

1. The meeting was resumed at 9:00 a.m. on 29.10.2014.
2. The following Members and the Secretary were present at the resumed meeting:

Mr Thomas T.M. Chow

Chairman

Mr Stanley Y.F. Wong

Vice-chairman

Mr Roger K.H. Luk

Professor S.C. Wong

Professor P.P. Ho

Professor Eddie C.M. Hui

Mr Laurence L.J. Li

Dr W.K. Yau

Dr Wilton W.T. Fok

Mr Sunny L.K. Ho

Mr Lincoln L.H. Huang

Ms Janice W.M. Lai

Mr Stephen H.B. Yau

Mr F.C. Chan

Mr David Y.T. Lui

Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport) 3,
Transport and Housing Bureau
Miss Winnie M.W. Wong

Assistant Director/Regional 3, Lands Department
Mr Edwin W.K. Chan

Director of Planning
Mr K.K. Ling

Presentation and Question Sessions

[Open meeting]

3. The following representatives of the Planning Department (PlanD), representers and representers' representatives were invited to the meeting at this point:

Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin – District Planning Officer/Fanling, Sheung Shui and Yuen Long East (DPO/FS&YLE), PlanD

Mr Otto K.C. Chan – Senior Town Planner/Fanling, Sheung Shui 1, PlanD

Mr Kelvin C.P. Ng – Senior Town Planner/Fanling, Sheung Shui 2, PlanD

FLN-R4426, KTN-R3976 – Mr Hui Yuen Kwong

Mr Hui Yuen Kwong – Representer

FLN-R4505, KTN-R4055 – Ms Shirley Hui

FLN-R4503, KTN-R4053 – Mr Ho Kwok Keung

FLN-R4857, KTN-R4407 – Mr Au Lap Hang

FLN-R4841, KTN-R4391 – Becky

FLN-R5110, KTN-R4660 – Sze Tat Fung

FLN-R5139, KTN-R4689 – King San Lee

FLN-R5276, KTN-R4826 – Jean Sun Tsz Ying

FLN-R5362, KTN-R4912 – 陳華隆

Mr Au Lap Hang (東北城規組) – Representer and Representers' Representative

FLN-R4659, KTN-R4209 – Mr Kong Hon Ling

Mr Kong Hon Ling – Representer

FLN-R4820, KTN-R4370 – Mr Steven Lam

Mr Steven Lam – Representer

4. The Chairman extended a welcome and explained the procedure of the hearing. He said that the meeting would be conducted in accordance with the “Guidance Notes on Attending the Meeting for Consideration of the Representations and Comments in respect of the Draft Kwu Tung North Outline Zoning Plan No. S/KTN/1 and the Draft Fanling North Outline Zoning Plan No. S/FLN/1” (Guidance Notes) which had been provided to all representers/commenters prior to the meeting. In particular, he highlighted the following main points:

- (a) in view of the large number of representations and comments received and more than 3,400 representers/commenters had indicated that they would either attend in person or send an authorised representative to make oral submission, it was necessary to limit the time for each oral submission;
- (b) each representer/commenter would be allotted a 10-minute speaking time. However, to provide flexibility to representers/commenters to suit their needs, there were arrangements to allow cumulative speaking time for authorised representatives, swapping of allotted time with other representers/commenters and requesting for extension of time for making the oral submissions;
- (c) the oral submission should be confined to the grounds of representation/comment in the written representations/comments already submitted to the Town Planning Board (the Board) during the exhibition period of the respective Outline Zoning Plans (OZPs) or the publication period of the representations; and
- (d) to ensure a smooth and efficient conduct of the meeting, the representer/commenter should not repeat unnecessarily long the same points which had already been presented by others earlier at the same meeting. Representers/commenters should avoid reading out or repeating statements contained in the written representations/comments already submitted as the written submissions had already been provided to Members for their consideration.

5. The Chairman said that each presentation, except with time extension allowed, should be within 10 minutes and there was a timer device to alert the representers and the representers' representatives 2 minutes before the allotted time was to expire and when the allotted time limit was up.

6. The Chairman said that the proceedings of the hearing would be broadcast online and the video recording of the presentation made by the representative of PlanD on the first day of the Group 4 hearing (i.e. 13.10.2014) had been uploaded to the Board's Website for the meeting and would not be repeated at this meeting. He would first invite the representers/authorized representatives to make their oral submissions. After the oral submissions, there would be a question and answer session which Members could direct questions to any attendees of the meeting. There would be one short break in the morning session, as needed.

