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\$22m study on reclamation of harbour gets under way

CONSULTANCY studies costing \$22 million have been under way since February to shape long-term development strategy for the harbour area to help the Government meet future population demands.

The Legislative Council's Finance Committee recently approved a Territory Development Department proposal to upgrade the consultancy project in the Public Works Program by allocating the \$22 million.

The studies coincide with the Government's projection that there will be a trend of "reverse migration" by the turn of the century, with population growth concentrated in the urban areas after massive development in the new towns has reached capacity.

It is projected that Hongkong will need to accommodate an extra 1.5 million peo-

ple by 2001 and this increase can best be accommodated in urban areas created by reclamation in the harbour region - including Victoria Harbour (covering Central and Western, Wan Chai and Hung Hom Bay), Green Island, Kowloon West, Kowloon East and Tsing Yi.

It is understood that land production in the harbour region would be more cost-effective than further developing the existing new towns or building another new town.

At the same time, further development around the harbour would help improve the infrastructure in the urban areas, where such facilities presently fall behind those of the new towns due to space constraints.

These studies on the harbour areas will form part of the five sub-regional studies making up the Territorial

Development Strategy to boost the Government's land reserve following the full development of new towns in the New Territories.

Under the current studies, hydraulic and water quality tests which started in February will be completed in two years.

The Central, Wan Chai, and Green Island reclamation studies will start in the middle of this year and take 15 months to complete.

The starting date for the West Kowloon reclamation study is still subject to review while the Pokfulam site investigation will start early next year and be completed in early 1989.

It is expected that consultants will undertake mathematical and physical model studies to assess the impact of the proposed reclamation on tidal flows in the harbour.