

# Together we tackle the Waste Crisis – Concrete actions to address local concerns

Dear Tseung Kwan O residents,

Our three landfills will become full, one by one, in the next two to six years. Without timely extension, there is no way to deal with the thousands of tonnes of waste, which will have serious public hygiene consequences. How can we address this issue?

## Waste reduction and recycling?

Even if we can meet the waste reduction target in the “Blueprint for Sustainable Use of Resources 2013-2022”, there will still be thousands of tonnes of waste that require proper treatment by waste facilities with sufficient capacity.

## Incineration?

The large scale waste-to-energy incinerator proposal has been held up by a judicial review. As construction takes 8 years, it will not be available to treat municipal solid waste in the near future.

## Local concerns

Compared to the existing Southeast New Territories (SENT) Landfill, the proposed extension is even further away from residential areas. Nevertheless, as the SENT Landfill is the closest of the three landfills to residential developments, we will step up efforts to address local concerns:



### Odour Elimination

2013

**June** New “On-site Enhanced Malodour Monitoring Team” to step up monitoring

Enhanced services commenced in June with designated team to provide on-site monitoring and swift investigation of odour complaints from 6am to 2am every day.

**By Year end** Reduce intake of Municipal Solid Waste

To start diverting government’s and government contractors’ refuse collection vehicles two months after approval of the extension.

**Receive construction waste only: no more odour**

To amend legislation after the approval of the landfill extension, so that the SENT Landfill will become a construction waste reception facility which will completely resolve the odour problem.

**Enhance enforcement action at fly-tipping blackspots in the district**

To follow up on enhanced enforcement actions e.g. CCTV at blackspots.

**Sludge treatment by new means to reduce odour**

To divert odourous sludge progressively to the new Sludge Treatment Facility.

### Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCVs) Improvement

2013

**June** Road cleansing and vehicle washing to improve environment

To cleanse Wan Po Road 10 times per day and mandate full body washing of RCVs before leaving the landfill.

2014

**By mid year** Reduce landfill related vehicle loads by half and shorten operating hours

Vehicular trips going to the landfill will be reduced by half from approximately 1,000 to 500 per day when the legislative amendment takes effect. We will discuss with the trade the reduction of landfill operating hours, e.g. to close on Sundays.

**By year end** Subsidise the trade to retrofit RCVs for hygienic operation

To subsidise retrofitting of RCVs, so they could be fully enclosed to reduce odour.

**Legislate to mandate full enclosure of RCVs**

To provide a detailed proposal and legislate for all RCVs with a rear compactor compartment to be fully enclosed.

### Air Quality

2013

**July** Commission the PM2.5 measurement  
To monitor the PM2.5 level along Wan Po Road.

2015

**By year end** New Air Quality Monitoring Station  
To set up a new Air Quality Monitoring Station in Tseung Kwan O (TKO).

## Odour

**Q:** What is the intensity of the odour problem in the areas close to the landfill?

**A:** According to various odour investigations conducted in TKO in past years, and using odour intensity grading ranging from 0 (no odour) to 4 (serious), the odour intensity observed occasionally at LOHAS Park and its vicinity was mostly between 0 and 1.

## RCVs

**Q:** Some say that the landfill related vehicle load on Wan Po Road is over 4,000 per day. Is that correct?

**A:** The total number of vehicular trips going to the landfill is about 1,000 per day, of which 450 are construction waste collection vehicles, 230 are RCVs, and 300 are other vehicles.

## Air Quality/ Health Concern

**Q:** Is the air quality along Wan Po Road a major concern? Does the PM2.5 level exceed standards and affect health?

**A:** In August 2012, the Environmental Protection Department measured the level of PM2.5 on Wan Po Road. The 24-hour average level was 39.5µg/m3, which complied with the standard of the proposed new Air Quality Objectives.

**Q:** Does construction waste contain hazardous substances that are harmful, such as asbestos?

**A:** We have stringent law enforcement in place against the disposal of construction waste mixed with asbestos or other chemical waste at landfills. In fact, we have never detected such a problem at the SENT Landfill.

## Others

**Q:** Didn't the Government pledge to close the SENT Landfill by 2014?

**A:** Since the inception of the SENT Landfill extension project in 2004, the Government has closely engaged the District Council and local representatives to explain the need and urgency of the landfill extension.

**Q:** Can't waste be used for reclamation or landfill in outlying islands?

**A:** This suggestion involves overall planning, including ecological impact, engineering consideration and transport planning etc. It is not an easy solution and is exceedingly challenging. In any case, it would not address the impending waste disposal crisis.

**Q:** Can waste be exported for treatment?

**A:** It is not advisable. Nearby regions have their own waste problems to deal with. We should not shift our burden to places or locations outside Hong Kong.

“Use less, waste less” lies at the heart of the “Blueprint for Sustainable Use of Resources”. The Government will make every effort to achieve the target of reducing waste by 40% in 10 years. Yet, waste reduction and recycling efforts cannot do away with the urgent need for landfill capacity to be increased. We are making our best efforts to address local concerns with these concrete actions. We look forward to providing Hong Kong with sufficient waste treatment facilities of a high environmental standard and efficiency. Let's work together to take forward the Blueprint.

Secretary for the Environment