7. The Chairman, then invited the representers and their representatives to elaborate on his representations.

FLN-R4426, KTN-R3976 – Mr Hui Yuen Kwong

8. Mr Hui Yuen Kwong made the following main points:

- (a) he was a retiree residing in Fo Tan. The procedures in formulating the New Development Areas (NDAs) proposals were unsatisfactory in the following aspects:
 - (i) a substantial number of existing residents in FLN and KTN were not sufficiently consulted on the proposals;
 - (ii) it was unreasonable for the Government to seek the Legislative Council (LegCo)'s funding approval for the advance works for implementation of the proposals before the Town Planning Board (the Board) had completed the plan-making process. Furthermore, some LegCo members had land interests in the

concerned areas but they still participated in vetting the funding application. The granting of approval by LegCo was an injustice; and

- (iii) the Government had previously stated that implementation of the NDAs proposals would be proceeded via conventional land resumption procedures. However, it was eventually decided that private land owners in the NDAs would also be allowed to apply for modification of land leases to carry out developments. Such approach would lead to a transfer of substantial wealth to existing landowners including some major land developers, and was considered unacceptable to the public.

- (b) a total population of over 170,000 would be accommodated in the NDAs but the job places available would only be about 37,000. It implied that over 60% of the residents in the NDAs would need to travel to other districts for work. Besides, the education requirements for the jobs to be provided in the NDAs were unknown and it was uncertain whether these jobs could be taken up by the local residents;

- (c) the implementation of the NDAs proposals would incur a cost of about \$120 billions. It was doubtful whether spending such a large sum of public money on the proposals was to the best benefit of Hong Kong as a whole;

- (d) the Government stated that the area of land for public housing development and that for private housing development in the NDAs would be roughly the same. However, according to the estimates by some members of the public, 36 ha of land would be used for public housing but over 50 ha would be used for private housing. The information provided by the Government might be misleading;

[Mr Laurence L.J. Li arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

- (e) the proposals would affect about 24 to 28 ha of active farmland. Although the Government indicated that fallow farmland was available in Kwu Tung

South for agricultural rehabilitation, the feasibility of such rehabilitation was not yet proved. Furthermore, it was uncertain whether the affected villages with farming activities could be re-sited to Kwu Tung South in entirety. The Government claimed that it was necessary to remove the existing farming activities to make way for building a new railway station. However, it did not explain why the railway station could not be built elsewhere. The removal of the farmland was thus unfair to the existing farmers in the areas, and also seemed contradictory with the Government's commitment to reviewing the agricultural policy in Hong Kong;

- (f) under the NDAs proposals, about 300 ha of land would be put into development which included considerable area proposed for open space uses. The actual area required for meeting housing needs might be much less if less open space was provided. The existing Fanling Golf Course (FGC), which was about 170 ha, might be a better alternative to the NDAs as a source of land for housing development. To allow the public to make the best choice, the NDAs proposals should be withheld pending completion of the review of land use at FGC;
- (g) the following suggestions were made:
 - (i) the conventional land resumption procedures should be adopted for implementation of the NDAs proposals in order to avoid the transfer of benefits to certain major land developers;
 - (ii) the Board should not endorse the development proposals on the two OZPs before the findings of the land use review for FGC was available; and
 - (iii) unless a feasible arrangement of agricultural rehabilitation and re-site of the affected villages in entirety to Kwu Tung South was worked out, the NDAs proposals should be revised to allow the existing farmers and residents to stay and continue their way of living in the areas.

[Actual speaking time : 10 minutes]

FLN-R4505, KTN-R4055 – Ms Shirley Hui

FLN-R4503, KTN-R4053 – Mr Ho Kwok Keung

FLN-R4857, KTN-R4407 – Mr Au Lap Hang

FLN-R4841, KTN-R4391 – Becky

FLN-R5110, KTN-R4660 – Sze Tat Fung

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FLN-R5276, KTN-R4826 – Jean Sun Tsz Ying

