

1. The meeting was resumed at 9:00 a.m. on 26.11.2014.
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 Eddie C.M. Hui	
Dr W.K. Yau	
Dr Wilton W.T. Fok	
Mr Sunny L.K. Ho	
Ms Janice W.M. Lai	
Mr Dominic K.K. Lam	
Mr Stephen H.B. Yau	
Mr F.C. Chan	
Mr Peter K.T. Yuen	
Assistant Director/Regional 3, Lands Department	
Mr Edwin W.K. Chan	
Chief Engineer (Works), Home Affairs Department	
Mr Frankie W.P. Chou	
Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport) 3	
Transport and Housing Bureau	
Miss Winnie M.W. Wong	
Director of Planning	
Mr K.K. Ling	

[As representers/representers' representatives had not arrived, the meeting was adjourned for a break of 35 minutes.]

Presentation and Question Sessions

[Open meeting]

3. The following representatives from the Planning Department (PlanD), Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) and Highways Department (HyD) 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 Kevin C.P. Ng    | - | Senior Town Planner/Fanling, Sheung Shui 2, PlanD  |
| Mr M.T. Law         | - | Chief Engineer/New Territories East 4 (CE/NTE4), CEDD                                    |
| Mr C.M. Chan        | - | Chief Engineer/Railway Development 2-2 (CE/RD2-2), Railway Development Office (RDO), HyD |

4. The following representers and representers' representative were invited to the meeting at this point:

FLN-R12764, KTN-R12312 – Tai Sau Wai

Ms Tai Sau Wai - Representer

FLN-R13003, KTN-R12552 – Ho Yee Yan

Ms Ho Yee Yan - Representer

FLN-R12719, KTN-R12267 – Sheta Chow

FLN-R12762, KTN-R12310 – Sayho Wong

FLN-R12767, KTN-R12315 – Sarah Yiu

FLN-R12830, KTN-R12378 – S.Y. Wong

FLN-R12859, KTN-R12407 – Rosy Tam

FLN-R12920, KTN-R12468 – Rachel Wong

FLN-R13040, KTN-R12589 – Penny Chan

Ms Chan Ping Fung (東北城規組) - Representers' representative

5. 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 (OZP) No. S/KTN/1 and the Draft Fanling North OZP 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 total of 10-minute speaking time. However, to provide flexibility to representers/commenters to suit their situations, there were arrangements to allow cumulative speaking time for authorised representatives, swapping of allotted time with other representers/commenters and requesting an extension of time for making the oral submission;
- (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 Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) or the publication period of the representations; and

- (d) to ensure a smooth and efficient conduct of the meeting, the presenter/commenter should not repeat unnecessarily long the same points which had already been presented by others earlier at the same meeting. Presenters/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.

6. 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 presenters and the presenters' representatives 2 minutes before the allotted time was to expire and when the allotted time limit was up.

7. 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 the meeting. He would first invite the presenters/presenters' representative to make their oral submissions, following the reference number of each presenter who had registered with the Board's Secretariat on the day. After all registered attendees had completed their oral submissions, there would be a question and answer (Q&A) session at which Members could direct enquiries to any attendee(s) of the meeting. Lunch break would be from about 1:00pm to 2:00pm and there would be one short break each in the morning and afternoon sessions, as needed.

8. The Chairman then invited the presenters and presenters' representative to elaborate on their written representations.

FLN-R12764, KTN-R12312 – Tai Sau Wai

9. Ms Tai Sau Wai made the following main points:

- (a) 30% of the vegetables in Hong Kong were produced locally in the 1990s, reducing to 2.5% in recent times. In 2014, 92% of the vegetables consumed daily in Hong Kong were imported, some of which were from Beijing and Ningxia in China. Beijing was a city lacking in water and had much of its underground water already exhausted. Ningxia, on the other hand, was located on a high ground (i.e. 1,100m above sea level) surrounded by deserts with low rainfall. Its soil condition was nevertheless conducive to farming due to low level of pests. As a result, environmental pressure faced by Ningxia was increasing and droughts had become frequent since 2000;
- (b) being a previous staff of a charity organisation which aimed at helping the poor through environmental improvement projects, she visited Yinchuan in Ningxia, helping the locals in planting vegetables that could withstand dry climatic condition and introduced a rain water collection system. She was surprised to learn that Yinchuan had become one of Hong Kong's leading suppliers of vegetables, accounting for about 70,000 tonnes of vegetables annually;
- (c) there was an increasing global concern on China's water and food supply. According to a detailed study on Ningxia undertaken jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) and relevant government departments in China, Ningxia was regarded as having a fragile ecology and temperatures could soar up to 40 degrees Celsius at times. Its water source was the Yellow River, which was progressively diminishing. The same situation was happening for its underground water and water content in soil. Ningxia was located some 2,800 kilometres away from Hong Kong, and transportation of the vegetable by vehicles alone would take two days. Water was taken away from the local areas of Ningxia through the water gathering grounds set up for the vegetable growing industry. To combat drought, plastic sheets/membranes and anti-drought lotion were used;

