public could be fulfilled.



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## 18 How can the EELM plan **help Hong Kong people in homeownership**?

There are various factors causing Hong Kong's sky-high property prices. **We believe that the EELM can increase housing supply substantially, thus stabilising the property market**. We hope that property prices can be less exorbitant compared to our median household income.



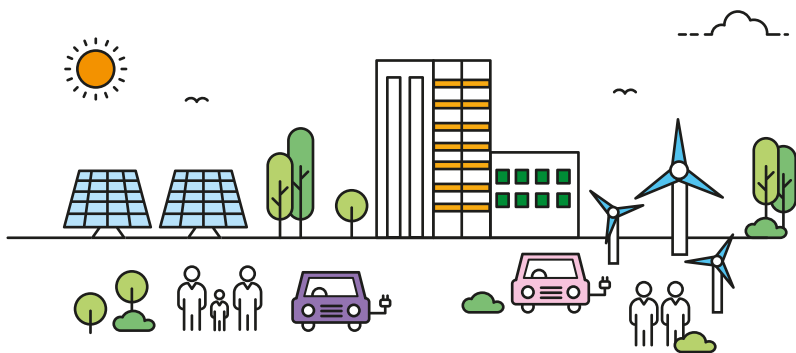
## 19 Will the considerable housing supply from the EELM plan cause a crash in the property market?

There are a number of factors affecting the property price. Although the EELM could produce a considerable amount of housing supply, the government will not be obliged to make these supply available to the market in one fell swoop. We recommend **the government to release these land and housing supply into the market in batches in accordance to the actual demand dynamics**. Unnecessary fluctuation in the market should be avoided.



## 20 How liveable can the EELM be?

The 2,200-hectare EELM will enable us to reimagine urban design and the quality of living. **It could be green and socially inclusive, with communal facilities and next-generation green solutions in place**. These will include solar panels, eco-shoreline design and a waste management system, among others.



## Questions on RECLAMATION

## 21 How should we view reclamation?

We oppose reclamation inside Victoria Harbour. However, under the current context of severe land shortage and urgent social discontent built upon our housing problem, **we believe that society should take reclamation as a land supply option seriously**.

Since Hong Kong's early days, we have always been limited by our hilly terrain, yet we have always managed to source our land supply by reclamation. We have developed new towns such as Tsuen Wan, Sha Tin, Tuen Mun and Tai Po in the 1970s, Tin Shui Wai and Tseung Kwan O in the 1980s, and Tung Chung in the 1990s. These examples of new towns are evidence that our urban development has always been tied with reclamation.



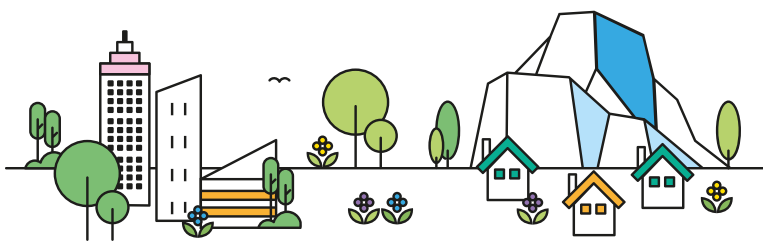
## 22 Why is reclamation a **more favourable** land supply option than others?

Reclamation is the only option that will not involve disruption to existing properties. Also, it will not add burden to local traffic. **The large piece of flat land obtained from reclamation could facilitate a comprehensive urban design plan so that our long-term needs could be fulfilled.** Reclamation could be the key solution for Hong Kong's land shortage problem.

Fulfill our  
**LONG-TERM  
NEEDS**

## 23 With reclamation, do we still **need to consider other options to increase land supply in Hong Kong?**

**A multi-pronged approach is needed to solve our land shortage problem.** Therefore, all land options should be considered. Under this backdrop however, we would highlight that reclamation is the most optimal solution, taking into consideration cost-effectiveness, environmental conservation, planning and infrastructure, as well as the preservation of property rights.



## 24 With reclamation, do we still **need to develop our Country Parks?**

While we have always relied on reclamation for land supply, **other options may still be viable, including developing the periphery of Country Parks with lower ecological value for public housing.** The alternative land supply brought by the EELM may even allow us to expand our Country Parks boundary by including sites that have higher ecological value.

## 25 Will the EELM plan **cause pollution to our environment?**

In order to minimise the disruption to the environment, we could adopt the non-dredging method in the process of reclamation such that fill material requirement could be reduced. Such method has already been used in the reclamation of Tung Chung East. Moreover, **the man-made island will also keep a buffer distance of at least 200 metres from the existing islands with conservation in mind.**

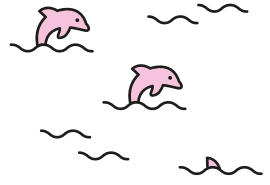
**AT LEAST 200  
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## 26 Have we considered the Chinese White Dolphins?