FLN-R5362, KTN-R4912 – 陳華隆

9. Mr Au Lap Hang made the following main points:

Housing

- (a) although there was an imminent need in Hong Kong to resolve the housing problems of the general public, developing FLN and KTN was not a suitable solution. The 170 ha of land within FGC, which was largely flat land with no existing residents, was more suitable for housing development. There were only very few people in Hong Kong who could enjoy the facility in the FGC. Comparing with meeting the housing needs, providing golf facility should not be given the priority in land allocation;
- (b) the existing residents in FLN and KTN had established their homes and community network for years. It was unreasonable to remove them for meeting the housing needs of others and create conflict in the community. Although the Government had committed to make due arrangement for rehousing the affected clearers, it was doubtful whether the arrangement could be satisfactorily settled, as could be demonstrated from the experience in the re-siting of Choi Yuen Tsuen in which many problems still remained unresolved. It was noted that many non-government organizations helping the lower-income families to resolve housing problems also objected to the NDAs proposals;

- (c) he noted that only about 96 ha of land in the NDAs, which covered more than 600 ha of land area, would be used for housing development. Amongst the housing sites, only about 36 ha would be for public housing. It was not worthwhile to undertake such a large scale development and clearance of residents to obtain only so little land for housing development;
- (d) he noted that some of the public housing in the NDAs would be Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) flats, and it was the Government's expectation that supplying HOS flats would relieve the demand on public rental flats. The Government's expectation, however, would not be realized given the continuously surging housing price, inflation rate and slow growth or even reduction of income in real term of the general public. Providing HOS flats at the NDAs could not help meet the housing needs of the general public. Instead, it would aggravate the housing problem by reducing the supply of public rental flats;
- (e) some sites in the NDAs were proposed for low-density private housing, which was not justified given the high vacancy rate of this housing type in the market. Building low-density housing would merely allow for speculative trades rather than meeting the genuine housing needs of the general public;
- (f) there were still many vacant sites in the urban area which could be used for high-density housing development. It was unreasonable to leave these sites idle and initiate development in the NDAs which would affect so many existing residents;
- (g) according to a paper on the "Projection of Housing Demand" submitted by the Government to the Subcommittee on the Long Term Housing Strategy of LegCo Panel on Housing (the Subcommittee) in March 2013, it was a basic view of the Government that "*every household in Hong Kong should be adequately housed, irrespective of whether they lived in public or private housing, or in owned or rented accommodation*" and "*as such, housing demand was defined as the total number of new housing units*

required to be built if each and every household was to be accommodated in adequate housing over the long term". In response to the Subcommittee's enquiry relating to the paper, the Government stated in a letter that *"as a basic first step, the starting point was to determine what constituted "inadequate housing" or "poorly-housed households"*". In this connection, it was unknown what criteria the Government would adopt in defining "inadequate housing" or "poorly-housed households" in the NDAs. If the new flats to be provided were too small like the "sub-divided units", the current problem of "inadequate housing" would be shifted from the urban area to the NDAs, without genuinely solving the housing problem of the general public;

- (h) he noted that the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HKHA) had adopted a flat size of 25m² and 30m² as the standards for defining "under occupation in public rental housing" for one-person and two-person families respectively since 1992. Such standards, however, had not been fully followed in all previous public housing developments. As a result, many households could easily fall into the category of "under occupation in public rental housing" when there was a change in the standard by HKHA. For the NDAs, over 10,000 public housing units were proposed but no details were available regarding their size. The residents in those units would take the risk of being affected and forced to move to smaller units under future changes by HKHA in the arrangement for tackling "under occupation in public rental housing";

Employment and Traffic

- (i) there were totally about 37,700 job places proposed in the NDAs. However, no information had been given on the types of these jobs and whether they would be long-term or not. Such information was important to assess whether a balance between population and job places could be achieved in the NDAs. The imbalance between population and job places had persisted in various new towns such as those in Tin Shui Wai and North District for years. In the territorial context, while 77% of job places

were in the Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, Kwai Chung and Tsing Yi, 41% of the working population lived in the New Territories. It implied that many people living in the New Territories needed to travel to other districts for work. According to a survey by the League of Public Transport Affairs carried out in June and July 2013, the average expense on cross-district travelling by a low-income worker living in new towns was about \$784 per month, which was significantly higher than the monthly subsidy of \$600 provided by the Government under the Work Incentive Transport Subsidy Scheme (WITSS). The need of daily travelling across districts had seriously affected the living quality of the residents in the new towns. It would also incur more expenses of the Government under the WITSS. Such problem had been very serious, especially in Tin Shui Wai and the North District which were far away from the urban area. It was likely that the same problem would occur in the NDAs in FLN and KTN;