- (d) Hong Kong, being a wealthy city, had its supply of vegetables at the expense of poor provinces in China which had as a result suffered from adverse environmental consequences. While plastic particles used by the industry would not decompose, the effects of micro-particles and anti-drought lotion on human and the environment were unknown. Local farmers in Ningxia also could not afford the major infrastructure required for the industry, which fell in the hands of a few major corporations and Hong Kong investors. It was unfair that the locals could not benefit financially from the industry while they had to bear the associated environmental consequences;
- (e) the problem of human trafficking in the poor countries also became more serious during the drought periods. According to the data concerning Nepal, the number of females being trafficked would increase by 23% whenever there was a drought;
- (f) Hong Kong had an ethical responsibility to reduce the environmental pressure it was exerting on Ningxia. Global warming had increased storm frequency and the demand for energy to combat hot weather. Those were also the concerns of Hong Kong, especially for the poor and the elderly. The development of the North East New Territories (NENT) New Development Areas (NDAs) would involve the replacement of green areas by concrete surface, creating hot island effect that would speed up global warming and other environmental consequences. It was a vicious cycle; and
- (g) Hong Kong should be a city that cared for the Earth, China and itself. To pursuit that objective, agricultural land in the NENT NDAs should be preserved and that man-made water channels be reverted back to natural watercourses.

[Actual speaking time: 13 minutes]

FLN-R13003, KTN-R12552 – Ho Yee Yan

10. Ms Ho Yee Yan made the following main points:
- (a) she had attended a previous hearing session. Since the current session was the 21<sup>st</sup> session, she queried whether Members of the Board had pondered as to whether there were merits in withdrawing the two OZPs and to rethink how the area should be developed, as suggested by the representers/commenters and if the suggestions raised were worthy of implementation;
  - (b) Members had a significant role in the decision making process of the NENT NDAs, which would affect the future generations. The people of Hong Kong had been seriously deprived of various resources, including land resources. Property developers had monopolised the land market and would continue to do so through the NENT NDAs' proposals;
  - (c) contrary to the Government's claim that there was a need to develop the NENT NDAs due to the acute shortage of land for housing, the Board had approved the rezoning of 91.6 ha of land in the urban area for hotel development. Out of 612 ha of land in the NENT NDAs, only about 88.3 ha were proposed for housing development. It was doubtful if there were strong justifications to develop NENT NDAs;
  - (d) according to Government figures, there were about 400 ha of vacant residential land in Hong Kong and 2,200 ha of Government land were under short-term tenancies, all of which could be used to help meet the housing needs. While the Government had affirmed that those Government sites being less than 0.05 ha would not be suitable for development, sites being less than 0.05 ha in size were however included in the 2013-14 Land Sale Programme. Those sites were sold to developers for building apartments that were \$5,000 per sq ft, which were beyond the reach of people with average monthly

incomes. The problem was not the lack of land for housing;

- (e) it was totally wrong to demolish the existing villages or the active agricultural land to make way for housing development. Members should ask the Government to consider using the current 800 ha of brownfield sites for housing development;
- (f) there was no agricultural policy in Hong Kong. Agriculture was important for Hong Kong, and also supported many related industries and would affect food safety in Hong Kong. Once a self-sufficiency rate was set for the local agricultural produce, the amount of agricultural land required could be worked out. There were about 3,800 ha of fallow agricultural land and, if rehabilitated, they could help attain Hong Kong's previous self-sufficiency rate of 30%; and
- (g) the NENT NDAs with only 612 ha of land could not solve the housing problem of Hong Kong. Members were requested to convey the views of the representatives to the Government that the NENT NDAs should be withdrawn.

