

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)1124/09-10
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/DEV/1

Panel on Development

Minutes of meeting
held on Tuesday, 24 November 2009, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building

Members present : Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP (Chairman)
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Philip WONG Yu-hong, GBS
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, SBS, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, GBS, JP
Hon KAM Nai-wai, MH
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king
Hon Tanya CHAN
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP
Dr Hon Samson TAM Wai-ho, JP

Members attending : Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon IP Wai-ming, MH

Members absent : Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, SBS, S.B.St.J., JP
Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG LAU Yau-fun, GBS, JP
Hon WONG Yung-kan, SBS, JP
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP

Public officers attending : **Agenda item IV**

Mr Joshua LAW Chi-kong, JP
Permanent Secretary for
Constitutional and Mainland Affairs

Mr Howard CHAN Wai-kee, JP
Deputy Secretary for
Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (2)

Ms Kinnie WONG Kit-yee
Principal Assistant Secretary for
Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (7)

Mrs Carrie LAM CHENG Yuet-ngor, JP
Secretary for Development

Mr MAK Chai-kwong, JP
Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)

Mr David TONG Sek-por
Principal Assistant Secretary for Development (Works) 4

Ms Grace LUI Kit-yuk, JP
Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (1)

Mr Daniel CHENG Chung-wai
Principal Assistant Secretary for Education
(Further Education)

Ms Shirley LAM Shuet-lai
Principal Assistant Secretary for Food and Health
(Health) 1

Mrs Cecilia YUEN
Assistant Director of Social Welfare
(Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services)

Agenda item V

Mrs Carrie LAM CHENG Yuet-ngor, JP
Secretary for Development

Mr MAK Chai-kwong, JP
Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)

Mr John CHAI Sung-veng, JP
Director of Civil Engineering and Development

Mr KWONG Hing-ip, JP
Project Manager (Kowloon)
Civil Engineering and Development Department

Agenda item VI

Mrs Carrie LAM CHENG Yuet-ngor, JP
Secretary for Development

Mr Thomas CHOW Tat-ming, JP
Permanent Secretary for Development
(Planning and Lands)

Mr LING Kar-kan
Principal Assistant Secretary for Development
(Planning and Lands) 5

Mr Raymond WONG Wai-man
Assistant Director of Planning/Territorial

Ms Jacinta WOO Kit-ching
Acting Chief Town Planner/Studies and Research
Planning Department

Agenda item VII

Mrs Carrie LAM CHENG Yuet-ngor, JP
Secretary for Development

Mr Thomas CHOW Tat-ming, JP
Permanent Secretary for Development
(Planning and Lands)

Mr LING Kar-kan
Principal Assistant Secretary for Development
(Planning and Lands) 5

Mr Raymond WONG Wai-man
Assistant Director of Planning/Territorial

Ms Jacinta WOO Kit-ching
Acting Chief Town Planner/Studies and Research
Planning Department

Mr LIU Chun-san
Acting Chief Engineer/Project 2 (NTN&W)
Civil Engineering and Development Department

Clerk in attendance : Ms Anita SIT
Chief Council Secretary (1)4

Staff in attendance : Mr WONG Siu-yee
Senior Council Secretary (1)7

Ms Christina SHIU
Legislative Assistant (1)7

Action

- I Confirmation of minutes**
(LC Paper No. CB(1)397/09-10 -- Minutes of meeting on
21 October 2009

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2009 were confirmed.

- II Information papers issued since last meeting**
(LC Paper No. CB(1)158/09-10(01) -- Submission on request for
reviewing the compensation and
rehousing arrangements for
tenants affected by land
acquisition for implementing
redevelopment projects and

- LC Papers No. CB(1)159/09-10(01) and (02) -- railway projects from different parties dated 10 October 2009
-- Submission on private development at Ma On Shan Area 77 from Green Sense dated 24 September 2009 and the Administration's response
- LC Paper No. CB(1)212/09-10(01) -- Referral from the Complaints Division regarding redevelopment and compensation issues related to Chuk Yuen Village, Ta Kwu Ling
- LC Papers No. CB(1)217/09-10(01) and (02) -- Referral from the Complaints Division regarding the proposed cycle track in Sham Tseng and the Administration's response
- LC Paper No. CB(1)230/09-10(01) -- Administration's response to issues raised at the meeting between Legislative Council Members and Kowloon City District Council members on 2 July 2009 on proposal to revitalize Ma Tau Kok Cattle Depot Artist Village into a cultural development and tourist spot (LC Paper No. CB(1)2760/08-09(01))
- LC Paper No. CB(1)330/09-10(01) -- Joint submission on proposals to lower the application threshold under the Land (Compulsory Sale for Redevelopment) Ordinance from different parties dated 5 November 2009
- LC Paper No. CB(1)393/09-10(01) -- Draft report on the visit to Sichuan from 24 to 26 September 2009 by members of the Panel on Development and Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen of other relevant committees in connection with post-quake restoration and reconstruction
- LC Paper No. CB(1)403/09-10(01) -- Administration's paper on Capital Works Reserve Fund Block Allocations for 2010-2011
- LC Papers No. CB(1)433/09-10(01) and (02) -- Issues raised at the meeting between Legislative Council Members and Wong Tai Sin