- (j) even for those residents who could get a job within the NDAs, there would be other problems. Firstly, it was expected that many of these jobs would be for cleansing, security and sales, which were mostly of low-pay. Furthermore, there had been many cases of violation of labour laws by the employers of cleansing and security companies, which might make people not willing to take up these jobs. Many people might eventually choose to travel across districts for a better job if available;
- (k) although a new railway station was proposed at KTN, he doubted whether there was spare capacity of the existing railway system to accommodate additional passengers from the NDAs as both the East Rail and West Rail had already reached their capacity;

Hong Kong – Mainland Interaction

- (l) since the implementation of the Individual Visit Scheme for Mainland travellers, there had been a tremendous increase in the number of visitors from Shenzhen and grey goods traders in the North District, especially Sheung Shui. It had seriously affected the daily living of local residents by

causing various problems, such as congestion on roads and public transport, replacement of local shops by dispensaries, surging of daily goods price, etc. It had also led to conflicts between the local residents and Mainland visitors. The problems would be aggravated with the proposed development at FLN and KTN, which would attract more visitors from Shenzhen. So far, the Government had not suggested any measures to tackle these problems;

Provision of community facilities

- (m) seven primary schools and four secondary schools were proposed for the NDAs. However, there was no information on how such provision was worked out and why fewer secondary than primary schools were proposed. If it turned out that many primary school graduates would need to continue their study outside the NDAs, the current problems of cross-district travel and shortage of secondary school places in various districts would be worsened;
- (n) it was not certain whether hospitals and clinics would be provided in the NDAs and when they would be implemented. It was a reasonable worry that such facilities would not be available in the NDAs even after many years since population uptake, like the case in Tin Shui Wai;
- (o) some people believed that low household income was the cause for many social problems in the new towns in Hong Kong. That was not true. The real reason was the lack of adequate community facilities and the remoteness of new towns from the urban areas. Without the provision of adequate community facilities, the NDAs could not attract people to move in; and

Management of shopping malls in public housing developments

- (p) it was likely the future shopping malls in public housing estates of the NDAs would be managed by the Link, which had been accused of causing many social problems due to high shop rentals resulting in the removal of local shops and surge of daily goods price, outsourcing of cleansing and security jobs resulting in reduced income of workers, eviction of hawkers resulting in impacts on local economy, etc. Those problems would likely occur in the NDAs too. Furthermore, the Link was a listed company and its profit would be taken up by shareholders. Assigning the shopping malls to the Link would involve a transfer of public resources to the individuals, which was not to the benefit of the general public.

Conclusion

- (q) the NDAs would provide only very little land for housing development and could not address the housing needs of the general public. To genuinely meet such need, the Government should build more public rental flats on suitable sites available in the urban area instead of developing the NDAs;
- (r) apart from land use designation, the provision of job places, community facilities and other supporting services were also key considerations in town planning. In that regard, the NDAs plan would cause many social problems, which were not yet duly addressed by the Government; and
- (s) the Government's intention of implementing the proposals via the mechanism of in-situ land exchange would enable the existing land owners to acquire land at a much lower price than that acquired through conventional land sales. It would reduce the income to the Government and hence the public resources available for social uses. The general public would be affected.

[Mr David Y.T. Lui left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

FLN-R4659, KTN-R4209 – Mr Kong Hon Ling

10. Mr Kong Hon Ling made the following main points:

- (a) he was the owner of an industrial establishment in Ma Tso Lung and said that the industrial operators in Ma Tso Lung supported the NDAs plan for the following reasons:
 - (i) development should always be supported;
 - (ii) upon the linkage of East Rail and West Rail, a vast area in KTN would have good potential for development. The current new town at Fanling and Sheung Shui was too small and could not meet the future development need. Furthermore, the provision of infrastructure in North East New Territories in general had lagged behind most other areas in Hong Kong such as Tseung Kwan O and Tuen Mun; and
 - (iii) the NDAs plan could help relieve the housing shortage in Hong Kong, and would not involve land reclamation or other complicated problems. The major issues were only on the financial implications and land acquisition;
- (b) compensation to the affected bodies should be offered in an open, fair and just manner. Under the Government's current proposal, the amount of compensation payable to the industrial operators was totally inadequate and unreasonable taking into account the inputs, investment and contribution to taxation and employment made by the operators for years. Consideration should be given to increasing the compensation; and

- (c) the industrial operators would also like to continue their business in new locations after their land was resumed. There was land reserved for innovative and high-technology industries under the current proposal for KTN, which, however, would not suit the need of conventional industrial establishments. The Government should help the operators by various means such as granting land or giving priority to bid land in appropriate areas, and assisting them to continue their industrial operations on agricultural land through such means as planning applications or applications for short term waivers, etc.