[Actual speaking time: 10 minutes]

FLN-R12719, KTN-R12267 – Sheta Chow

FLN-R12767, KTN-R12315 – Sarah Yiu

FLN-R12762, KTN-R12310 – Sayho Wong

FLN-R12830, KTN-R12378 – S.Y. Wong

FLN-R12859, KTN-R12407 – Rosy Tam

FLN-R12920, KTN-R12468 – Rachel Wong

FLN-R13040, KTN-R12589 – Penny Chan

11. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation and four video clips, Ms Chan Ping Fung made the following main points:



- (a) she was a member of the Choi Yuen Tsuen Support Group (菜園村支援組), and had been assisting the villagers of Choi Yuen Tsuen (CYT) in Shek Kong since 2009. CYT was demolished to make way for the Hong Kong Section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL) and the village was being built at a new location;
- (b) the residents in the NENT NDAs were similar to those of CYT as they were non-indigenous villagers who migrated from the Mainland China decades ago, had made many contributions to the society but were offered unreasonable compensation and rehousing arrangements;
- (c) the detached mindsets of government officials were well illustrated by an senior engineer of the XRL project. The officer visited CYT before the gazettal of the XRL railway scheme under the Railways Ordinance and asked the villagers not to be concerned with the exact location of the planned emergency rescue station at Shek Kong, despite that the location of the station would essentially determine if demolition of villagers' homes would be required;

[Dr Wilton W.T. Fok and Mr Roger K.H. Luk left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

- (d) villagers of CYT enjoyed their way of life and did not want any change. The XRL project had split up the community who had lived there all their life. The villagers had tried their best to persuade the Government to amend or abandon the XRL railway scheme before gathering outside the Legislative Council (LegCo) at the end of 2009 and early 2010. In fact, about 3,000 and over 10,000 objection letters were collected and submitted by the villagers to the Government for the two rounds of consultation before the gazetting of the XRL railway scheme;

- (e) although there were queries not answered, the XRL was approved by LegCo. The Government was not responsive to the various issues concerning the XRL, such as those relating to the cost of the project and its impact on the environment as raised at the previous public forums. The subsequent protests by villagers were supported by the people of Hong Kong and a video was shown indicating that about 1,000 people went to CYT to show their support to the villagers;
  
- (f) the Government should take care of its people and respect their basic rights, and not to go against their wishes, especially for an unjustified project. However, the Government did not give serious consideration to the public views. The Government would not made change to the NENT NDAs for the villagers, which would be the same treatment given by the Government to the villagers of CYT for the XRL project;
  
- (g) squatter structures were unwelcome by the Government, even if they were within an established village with good and natural surroundings, like in the case of CYT;
  
- (h) the Government did not provide a proper arrangement to relocate the villagers of CYT which was not an indigenous village. After giving up their request for 'no removal, no clearance' (不遷不拆) in February 2010, the villagers had agreed to pursue collectively a plan of rebuilding the village under the agricultural resite policy which was an outdated policy. It involved difficult and lengthy application process, stringent and out-of-date eligibility criteria, e.g. to be eligible, the household had to already own 14,000 sq ft of farmland and its sole income had to come from farming. In the end, out of the 150 households in CYT, only 47 households could join the agricultural resite plan;

[Mr Stephen H.B. Yau and Dr W.K. Yau left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

- (i) between funding approval for compensation in January 2010 to the demolition of CYT in October of the same year, the villagers of CYT were only given 9 months from finding a new location for village resite, construction of domestic structures and moving into the new location. The process was cumbersome and villagers had to take up a lot of liaison work themselves without Government's assistance;
  
- (j) with reference to a layout plan shown in the Powerpoint presentation, she pointed out that the layout was for 47 households with farmland for agricultural rehabilitation at the new location. Immense difficulties were encountered and a great deal of time was consumed in the process of rebuilding the village with limited funds from the villagers, given that a squatter structure could only be compensated for \$600,000. That should have been the responsibility of the Government as the relocation was due to the Government project;
  
- (k) although the Government had promised villagers that the demolition of CYT would not take place until they had moved to the new location, a large number of police officers were sent to CYT to oversee the demolition of the village at end of 2010. The Government had totally abandoned and disregarded the villagers who were the minority group of the society;
  
- (l) to accommodate the villagers temporarily after the demolition of CYT, temporary housing was built by the MTR Corporation Limited on the farmland of the new village location. Three years had passed since then. The temporary housing was becoming run down and the new village at the location was yet to be completed. The delay was caused by the lack of expertise on the part of the villagers and the lack of support from various government departments. Many elderly villagers had in fact passed away in the meantime;