District Council members on 11 June 2009 relating to improving Ngau Chi Wan Village to tie in with urban development and the Administration's response)

2. Members noted that the above information papers had been issued since the meeting on 27 October 2009.

III Items for discussion at the next meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(1)396/09-10(01) -- List of outstanding items for discussion

LC Paper No. CB(1)396/09-10(02) -- List of follow-up actions

LC Paper No. CB(1)370/09-10(01) -- Letter dated 10 November 2009 from Hon WONG Kwok-hing on drought in Guangdong)

3. The Chairman said that the Administration had requested to defer the discussion of the two items originally proposed for the regular meeting scheduled for 22 December 2009. As regards the item on water resource management proposed by Mr WONG Kwok-hing, he suggested and members agreed that it should be added to the Panel's list of outstanding items for discussion. Mr WONG Kwok-hing considered that the item should be discussed as soon as the Administration was ready to discuss the subject with the Panel. Members did not propose any discussion item for the regular meeting in December 2009. Taking note of the situation, members agreed that the regular meeting in December 2009 should be cancelled.

IV Hong Kong Special Administrative Region's work in support of reconstruction in the Sichuan earthquake stricken areas

(LC Paper No. CB(1)396/09-10(03) -- Administration's paper on progress report on HKSAR's work in support of reconstruction in the Sichuan earthquake stricken areas

LC Paper No. CB(1)396/09-10(04) -- Paper on Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government's post-quake reconstruction support work in Sichuan prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief))

4. The Secretary for Development (SDEV) said that the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council had approved a total amount of \$9 billion for injection into the Trust Fund in Support of Reconstruction in the Sichuan Earthquake Stricken Areas (Trust Fund) in three stages. The Administration had reported to the Panel in February and June 2009 on the progress of the reconstruction support projects and would continue to provide reports on a regular basis. The total number of reconstruction support projects for all three stages was 151 and the total commitment was about \$8.5 billion. Except for complicated projects like the Mian Mao Highway and Management and Prevention of Geology Disaster in the Wolong Nature Reserve package, other projects were expected to be completed within three years. Without compromising the quality and quantity of the projects, the Administration would continue to cooperate with the Sichuan side in striving to complete all the projects as soon as practicable. To address Members' concerns on monitoring, the Administration had engaged independent professional consultants through three contracts. While some aspects of the 13 projects they had audited required further improvements, there were no major safety incidents and quality problems. The Administration would step up monitoring in specific aspects of the projects. The independent professional consultants' reports and supervision engineers' reports listed out in Appendix 6 to the Administration's Third Progress Report were deposited at the Development Bureau for Members' perusal.

5. The Permanent Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs (PSCMA) said that out of the 151 reconstruction support projects, the tendering procedures for the construction works of 60 projects were in progress and the construction of 27 projects had commenced or been substantially completed. The rest of the projects were expected to proceed to the implementation stage within the next few months. The Sichuan side had set up a Dedicated Account to ensure that the funds were only used for their intended purposes, and audit reports would be prepared by the Sichuan authorities. As at 19 November 2009, the two sides had signed Project Cooperation Arrangements for 121 projects and about \$2 billion had been transferred from the Trust Fund to the Dedicated Account. The Administration would closely monitor the use of the funds and release the funds according to the actual progress of individual projects to ensure that they were properly spent. As regards applications from non-government organizations (NGOs) in Hong Kong for undertaking reconstruction support projects, the Trust Fund had approved 33 projects and agreed in principle another three applications. As no residual funds were available, the Trust Fund had therefore ceased inviting new applications from NGOs for funds.