[Actual speaking time : 7 minutes]

FLN-R4820, KTN-R4370 – Mr Steven Lam

- 11. Mr Steven Lam made the following main points:
 - (a) to increase land supply for housing development, the Government should make use of FGC rather than developing the NDAs. There was no need to retain the golf course as golf was not a mainstream sport in Hong Kong or a sport under promotion by the Government. Furthermore, Hong Kong had no capacity to hold large-scale golf tournaments; and
 - (b) the Government should focus on meeting the housing needs of the lower-income group by building public rental housing. There was no urgency for developing private housing.

[Actual speaking time : 2 minutes]

12. As the representers/authorized representatives' presentations had been completed, the Chairman invited questions from Members.

13. In relation to the comments of some representers that only very little land within the NDAs was designated for housing development, the Chairman requested Ms Maggie

M.Y. Chin, DPO/FS&YLE, to elaborate on the relevant information and explain the reason for not proposing more public housing development.

14. In responses, Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin made the following main points:
- (a) amongst the 612 ha of land within the NDAs, about 300 ha in areas beyond the town centres were designated mainly for open space, agricultural, greening and nature conservation uses. Developments would be concentrated in the remaining 300 ha of land, mainly around the proposed railway station at KTN and the two district nodes with public transport interchanges at FLN. The location of the proposed railway station at KTN was fixed as part of the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line project, which was already in operation;
 - (b) about 90 ha of land was proposed for housing development, which occupied about 30% of the development land. The split of land area and number of flats between public and private housing development was about 50:50 and 60:40 respectively. For some of the housing sites such as those along Ng Tung River and Sheung Yue River, lower development intensity was proposed with a view to achieving a more desirable building height profile and also providing more housing choices;
 - (c) amongst the supply of public housing, flexibility was allowed in the split between HOS and PRH units on individual sites, which would be further considered upon implementation of the developments to ensure that the social needs in the medium and long term would be duly addressed;
 - (d) a site had been reserved in KTN Planning Area 28 for the provision of medical facilities such as hospital, polyclinic and general clinic/health centre. Such information was available in para. 12.6.2 of the Explanatory Statement of the KTN OZP;

- (e) the number of school sites in the NDAs was proposed on the basis of the requirements set out in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG) and the advice from the Education Bureau. Those sites, particularly those for primary schools, were in close proximity to residential developments to facilitate convenient access to students. While sufficient sites had been reserved to meet the needs arising from the planned population in the NDAs, the Government would monitor closely the situation of population intake and make adjustment to the provision in future, if necessary;
- (f) the number of job opportunities was worked out having regard to the estimated floor area of various employment-generating uses and the corresponding figures of average worker density available in the HKPSG. About 20,000 jobs would be generated in the commercial, retail and community and other sectors. The overall ratio of job places to population in the NDAs would be similar to those in other districts;
- (g) the feasibility and desirability of releasing the land within FGC for development was under study by the Government in the Preliminary Feasibility Study on Developing the New Territories North (the NTN Study) and the findings would be presented for public consultation when available. Taking into account the need to reserve certain amount of land as green buffer, the actual area of land within the FGC available for development might be less than 170 ha. Given the time required for the study and the limited land area available, the land within FGC, even if suitable for development, could not replace the NDAs in meeting the imminent housing needs in Hong Kong; and
- (h) the Government had been actively studying ways to increase the supply of housing sites, including the reviews on vacant land in the urban area and rezoning those sites suitable for housing development as soon as possible. For some sites, it might take a longer time to fully address the technical and other issues involved.

15. The Vice-chairman said that the arrangement of HKHA for tackling under occupation of public rental housing as quoted by Mr Au Lap Hang in his presentation was not totally correct. He advised Mr Au to check out the up-to-date information from the website of HKHA.