- (m) people had raised questions and queries regarding the NENT NDAs development and the Government's action in seeking funding approval from the Finance Committee of the LegCo for the advanced works of the NENT Project earlier. Town planning should be given a high degree of democracy as it would have significant impact on every citizen. Any planning proposal that disregarded the views of the local people should be amended or withdrawn; and
- (n) she objected to the NENT NDAs as she did not want to witness the suffering of villagers like the ones in CYT. There was an elderly person from a residential care home for the elderly (RCHE) at Drills Corner Garden (DCG) who was on his knees at LegCo, objecting to the NENT NDAs. Would it be worthwhile to destroy hundreds of homes and what they had worked for all their life for the NENT NDAs? What kind of future would the villagers in the NENT face under the compensation and rehousing arrangements? Town planning should be for a better future for the people who should live happily in our cities. The NENT NDAs should be withdrawn.

[Actual speaking time: 70 minutes]

12. The meeting was adjourned for a short break of 10 minutes.

[Mr Frankie W.P. Chou left the meeting temporarily while Mr Roger K.H. Luk and Dr W.K. Yau returned to join the meeting at this point.]

13. As the representers and representers' representative had completed their oral submissions, the Chairman invited questions from Members.

#### *Rehousing Arrangements*

14. The Vice-Chairman asked DPO/FS&YLE to provide information on the rehousing arrangements for the residents affected by the NENT NDAs, including the

elderly at DCG. In reply, Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin, DPO/FS&YLE, said that about 1,000 households would unavoidably be affected and an area had been designated in each of the two OZPs for the development of public housing in the first phase of the advance works, so as to allow timely rehousing of the affected clearerees. In the meantime, while the Government would endeavour to ensure that all affected clearerees would be offered reasonable compensation and rehousing arrangements under the current mechanism, the Government was also discussing the possible arrangements for the affected clearerees who might be dissatisfied with the compensation and rehousing arrangements.

### *DCG*

15. Ms Chin went on to say that DCG was a former barrack and was located adjacent to the proposed Kwu Tung Station, which would be the future Town Centre of KTN NDA. Noting the wishes of the existing elderly residents at DCG for preserving their communities and relocating them in the vicinity, the Government had been actively working in consultation with the elderly residents and the operators of the existing RCHEs at DCG, so as to explore possible special arrangements with the interests of the elderly residents in mind. To minimise impacts to the elderly residents at DCG, developments in the vicinity of DCG would be by phases, with the first phase in 2018 and the second phase in 2023. The Government had identified a possible relocation site near DCG for constructing a purpose-built complex to accommodate the elderly residents from DCG. The new complex would be equipped with modern facilities and would provide a more comfortable environment. There was also close co-ordination with the Social Welfare Department (SWD) such that the arrangement could meet the preferences of the elderly. By adjusting the development schedule, it was hoped that the elderly care facility could be timely provided to tie in with the relocation arrangement of DCG.

### *Experience Sharing*

16. The Vice-Chairman asked Ms Chan Ping Fung if she had any suggestions on the arrangements concerning villagers affected by the NENT NDAs, having taken into account the experience of CYT, so as to better serve the affected villagers. She said that she wanted to clarify her position that the NENT NDAs should be withdrawn and the solution to the problem was simply not to demolish the villages. The housing problem in Hong Kong was

not due to the lack of land, but the skyrocketing property prices beyond the reach of Hong Kong people. Bureaux could address the housing problem through various policy measures. It was unjustified to sacrifice villagers for the sake of a new infrastructural project purported to be in the public interest which could at the end only benefit a few people or a privileged group of the society. Rehousing was not an easy task as the original lifestyle and social fabric of villagers would be eliminated. Town planning should be based on a bottom-up approach in that the views of the affected people should be consulted under a mechanism beforehand. The NENT NDAs should be withdrawn and the way forward should be considered from the perspectives of the affected parties. To clarify, the Chairman said that Members were to consider if the proposed land uses under the two OZPs were suitable in respect of the KTN and FLN NDAs, and the decision on whether the NENT NDAs should be implemented would rest with the Government.