Participation of non-government organizations

6. Mr WONG Kwok-hing noted that no residual funds were available under the Trust Fund for NGO projects. He asked whether the Hong Kong Jockey Club's remaining reserved allocation of \$550 million could be used for this purpose and whether there were other solutions if this was not possible. He also asked whether

the recent snowstorms on the Mainland had affected the progress of the reconstruction support projects.

7. PSCMA responded that the discussion between the Hong Kong Jockey Club and the Sichuan Government on the use of the remaining reserved allocation was already at the final stage. As regards the impact of the recent snowstorms, the Principal Assistant Secretary for Development (Works) 4 (PAS/W4) said that they had little impact on Chengdu and the neighboring cities. As for the mountainous areas, since there was no large scale accumulation of snow, the reconstruction support works could still proceed and were expected to be on schedule in general.

Monitoring and standards of reconstruction support projects

8. Mr LEE Wing-tat welcomed that the Administration had provided a detailed report on the progress of the reconstruction support work and that up to the present, no major problems had been identified by the independent professional consultants. He enquired about the distribution of work among the three independent professional consultants and expressed concern that the quality of their work might be affected if their workload was too heavy. He also enquired about the party responsible for certifying the completed works projects because legal responsibility was involved. He expressed concern whether the certification standards adopted would be comparable to Hong Kong standards.

9. Prof Patrick LAU considered it reasonable to adopt national standards for the facilities under the reconstruction support projects. The standards of those facilities were quite commendable and Hong Kong's funds were well spent in terms of cost-effectiveness. He however considered it important for the Administration to provide detailed reports on the reconstruction support projects, so that Hong Kong citizens were well informed of how the approved funds were spent.

10. The Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (PSW) responded that as a statutory requirement, Mainland implementation units must appoint independent supervision engineers who would be stationed on site and responsible for monitoring the reconstruction support projects. The relevant parties from the Sichuan side would be responsible for certification of the completed works projects. The Administration had engaged independent professional consultants to conduct site audits and they had not identified any structural problems in the works projects. Information on the reports prepared by the independent supervision engineers and independent professional consultants and follow-up actions required was recorded in the relevant appendices to the Third Progress Report. SDEV added that while funds were provided by Hong Kong, national standards would be adopted for the reconstruction support projects. For the two Wolong Nature Reserve flagship projects, which were of international attention, the Sichuan Government had agreed to adopt design standards recommended by the architectural experts from the Hong Kong side.

11. Mr Albert CHAN was concerned whether Hong Kong's funds were well spent. He was worried that Hong Kong Government officials would refrain from raising queries on the reconstruction support projects. To facilitate monitoring, he enquired about the possibility of setting up a reporting mechanism under which the informant would be granted a monetary reward if the irregularities reported were found to be substantiated. This could serve as a deterrent to malpractices. He had personally visited some reconstruction projects in rural areas supported by other provinces/municipalities, and observed that the standards adopted were low. By way of illustration, the roads were primitive and no retaining walls were constructed. He asked whether it was possible to enhance those projects.

12. SDEV responded that the Hong Kong Government's role in the reconstruction support work was clearly specified in the Cooperation Arrangement on the Support of Restoration and Reconstruction in the Sichuan Earthquake Stricken Areas. The Hong Kong Government would not be able to handle matters falling outside this framework. For reconstruction projects supported by Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Government would monitor their implementation by, among other means, engaging independent professional consultants. Hong Kong professionals in the relevant sectors also provided advice on the reconstruction support work. While Hong Kong would share its project management experience with the Mainland, its participation would not be extended to projects supported by other provinces/municipalities.

13. Mr James TO asked whether the independent professional consultants had gained any experience that could enhance the mechanism for monitoring the reconstruction support projects. He was concerned whether Mainland people knew that there was such a monitoring mechanism and, if not, the Administration could inform them in a discreet way. Mainland people could then help monitor the reconstruction projects supported by Hong Kong by reflecting their views or providing information on those projects.

14. PSW responded that Appendix 7 to the Third Progress Report provided the gist of the independent professional consultants' observations and recommendations on necessary follow-up actions. Mainland people should know which reconstruction projects were supported by Hong Kong as relevant signs were put up at the project sites. He believed that Mainland people would reflect their views if they considered that certain aspects of those projects deserved attention. Many of the projects supported by Hong Kong, such as schools, were not complicated projects. As site inspections conducted by various relevant parties would be carried out by different persons, monitoring would be carried out in an independent manner. No separate complaint mechanism was needed at present.