16. The Vice-chairman further asked what measures the Government would take to assist the existing industrial operators who would be affected by the NDAs development. Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin replied that the Government had maintained close liaison with all parties affected by the NDAs proposals, including the existing industrial operators. Assistance was being given to the affected operators in identifying suitable land for relocation, such as the land within “Industrial (Group D)” or “Other Specified Uses (Port Back-up)” zones, and sorting out the lands administration procedures involved. Compensation to the affected operators would be handled under the established mechanisms.

17. A Member asked for information regarding the timeframe and phasing arrangement for implementation of the NDAs development and whether there were any other measures to increase housing supply in Hong Kong in the short, medium and long term. In response, Miss Maggie M.Y. Chin made the following main points:

- (a) the NDAs development would be implemented in six packages. The first package would include the development at two sites for local rehousing of eligible clearerees affected by the NDAs development and also some works to facilitate rehabilitation of the affected agricultural activities. Advance works for the first package, including detailed design for site formation and engineering infrastructural works, was scheduled for commencement in 2014 to enable construction works to start in 2018 and first population intake in 2023. Other works would start after the commencement of the advance works; and
- (b) it was the target of the Government to provide a total of 470,000 housing units in Hong Kong within the next 10 years as recommended by the Steering Committee on Long Term Housing Strategy. As short term

measures to achieve the target, the Government had been actively identifying suitable housing sites through various means such as reviewing the land currently under “Green Belt” zone with a view to rezoning those sites suitable for development as soon as possible. As medium and long term measures, the Government was looking into several large-scale development proposals including the FLN and KTN NDAs. Other proposals under study included those in Hung Shui Kiu, Yuen Long South and other areas being occupied by large tracts of brownfield sites. The findings of these studies would be presented to the Board for consideration when available.

18. With regard to the comment raised by some representers that the land reserved for open space use was excessive, the Chairman asked whether the provision of open space could be reduced to reserve more land for housing development. A Member had a similar query and said that there were already plenty of natural and green areas surrounding the NDAs for enjoyment of the future residents. Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin replied that the provision of open space proposed in the NDAs was in accordance with the requirements under HKPSG having regard to the planned population. Other than providing the district open spaces and local open spaces to meet the need of the local community, it was also an intention for the NDAs to make use of the unique natural features, such as Ng Tung River, Sheung Yue River and the fung shui woodland in the area, to provide regional open spaces for enjoyment of other residents of Hong Kong.

19. Regarding the comment made by Mr Au Lap Hang that the NDAs proposals would not provide sufficient job places for the future population, a Member asked Mr Au for his views on the appropriate proportion of population within the NDAs who could find job in the same district. This Member also asked Mr Kong Hon Ling the kind of industrial activities currently operating in KTN and whether the land concerned was owned by the industrial operators.

20. In response, Mr Au Lap Hang said that it was not possible to allow all residents to work in the same district that they lived. However, it would be unsatisfactory if such proportion in the NDAs was just similar to those in other areas, as advised by Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin. He said that the social problems caused by the residents’ need to spend long

time on travelling for work had been very serious in other new towns, and should not be repeated in the NDAs. He further said that the existing industrial activities in the NDAs should be retained as it could provide more job opportunities suitable to the local residents.

[Mr David Y.T. Lui returned to join the meeting at this point.]

21. In response to Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin's advice that more time was required to study the feasibility of releasing the land within FGC for development, Mr Au Lap Hang said that as the NDAs plan was formulated in rush without resolving all issues and affecting so many people, he expressed doubt on why the study covering FGC was not undertaken earlier. It was also unfair to the existing residents who would be cleared from their living places for providing open space to be enjoyed by others.

22. In response to Mr Au's comment, Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin made the following main points:

- (a) the idea of developing FLN and KTN was first raised many years ago, and was included in the Planning and Development Study on NENT completed by the Government in 2003. Following the promulgation of Hong Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy, which recommended proceeding with the NDAs development to address the long-term housing demand, the planning and engineering study leading to the current NDAs plan (the NENT NDAs Study) started in 2008. During the study process, public engagement (PE) exercises had been undertaken in three stages to solicit public views on the vision and aspiration for the NDAs, the preliminary outline development plan (ODP) and recommended ODP respectively. A wide range of PE activities including briefings, forums and workshops had been held for the public, in particular the local residents, community bodies and green groups;
- (b) for the areas designated for greening or nature conservation uses, no land resumption and clearance would be instigated by the Government; and

- (c) the suggestion of making use of FGC for housing development was first raised in 2012, and the site was later included in the NTN study.