#### *Agricultural Rehabilitation*

17. In response to the Vice-Chairman's enquiry on the arrangements concerning agricultural rehabilitation in the NENT NDAs, with the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Ms Chin said that about 28 ha of active agricultural land would be affected in the two NDAs, comprising 4 ha in the KTN NDA and 24 ha in the FLN NDA respectively. Having recognised the aspirations for agricultural rehabilitation and retention of more farmland for agricultural development in Hong Kong, it was a new idea to designate agricultural zones on the two NDAs to allow continuation of farming practices by farmers. A total of about 95 ha of land, including about 46 ha of land zoned "Agriculture" ("AGR") and "AGR(1)" to the north and south of Long Valley Nature Park (LVNP) respectively, 37 ha of land zoned "Other Specified Uses" annotated "Nature Park" for the LVNP and 12 ha of agricultural land at Fu Tei Au, had been so designated for agricultural purposes. Private land within LVNP in the KTN NDA would be resumed by the Government and the existing wetland would be conserved while the farming practices including wet farming would continue. Apart from conserving the rural natural resources such as feng shui woodlands, the riversides of Ma Tso Lung Stream and meanders, the "Green Belt" ("GB") zone could also conserve the existing agricultural land and the existing domestic uses or agricultural use could continue.

18. Ms Chin continued to say that to facilitate agricultural rehabilitation, PlanD had been working with the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and after surveying 103 ha of land in Kwu Tung South (KTS) with various considerations including availability of infrastructure, soil fertility and other supporting measures, it was found that about 34 ha of fallow agricultural land had potential for agricultural rehabilitation and resite for the affected farmers in the NDAs. Out of the 34 ha, 5 ha were Government land. Discussions amongst PlanD, AFCD and the other concerned departments in working out the technical and financial support to facilitate agricultural rehabilitation/resite in KTS were in progress. As for clearance and licence for agricultural rehabilitation, under the prevailing agricultural resite policy, genuine farmers affected could apply to the Lands Department (LandsD) for agricultural resite. In processing such applications, AFCD and other relevant departments would be consulted by LandsD on issuing a short term waiver to the landowner allowing him to construct an on-farm domestic structure. The domestic structure would be of 2 storeys not exceeding 17 ft in height and the area per floor would be 400 sq ft. Furthermore, the existing agricultural policy was being reviewed with the aim of enhancing productivity and supporting sustainable agricultural development in Hong Kong. Public consultation on the review was anticipated to commence near the end of 2014.

#### *LVNP*

19. In response to Members' enquiries on LVNP regarding the current situation of agricultural land there and the future rehabilitation, Ms Chin explained that through a field survey completed in 2013, it was found that out of the total area of about 37 ha in LVNP, 28 ha were under active agricultural use, comprising wet and dry farming. LVNP would conserve and enhance the ecologically important environment as a nature park and, through land resumption, it would compensate for the wetland loss due to the NDAs. As the ecological value of the area was closely related to the existing farming practices, in particular, wet farming, those practices would be retained in LVNP. LVNP would be managed by AFCD and a detailed management plan for LVNP would be formulated under a separate study by CEDD and AFCD with the participation of the stakeholders including green groups and local farmers, where a range of key components of agricultural rehabilitation including infrastructural support such as access, drainage and irrigation to enhance agricultural activities would be considered comprehensively. In order to

facilitate visitors, a small-scale visitor centre cum education centre on wetland conservation and agricultural development with ancillary facilities was also proposed.

20. A Member enquired if the erection of domestic structures by farmers under the agricultural resite policy would be allowed in LVNP, as that would assist farmers to engage in agricultural rehabilitation. Ms Chin said that the arrangement would be examined comprehensively in the detailed planning of the LVNP together with its adjoining areas zoned “AGR” where on-farm domestic structures were located. The Chairman then asked Ms Chan Ping Fung to clarify if the concrete domestic houses for CYT at the new location as shown in her Powerpoint presentation were the domestic houses erected under the agricultural resite policy. Ms Chan said that the houses were two storeys (i.e. 17 ft) high and the area per floor was 400 sq ft, as permitted under the policy.

21. A Member asked whether the area of active agricultural land affected was only 4 ha in KTN NDA since the existing farmers in LVNP would also be affected. In response, Ms Chin said that the 4 ha in the KTN NDA referred specifically to those lands affected by the new infrastructure development under the NENT NDAs. As the detailed management plan and planning for LVNP were under preparation, and that the current farmers engaging in farming would mostly be allowed to stay subject to the details of the management plan, the area of the affected active agricultural land in respect of LVNP was yet to be determined. A Member asked the representers/representers’ representative if they had any views on agricultural rehabilitation in LVNP, Ms Tai Sau Wai said that she was pleased to hear that the land within LVNP would be reserved for agricultural use and there were young farmers in Long Valley (LV) who had spent a great deal of time and efforts to improve farming in LV. Those young farmers, who possessed local knowledge and expertise in farming, should be consulted first and be allowed to stay in LVNP.