Need for long-term rehabilitation work

15. Prof Patrick LAU said that he was deeply touched by the recent visit to Sichuan. He asked whether funds would be available for providing long-term

assistance in the rehabilitation area to meet the needs of those who had become physically disabled as a result of the earthquake. As physically disabled children would continue to grow up, they had to replace their prostheses periodically. Such rehabilitation services deserved continued financial support. Mr James TO said that he was also deeply touched by the recent visit to Sichuan. He shared the view that funds should be made available for replacement of prostheses for the children as they grew up.

16. PSCMA said that the Administration noted the long-term need for rehabilitation services and had taken steps to address such a need. It would not be possible, however, for the Trust Fund to meet all recurrent funding requirements given the limited funds available. Nevertheless, the StandTALL project had been granted funds of about \$11 million, \$34 million and \$34 million in three stages, which should meet its needs in providing rehabilitation services, including the costs for certain prostheses. The total amount granted to the said project was nearly one-third of the total amount of funds earmarked under the Trust Fund for NGOs. Besides, the Sichuan Hong Kong Rehabilitation Centre, a key first stage project, would serve as the core in the network of rehabilitation centres at the provincial level in providing rehabilitation services for disabled persons. This network of rehabilitation centres would meet the needs of the patients requiring rehabilitation services during the different stages of recovery.

V Enhancing the delivery of Kai Tak Development and proposed creation of a D2 post

(LC Paper No. CB(1)396/09-10(05) -- Administration's paper on enhancing the delivery of Kai Tak Development

LC Paper No. CB(1)396/09-10(06) -- Paper on Kai Tak Development prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief))

17. SDEV said that the proposed establishment of the Kai Tak Office (KTO) would help ensure the timely completion and intended functioning of the various works packages under the Kai Tak Development (KTD). By way of illustration, KTO would further strengthen work in ensuring good connectivity between KTD and adjoining districts, implementing green features in KTD and conducting public engagement. KTO would also be conducive to implementing conservation initiatives in KTD, such as the preservation plan for Lung Tsun Stone Bridge. She emphasized that the proposed D2 post for KTO had already been included in the internal resource allocation exercise of the Development Bureau in the previous year.

18. Mr CHAN Kam-lam said that Members of the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong supported the Administration's proposal

because it could enhance the delivery of the Kai Tak Development in areas such as connectivity with neighbouring districts. He was however concerned whether the proposed post was pitched at the appropriate rank for performing the intended coordination role with counterparts in various departments. Noting that there would only be two D1 posts in KTO, he asked whether this was sufficient in view of its heavy workload in the coming four years.

19. SDEV responded that she did not expect that further staff could be added to KTO. The proposed D2 post, if approved, could provide some relief already. Apart from the proposed post, the Kai Tak Supervisory Team Meeting chaired by herself and another bi-monthly committee on engineering matters chaired by PSW would also perform a cross-bureau/department coordination role. These mechanisms would be sufficient to steer KTD. PSW added that the bi-monthly committee on engineering matters chaired by himself would discuss, apart from programmes, the details, such as concepts and designs, of the different implementation stages of KTD. There was a clear implementation timetable based on which the whole project would be carried out.

20. Mr WONG Kwok-hing said that while he appreciated the need for establishing the KTO and the proposed new D2 post in view of the tremendous scale of the KTD, the Administration should not abuse the arrangement of creating special offices and additional posts for implementation of infrastructure projects. He asked whether the Administration would engage intermediary companies to recruit personnel to fill new posts at the lower ranks created through the implementation of KTD.

21. SDEV responded that there were precedents of establishing dedicated offices such as the New Airport Projects Co-ordination Office and the Railway Development Office in Highways Department for implementation of large scale infrastructure projects. In comparison with these past cases, the Administration had adopted a very restrained approach in establishing the KTO, as only one D2 post would be created and the two D1 posts required would be redeployed from the Kowloon Development Office. Indeed, the Administration was not seeking to create a host of new posts for the work on KTD. As such, there was no need to use the recruitment arrangement mentioned by Mr WONG for the posts in KTO. The Civil Engineering and Development Department had undergone a restructuring in the past and its establishment was already very lean. SDEV also remarked that creation of directorate posts required the approval of the Legislative Council and hence, the Administration would not create new directorate posts through administrative means.

22. As there were no further views on the Administration's proposal, the Chairman concluded the discussion and said that members' views would be reported at the relevant meeting of the Establishment Subcommittee.