Historical surveys suggest that the distribution of Chinese White Dolphins is limited to the western waters of Hong Kong, which does not coincide with our proposed site. Prior to the actual works, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) that investigates ways to **minimise disruptions to the White Dolphins will also be conducted.**



## 27 Have we engaged with professional consultants on the project?



The EELM plan is a project led by Our Hong Kong Foundation, supported by McKinsey & Company (a professional consultancy firm), Arup (an engineering consultancy firm), ERM-Hong Kong Limited (an environmental consultancy firm) and Ozzo Technology (HK) Limited (a traffic consultancy firm). **The plan has been thoroughly researched and studied in the course of the project.**

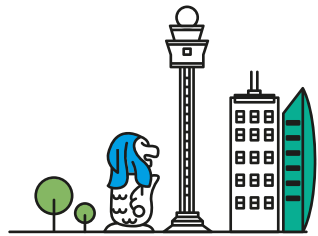
## 28 Are there any overseas examples of reclamation?

**Many of our neighbouring countries have resorted to reclamation in order to fulfill their societal and economic needs.** In South Korea, the Saemangeum Free Economic Zone is 28,300 hectares of land reclaimed, which is equivalent to half of Seoul's size. Over the past 50 years, Singapore has done reclamation equivalent to 1/5 of its land area. Shenzhen has also reclaimed nearly 10,000 hectares of land in the past 30 years and it has plans to reclaim 5,500 hectares more. 60% of Macau's current land mass is also acquired through reclamation.

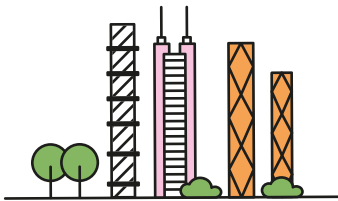


South Korea,  
the Saemangeum Free  
Economic Zone

**28,300 HECTARES**  
reclaimed land



Singapore has  
**20% LAND AREA**  
from reclamation



Shenzhen  
**10,000 HECTARES**  
reclaimed land



Macau has  
**60% LAND AREA**  
from reclamation





## 29 What are the **economic benefits** of building a man-made island?

The EELM will provide the environmental capacity for Hong Kong to develop a number of industries. We could build top-tier tertiary institutions and develop our education industry, or we could build flagship hospitals to enhance our healthcare industry. Alternatively, we could set up an international research and development lab or data centre to foster our technology industry; or encourage young entrepreneurs via increasing commercial land supply and reducing rental pressure. Other options include building a new film studio to revive our entertainment industry, building a new exhibition venue to enhance our competitive edge in the “meetings, incentives, conferencing and exhibitions” industry, or building new sport facilities to foster development of the sports industry.



## 30 How could the EELM help on the issue of **urban redevelopment**?

Hong Kong's private housing units are expected to age rapidly. In 2016, there were only 1,100 private units aged 70 years or above. By 2046, the number will surge almost 300 times to 326,000 units. The EELM could provide a decanting site to relocate existing occupants in the old urban area before redevelopment occurs.

By 2046  
private units aged  
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**326,000 UNITS**

## 31 Can the EELM **improve Hong Kong's traffic**?

Three new railways connecting the EELM to Kennedy Town, Mei Foo and the future Tuen Mun South station have been suggested. This would form a closed-loop design in Hong Kong's railway network and help relieve traffic congestion in the New Territories West.

In terms of road traffic, the EELM could also be connected to Mainland

China and the rest of Hong Kong through three major road links, including one connecting to Kennedy Town, another to Lantau Link and a third to Mui Wo and then to Tuen Mun and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge. The EELM is poised to be a key location at the core of the “one-hour living circle” connection within the Greater Bay Area.



### 32 Will the construction of the EELM be **expensive**?

Costs for land resumption varies with location, but that for New Town purposes would fall into the higher range—up to HK\$1,560 per square feet. This will be comparable to the estimated broad-brush costs of reclamation for the EELM. However, **the EELM will not face the risk of a property right conflict that may**

**otherwise occur in the land resumption exercise. Under such a context the EELM will be more cost-effective.**



### 33 How long does the EELM take to complete? **Will it solve the urgent land shortage problem?**

Our assessment suggests that the first phase of the EELM could be completed in 11 years, while the second phase could be completed 3 years later. Therefore, the best estimate is that **EELM could be expected to be completed in 14 years' time.** Hong Kong is currently facing a severe shortage in land supply, and we must act now in order to solve this urgent problem.

### 34 Is Hong Kong capable of **finishing this large-scale project in ten-plus years**?

The “Airport Core Programme”, also known as the “Rose Garden Project”, had ten “core projects” under its belt, including the Hong Kong International Airport, the Airport Railway, Tsing Ma Bridge, the Western Harbour Tunnel etc. These projects were all completed

and delivered on time within eight years in 1998. Therefore **Hong Kong is capable of delivering projects at similar scale as we have done it before. The key of delivering EELM is gathering the society's support and consensus for such project.**

**We can shape  
Hong Kong's future now!**

Let's break free from this difficult situation  
by **THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX.**

Through the Enhanced East Lantau Metropolis, we can create land to develop the community holistically, open up new opportunities and  
**INJECT VITALITY INTO HONG KONG'S FUTURE.**

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