#### *Sacrifices of Villagers*

22. A Member asked if Ms Chan could clarify whether the sacrifices of villagers were referring to the quality of life or living environment as if it was the latter, people in the urban areas would also have to make sacrifices should the increase in population be accommodated in the existing urban areas, instead of the KTN and FLN areas. In response,



Ms Chan said that the local residents had to make sacrifices as a result of Government's one way approach to development in that the villagers in CYT were not consulted and they had been given no alternative but to leave their homes. The Government had not made any efforts to minimise their sacrifices. Ms Ho Yee Yan supplemented that if the NENT NDAs were withdrawn, only developers who had been assembling plots of land in the New Territories would suffer loss. More importantly, the choice of a rural and sustainable lifestyle integrated with farming currently found in the rural KTN and FLN areas would be sacrificed should the NENT NDAs proceed. The community farm in Ma Shi Po village in Fanling was experimenting with a scheme using food waste as organic fertilisers for growing vegetables to serve the local community. That should not be sacrificed due to the NENT NDAs.

[Mr Stanley Y.F. Wong left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

### *Young Generation*

23. A Member asked if the young generation of Hong Kong would prefer the rural life style as suggested and since Hong Kong was a diverse city where the needs for different lifestyles would have to be catered for, a balance would need to be struck between meeting various needs of the community and addressing the housing problem for all. Ms Ho said that she would consider herself representing the young generation. While she herself was in need of housing, she considered that there was a lack of diversity in the society and the Government had not been fully utilising the valuable land resources, including those "Government, Institution or Community" ("G/IC") sites, sites under short-term tenancies and brownfield sites. She asked if there were any studies to investigate the feasibility of using these sites to meet the housing needs of the people. Railway-based and conventional New Town approach was not welcome nor desired by the people, especially the young generation. The recovery of self-sufficiency rate in food supply should be the target for the future of Hong Kong. The proposals for NENT NDAs should be postponed and detailed consultation with the affected parties should be carried out, to be followed by a detailed analysis of the views collected, including those of the young generation. Ms Tai added that the poor provinces in China had been making sacrifices to meet Hong Kong's demand for vegetables and that 20% self-sufficiency rate in Hong Kong, if achieved, could alleviate the need to import from Ningxia. The young generation would strive for an ethical Hong Kong

and did not accept injustice. They should be properly consulted.

*Need for the NDAs and Land Use Utilisation*

24. In view of the queries raised by the representers/representers' representative on the need for the NENT NDAs and utilisation of land including brownfield sites, the Chairman asked DPO/FS&YLE to provide information on those aspects. Ms Chin said that the FLN and KTN NDAs were mainly to provide land for addressing Hong Kong's medium to long-term housing needs. Besides population growth in the coming years, the average household size had been decreasing, perpetuating the need for housing. According to the Long Term Housing Strategy (LTHS), and in line with the 2014 Policy Address, 470,000 units had been adopted as the total housing supply target for the coming 10 years. To address the housing problem, the Government had adopted a multi-pronged approach in identifying potential sites. The NENT NDAs would provide 60,000 new flats, 60% of which would be public/subsidised housing. In the meantime, appropriate sites in urban areas and the new towns were designated for housing development to meet housing needs in the short term. Whether a piece of land was suitable for housing development would be subject to a number of considerations, such as land-use compatibility with the surrounding uses and the potential environmental and infrastructure impacts. Therefore, the NDAs were of territorial significance as they could effectively provide a large number of housing units. The NDAs could not be replaced and would need to be implemented in a timely manner.