VI Study on Land Use Planning for the Closed Area

(LC Paper No. CB(1)396/09-10(07) -- Administration's paper on Study on Land Use Planning for the Closed Area -- Draft Development Plan and Stage 2 Community Engagement

LC Paper No. CB(1)396/09-10(08) -- Paper on land use planning for the land to be released from the Frontier Closed Area prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief)

23. The Chairman declared that he was the Chairman of Heung Yee Kuk and possessed land lots in the Closed Area and North East New Territories. To avoid any possible conflict of interest or role, he suggested and members agreed that the part of the meeting for discussing items VI and VII be chaired by the Deputy Chairman.

24. The Deputy Chairman took over the chair. Mrs Regina IP declared that the Savantas Policy Institute had given written views on the Study on Land Use Planning for the Closed Area and the North East New Territories New Development Areas Planning and Engineering Study to be discussed under items VI and VII respectively, but no interest was involved. The Deputy Chairman also declared that he had served as the moderator of some public forums organized by Planning Department on these studies but there should be no conflict of interest.

25. SDEV briefed members on the Study on Land Use Planning for the Closed Area. She said that in Stage 1 Community Engagement of the study that commenced in May 2008, the Administration had consulted members on the Draft Concept Plan for the land to be released from the Closed Area. A site visit to the Closed Area was conducted in November 2008 to enhance members' understanding of the conditions. Stage 2 Community Engagement commenced in October 2009 to solicit the public's views on the Draft Development Plan, which was formulated under a sustainable development framework with due regard given to the economic, social and environmental aspects and the need to strike a balance between development and conservation. The Administration would refine the land use proposals in the Draft Development Plan as appropriate upon consideration of the public views collected.

Tourist-related developments

26. Mr WONG Kwok-hing said that he supported the proposed development themes for the area to be released from the Closed Area. He urged the Administration to facilitate the development of tourism in the area. The Administration should consider promoting cycle tourism and recreational activities such as yacht cruises on Shenzhen River. The Deputy Chairman considered that

the need for fences in the area should be reviewed if the area was to be developed for tourism uses. Mr CHAN Kam-lam shared the view that there was no need for fences in the area. He suggested that the Administration should capitalize on the opportunity to enhance the facilities in Sha Tau Kok and develop it into a tourism area. Mr James TO said that while he had reservations on removing the fences in the area on account of security concerns, the fences could be beautified if the area was to be developed into a tourism area.

27. The Assistant Director of Planning/Territorial (AD of Plan) responded that as the natural environment of the area had been well preserved over the years, there was potential for developing it into a tourism area. The Administration had explored the feasibility of constructing cycling tracks and hiking trails at appropriate locations, and these had been recommended in the study. Although Sha Tau Kok was not included in the present study as it would remain within the Closed Area, the Administration was conducting a separate study to explore opportunities for enhancing the environment of the Sha Tau Kok Town. The Administration would also examine in conjunction with the relevant Shenzhen authorities the feasibility of recreational activities on Shenzhen River after completing the river training works and resolving associated environmental problems. SDEV added that the concept of "one river, two banks" would be adopted.

Residential developments

28. Mr WONG Kwok-hing asked why only low density residential developments were proposed. Expressing a similar view, Mr CHAN Kam-lam noted that the area of the land for residential developments was small and considered that it should be increased. Mr James TO suggested that residential developments in the area should be concentrated in certain locations and supported retaining the greeneries in the area. He urged the Administration to be prudent in planning for the area.

29. AD of Plan responded that an area of about 27 hectares of the land to be released was proposed for residential use, including the comprehensive development area at Kong Nga Po and the residential area near Hung Lung Hang, which was in fact quite sizeable. The residential developments would not be the types of residential developments commonly found in urban districts. Those near Kong Nga Po would be three to six storeys high, whereas those near Hung Lung Hang would be at most four storeys high. Land would also be reserved for Village Development Areas and eco-lodge development. The development corridors along major transport routes would also provide opportunities for different kinds of cross-boundary related developments. SDEV added that the Administration had considered the pros and cons of different development options. The congested developments on the Shenzhen side had reinforced the conservation value of and the need to retain greeneries on the land to be released from the Closed Area. There would not be potential for high density developments in the area in the foreseeable

future and the Administration would be prudent in handling development proposals in the area.