23. In response to a Member's earlier question, Mr Kong Hon Ling said that there were some timber cutting workshops in Ma Tso Lung, which were relocated from Sheung Shui in 1980s. With a reduction of timber import from Malaysia and other countries in recent years, many of the workshops changed into storages for subsequent delivery of timber. Other workshops in the area included production of soya sauce and medicines. Most of the land used by the workshops was owned by the operators themselves.

24. A Member asked whether any low-rise, low-density housing development similar to the Valais in Kwu Tung South was proposed in the NDAs and if such proposals were made, what were the justifications. Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin said that most of the housing developments proposed in the NDAs were of high density with a maximum plot ratio (PR) of about 5 or 6, which were located mainly around the proposed railway station in KTN and the district nodes in FLN. Some medium-density housing sites subject to a maximum PR of 3.5 were proposed at locations beyond the town centres and along the riverside to achieve a more desirable building height profile, which would help maintain the visual corridors and breezeways for the NDAs as well as the existing Fanling/Sheung Shui (FSS) New Town. New low-rise or low-density housing development would only be allowed in a few sites including those under "Village Type Development" ("V") zoning, a site zoned "Comprehensive Development Area" to the south of Yin Kong Village which reflected a planning permission previously granted by the Town Planning Board (the Board), and a site zoned "Residential (Group C)" in Sheung Shui Wa Shan, which was currently a vacant school site adjacent to the "Conservation Area" and "V" zones.

[Dr W.K. Yau left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

25. The Chairman asked whether it was feasible to upzone all the medium and low-density housing sites to a maximum PR 5 or 6. Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin said that the feasibility of upzoning all the medium and low-density housing sites would largely depend on the adequacy of infrastructural facilities proposed for the NDAs, and further technical assessments would be necessary.

[Mr Stephen H.B. Yau left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

26. A Member had the following questions:

- (a) whether the general public had been adequately consulted in the PE exercises during formulation of the NDAs proposals and whether their comments had been duly considered and accepted;
- (b) whether there was a need to have medium or low-density developments in the NDAs, given that there were mountain ranges in the area and the NDAs were close to Shenzhen which had been developed with many high-rise buildings;
- (c) whether the provision of infrastructure and community facilities proposed for the NDAs could be reviewed to cater for a higher development intensity; and
- (d) whether the proposed ratio of public/private housing at 60:40 could be adjusted taking into account special circumstances of the development area.

27. In response, Mr K.K. Ling, Director of Planning, made the following main points:

- (a) the public had been widely consulted in the formulation of the NDAs plan through the PE exercises in the NENT NDAs Study, which were open to all stakeholders and members of the public. Some of the public comments received were basically against development at the NDAs. Those comments could unlikely be resolved even though the Government had clearly explained the need for the development and made adjustments to the proposals to address their concerns. Many of those commenters maintained their views and made representations to the Board on the OZPs. On the other hand, there were many comments raising concerns

on specific issues and giving suggestions for improvement of the proposals. Many of those comments had been addressed by the Government during the study process and the suggestions were incorporated in the current proposals;

- (b) only very few sites in the NDAs were proposed with low-density development. Most developments in the NDAs would be of high or medium density with a PR of at least 3.5, which was much higher than the PR 0.4 allowed for many low-density developments like Valais. Medium-density developments were mainly located in areas away from the town centres and near riversides. These developments could help preserve public views towards the rural backdrop of the NDAs and relieve visual intrusions in the existing FSS New Town;

[Dr W.K. Yau returned to join the meeting at this point.]

- (c) it was important to provide adequate infrastructural and community facilities to meet the population needs. In that regard, the relevant requirements under HKPSG had been taken as the basis for working out the provisions in the NDAs. In the past, the provision of infrastructural and community facilities in some new towns might sometimes lag behind population intake due to the lack of resources or other factors. While the Government would keep on monitoring the situation of population intake and deploy necessary resources for early implementation of these facilities in the NDAs, it was crucial in the planning stage to reserve sufficient land for such uses; and
- (d) the proposed public/private housing ratio of 60:40 was in line with the recommendations made by the Steering Committee on Long Term Housing Strategy, which was set out to achieve a balance in meeting the society's needs for various housing types in the long term. While that ratio was adopted in the NDAs and would be achieved in the long term, the earlier packages of development would focus on public housing development, including two sites for rehousing the eligible clearerees to be

affected by the development. Some community facilities, e.g. markets, might also be provided as part of the public housing estates to be developed in these early packages.