25. Ms Chin continued to say that aside from the land for residential development, land would need to be reserved to meet Hong Kong's economic needs. Land within the NDAs had been designated for commercial, business and technology developments as well as hotel development so as to cater for needs concerning economy and tourism, which would in turn create employment. Regarding the proposal to optimize the use of brownfield sites as suggested by some representers, she said that while there was no official or standardized definition for brownfield sites in Hong Kong, brownfield sites in the New Territories generally referred to those sites that were once used for agriculture but were now rented out at a low rent for activities such as open storage and rural industries. There was juxtaposition of brownfield sites and residential premises as well as a lack of infrastructural provision. The KTN and FLN NDAs also had brownfield sites with uses including open

storage, vehicle repair workshops and wood factories, and about 40 ha of them were located within the KTN NDA alone. With the objective of optimizing valuable land resources, PlanD had carried out studies on brownfield sites, including the two NDA Studies at Hung Shui Kiu and Yuen Long South. Development of brownfield sites would affect existing jobs and involve land resumption, clearance and rehousing. Those sites would require decontamination works before they could be put to alternative use. Relocation of the affected industries and operators might also be required. Those issues would be thoroughly examined in the studies, which would involve public consultation.

#### *Selection of the KTN and FLN as NDAs*

26. In response to Chairman's enquiry on the background information regarding the selection of the KTN and FLN as NDAs and the associated transport provision, with the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Ms. Chin said that the Territorial Development Strategy Review in 1990s first identified the potential for strategic growth in the NENT and the Planning and Development Study on NENT, which was commissioned in 1998, identified KTN and FLN as suitable for NDAs. It was intended to utilise the important transport infrastructures such as the Kwu Tung Station reserved on the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line (LMCSL), completed in 2007, and the proposed Northern Link (NOL). The KTN NDA would take advantage of the Kwu Tung Station with high-density residential and commercial developments around the railway station where more than 80% of the 100,000 planned population would reside within its 500m catchment area. A range of G/IC facilities such as schools, hospital and sport facilities would also be provided to serve the population. The Fanling North NDA at the peripheral area of Fanling and Sheung Shui and next to Ng Tung River would make use of the East Rail Line (ERL) and be developed into a 'Riverside Community' for a planned population of 70,000. The KTN and FLN NDAs were adjoining the north-western and northern parts of the existing Fanling/Sheung Shui New Town and would in effect be a natural extension of the Fanling/Sheung Shui New Town, in which the existing and new infrastructural facilities could be shared by all the residents. The proposed town centres of the two NDAs would be connected with the ERL through the 2 proposed public transport interchanges (PTIs) and the two NDAs would be consolidated to form the Fanling/ Sheung Shui/Kwu Tung (FL/SS/KT) New Town, which would have a total population of about 450,000 upon full development.

*Transport Infrastructure*

27. The Chairman commented that queries had been made by representers/representers' representatives in previous hearing sessions as to whether there would be sufficient carrying capacity in both the rail and road systems to cater for the increase in population generated by the two NDAs. In that regard, the opportunity should be taken to address those queries at the meeting. On railway transport, Mr C.M. Chan, CE/RD2-2, RDO of HyD, said that to meet the future needs, the Government had published the Railway Development Strategy (RDS) 2014 to explore the conceptual proposals of new railway schemes including the proposed NOL to connect the Kam Sheung Road Station on the existing West Rail Line (WRL) and the Kwu Tung Station on LMCSL. The NOL would allow residents at the KTN NDA to be connected with ERL and WRL by rail while it would also help re-distribute railway traffic between ERL and WRL. A previous study on railway development, which had taken into account the then planned population of the NDAs development, confirmed that upon completion of the Shatin to Central Link (SCL), the capacity of the eastern section of ERL would correspondingly increase by 20%, and such increase in the capacity of ERL would be able to accommodate the planned population of NDAs. Mr M.T. Law, CE/NTE4 of CEDD, supplemented that under the NENT NDAs Planning and Engineering Study (the NENT NDAs Study), detailed technical assessments including a traffic impact assessment (TIA) had been conducted. It was concluded that the ERL in respect of the railway section between Sheung Shui and Fanling would have spare capacity to cater for the new population of the NDAs, as SCL should have been in place before the population intake in the NDAs. In response to a Member's enquiry, he clarified that the traffic model in the NENT NDAs Study was using the same territorial population data that had been adopted by both PlanD and the Transport Department (TD).

28. Some Members enquired further about the nature of the 20% increase in the capacity of ERL, the carrying capacity of the ERL in respect of its section from Sheung Shui to Sha Tin/Tai Wai which was already highly packed during morning rush hours, and the relationship between the ERL and SCL. In reply, Mr Chan said that the relief of the existing capacity of the ERL by 20% was the result of railway traffic being diverted to the SCL. Due to the physical constraints on Hong Kong Island, the space for the proposed railway stations along SCL was limited. As such, SCL could only use 9-car trains. Being connected with SCL, ERL would correspondingly use 9-car trains, instead of the current 12-car trains.

