

All relevant decisions lawfully taken

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I REFER to the letter from Mr R. H. Morritt (*South China Morning Post*, December 7) on the proposed development of the Southeast New Territories (SENT) landfill in Clearwater Bay. The letter made reference to "secrecy" and "outside the law".

I wish to set the record right by making it clear that there is neither secrecy nor an unlawful act involved in handling the case of SENT landfill on the part of the Country Parks Authority.

We are advised that all relevant decisions have been lawfully taken and are not susceptible to judicial review.

To put the whole issue in perspective, your readers may wish to know that the Environmental Protection Department is responsible for the development of the landfill.

The proposed site is located at the south western end of Clear Water Bay Peninsula and has an area of approximately 100 hectares. Of these, 48 hectares will be reclaimed from the sea and 18 hectares will be located within the Clear Water Bay Country Park.

The encroachment into part of the country park is temporary, affecting only a thin strip of land approximately 100 m to 150 m wide, on the western side of the ridge. Upon the completion of the landfill, the site will revert to its former use within the Clear Water Bay Country Park.

The encroachment is necessary in order to achieve an environmentally acceptable landform which will blend in with the surrounding natural landscape when the landfill is restored.

The temporary encroachment is also operationally crucial as without it, the capacity of the landfill would be reduced significantly, thereby increasing the unit cost of disposal, reducing life expectancy of the landfill and necessitating earlier replacement.

The proposal was presented to the Country Parks Board (CPB) for discussion in February 1990. The CPB considered that an option involving minimum encroachment into the country park should be pursued and that a full environmental impact assessment should be conducted.

The full environmental impact assessment was completed in November 1990. The report recommended mitigation measures to safeguard the interests of country park users.

These measures which include the planting of trees along the landward perimeter of the landfill and temporary realignment of a hiking trail have been incorporated into the landfill design requirements.

The restoration measures to be undertaken will include replanting and landscaping to create an appearance compatible with the surrounding topographical features.

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and Fisheries