28. With the aid of a diagram, Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin supplemented the following points:

- (a) major amendments had been made to the preliminary proposals for the NDAs to address the public requests to optimize the development potential of NDAs as raised during the PE exercises of the NENT NDAs Study. Those included the increase of maximum PR of residential sites at the town centres from previously 3.5 or 5 to 6, upzoning of most of the low-density development sites to a maximum PR of 3.6, and lifting the proportion of subsidized housing to 60% of the overall housing mix; and
- (b) the public/private housing ratio of 60:40 could help achieve a balanced and socially integrated community. Compared with the new town development in Tin Shui Wai North, which comprised about 80% of flats as subsidized housing, the demand on community facilities and transport infrastructure in the NDAs could be better balanced.

29. Regarding the situation of Tin Shui Wai New Town, Mr K.K. Ling said that a team of academics from the University of Hong Kong had previously been appointed by the Government to conduct a review and make recommendations for reference in the planning for future new towns. One of the recommendations made by the team was that a reasonable mix of public and private housing flats should be allowed in the future new towns to achieve a balanced and socially integrated community and avoid excessive pressure on community and transport facilities. Such recommendation was adopted in the current NDAs proposals.

30. The Chairman asked Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin to elaborate on the percentage of land area proposed for individual land uses in the NDAs and how such figures were compared with the territorial situation. In response, Ms Chin made the following main points:

- (a) about 50% of land in the NDAs was designated mainly for open space, agricultural, greening or nature conservation uses, which included the area at Long Valley and the peripheral parts of the NDAs. The area zoned “Open Space” occupied about 9% of the total land area; and
- (b) the remaining 50% of land would mainly be used for housing, infrastructural and other developments to meet the need of the future population in the NDAs. About 30% of such development land, i.e. 90 ha, would be used for residential developments, half of which for public housing. Another 12% of land would be used as trunk roads, district distributors and local distributors. The percentage of land area used as roads was similar to that in other new towns.

[Mr Lawrence L.J. Li left the meeting at this point.]

31. Mr K.K. Ling supplemented that residential uses in Hong Kong occupied about 7% of total land area in the territory. In comparison, the percentage of land area designated for housing development in the NDAs was not low. He further said that other than meeting the housing needs, conservation of the natural environment was also one of the planning objectives for the NDAs. In the NDAs, about half of the land area would be protected from development, which was comparable to the percentage of land area conserved for country park or reservoir uses in the territory.

32. The Chairman asked Mr Au Lap Hang for his views on the desirable ratio of HOS and PRH flats in the NDAs. Mr Au said that priority should always be given to building PRH to meet the basic needs of people since the housing price in the market was already too high to be affordable by the general public.

[Professor Eddie C.M. Hui left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

33. A Member asked for information on the ratio of public/private housing in the Fanling, Sheung Shui (FSS) New Town and the overall ratio when considering the existing New Town and the NDAs as a whole. Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin replied that the ratio of public/private housing in the existing FSS New Town was about 60:40, which would be the

same after combining with the NDAs.

34. A Member said that although allowing a balanced development of public and private housing in the NDAs could help avoid the social problems occurred in some other New Towns, it might not sufficiently address the public's aspiration for early supply of more affordable housing. The Member asked how the priority was set between achieving a balanced development and providing more housing units in formulating the NDAs plan. In response, the Chairman said that the Government had taken into account all relevant factors including the public's aspiration for more affordable housing in formulating the NDAs proposals, which were translated into the draft OZPs for the Board's consideration. It was the responsibility of the Board to give due consideration to all factors, including the views made by all representers and commenters, and make a decision on whether to endorse the OZPs for submission to the Chief Executive in Council for approval.

35. As Members had no further questions to raise, the Chairman thanked the government representatives, representers and representer's representatives for attending the meeting. They left the meeting at this point.

36. The meeting was adjourned at 12 noon.