Nonetheless, with the increase in the frequency of trains from the current one train per 3 minutes to around one train every two minutes, the ERL would still maintain its current carrying capacity after the SCL was in operation. He continued to say that Tai Wai Station to Kowloon Tong Station was the busiest section during the critical morning peak hour and given that passengers on ERL would be diverted to SCL via Tai Wai Station, the capacity of the ERL along Tai Wai Station to Kowloon Tong Station would have 20% spare, as previously explained. He added that the capacity of the northern section of the ERL along Sheung Shui and Fanling had yet to become saturated.

29. Regarding road network, with the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Mr Law said that the TIA under the NENT NDAs Study had been conducted to assess the future transport demand to be generated by the NDAs (based on the traffic volume emanated from the planned population of about 170,000 for the two NDAs) and the associated traffic impacts on the strategic, regional and local road networks, which had in turn helped determine appropriate improvement/widening of existing roads and requirement for new roads. Referring to a plan showing the existing and proposed traffic and transport networks in the NDAs, he explained that Fanling Highway would serve as a major trunk road for the NDAs and that the section of Fanling Highway along the KTN NDA would need to be widened from dual 3-lane to dual 4-lane carriageways so as to cater for the increase in traffic. As stated in the TIA, upon the completion of the widening scheme at that section of Fanling Highway, its volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratio would be less than one, which was considered acceptable in traffic terms.

30. Mr Law continued to say that as the location of the FLN NDA was away from Fanling Highway, a new road was proposed (i.e. Fanling Bypass) to the northeast of the FLN NDA which would link up Man Kam To Road and Sha Tau Kok Road and could divert traffic directly from the FLN NDA to the eastern section of Fanling Highway. It could also serve the residents of the existing Fanling/Sheung Shui New Town. The eastern section of Fanling Bypass would be proposed for early completion in the Advance Works Package of the NDAs so as to tie in with the first population intake and to relieve the traffic burden of the existing road network in Fanling/Sheung Shui. For other existing roads in the NDAs, he added that the existing Po Shek Wu Interchange would be improved by constructing a bypass slip road connecting Po Shek Wu Road with Fanling Highway, thereby relieving the traffic at the interchange. Through assessing the existing major road junctions in the Fanling/Sheung

Shui New Town based on the traffic volume generated by the planned population of 170,000 for the NDAs, the TIA had proposed junction improvement works for 10 junctions. A separate TIA on the Queen's Hill Development in Fanling was commissioned by CEDD. Based on the results of those two TIAs, it had been concluded that the additional traffic generated by the NDAs and the Queen's Hill development could be accommodated upon the completion of the proposed widening scheme, new roads and improvement works to the existing junctions as mentioned above. More specifically, it was estimated that by around 2031, upon completion of the NDAs and the Queen's Hill development, the V/C ratio of Fanling Highway at the Wo Hop Shek Interchange would be less than 1.2, which was considered acceptable in traffic terms.

31. A Member opined that although Fanling Highway and the other related local road improvements as proposed would help accommodate the increase in traffic generated by the NDAs locally, the additional population due to the NDAs and other planned developments such as the Queen's Hill development would give rise to increase in road traffic beyond the local areas, i.e. between the NENT and the urban areas, especially during peak hours. The Member asked whether new tunnels would be constructed to cater for the future increase in road traffic since Tate's Cairn Tunnel and Lion Rock Tunnel had already reached their capacity. In reply, Mr Law said that while the V/C ratios of Tate's Cairn Tunnel and Lion Rock Tunnel were close to or higher than 1 during peak hours, indicating traffic congestion at times. The traffic conditions could, however, be brought under control. Route 8, a major expressway linking Shatin with the urban areas, had ample spare capacity at present. By 2026, it was estimated that the V/C ratios for Tate's Cairn Tunnel and Lion Rock Tunnel would be close to 1.2 while the V/C ratio for Route 8 would be under 1. Overall, the two tunnels and Route 8 as a whole would have sufficient capacity to meet the total future increase in road traffic. Various improvement works to the existing road network in Shatin including Phase 3 of Road T3 were in progress, which would help divert traffic to Route 8. CEDD and TD would closely monitor the situation and devise necessary improvement measures for implementation as appropriate.

32. As Members had no further question to raise, the Chairman thanked the representers, representers' representative and the government representatives for attending the meeting. They all left the meeting at this point.

33. The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.