High value-added uses

30. Mrs Regina IP said that adopting a conservation-oriented direction in developing the area was appropriate. She was however disappointed that the Man Kam To Development Corridor was proposed for low valued-added uses such as wholesale centres and showrooms. She considered this a waste of resources and not in line with the policy of further developing the six identified economic areas. She suggested that the said corridor should be used for high value-added uses such as testing and certification, pharmaceuticals, information technology and educational services. Development of high value-added industries required land. Some high value-added industries found it more convenient to set up their facilities at locations near the Closed Area. Land should be identified for such industries because Hong Kong should have a knowledge-based economy. She asked when the land in the Lok Ma Chau Loop and the area to be released from the Closed Area would become available. In developing the Lok Ma Chau Loop, the Administration should cater for the educational needs of local tertiary students first. Hong Kong was capable of producing talents. What was needed was to provide local tertiary institutions with the land they needed. The Administration had not yet consulted the Panel on Education on the proposed uses of the Lok Ma Chau Loop. The Administration should adopt an innovative approach in handling the above issues.

31. SDEV responded that the Administration had to conduct environmental impact assessment and provide the necessary infrastructure before developing the area. On the other hand, revitalization of the some 1 000 old industrial buildings in other parts of the Territory could provide better opportunity to serve the needs of the six economic areas. As regards educational services and high technology industries, the Lok Mau Chau Loop was being considered for such uses. In this regard, a planning and engineering study was already in progress. There would be about 80 hectares of land in the Lok Ma Chau Loop and the Administration would maintain flexibility in its use. The Administration had also widely consulted the local tertiary institutions on the possible uses of the land and she would relay Mrs Regina IP's views to the Education Bureau if necessary. The Administration would assist in identifying suitable land for high valued-added industries if members had any specific proposals in mind. The Principal Assistant Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands)⁵ (PAS/PL5) added that due to historical reasons, the area in the Closed Area to be released lacked the necessary infrastructure for development. The implementation of infrastructure projects required substantial resources and long lead time. The existing industrial estates had provided land for special industries such as pharmaceuticals. The New Development Areas might be able to provide land for industries such as testing and certification in a shorter time frame when compared with land to be released from the Closed Area. As regards the timetable for developing the land to be released from the Closed Area, AD of Plan

said that the study was not a development project as such as it only aimed to provide a planning framework to guide future development. Programme for the necessary improvement works of the basic infrastructure, such as road widening, needed to take into account the timing for the phased release of the Closed Area.

32. Mr James TO said that he preferred providing space for the six economic areas in revitalized old industrial buildings instead of in the area to be released from the Closed Area.

Other issues

33. Mr Albert CHAN said that the Administration's security policy on boundary control should be relaxed. There were still many restricted areas such as Sha Tau Kok and Starling Inlet. By contrast, areas like Hengqin and Macau were developing much faster than Hong Kong. Instead of waiting for land owners to initiate developments, the Administration should take the lead. The policies of various bureaux should dovetail with one another to expedite development. By way of illustration, implementing recreational facilities required necessary ancillary facilities. The facelift for Mui Wo had been planned for years without being implemented. The Administration should also review its country park policy. Improving the living environment of the whole population should be accorded higher priority than retaining country parks for the relatively smaller number of country park users. The Administration should release some of the land from country parks to enhance the living environment of the general public.

34. SDEV responded that Hong Kong was a compact city because its built-up area occupied only about one quarter of its territory of 1 100 square kilometres. As regards the suggestion of releasing some of the land from country parks, she considered that society did not have a general consensus in this regard. Implementing higher density developments along railways in Hong Kong was considered as a merit by many other places in the world. She shared the view that necessary infrastructure was indispensable for development. Apart from this, the Administration had to offer business opportunities. By way of illustration, the Administration had consulted the relevant sector on its interest in providing facilities such as eco-lodge and received positive feedback.

35. Noting this, Mr Albert CHAN said that there was no consensus on releasing land from country parks because the Administration had never initiated any review of its country park policy in the first place.

36. Mr James TO said that in developing the land to be released from the Closed Area, whether the Administration would resume land for implementing infrastructure projects before releasing the land was a very important issue because the compensation required for land resumption would differ substantially under different scenarios. The Administration should be prudent in handling the matter to ensure fairness. SDEV noted Mr TO's views.

37. Mr CHAN Kam-lam said that to facilitate commuters using the Lo Wu Boundary Control Point, the Administration should consider constructing a road to the control point to enable commuters to use other transport modes than railway to the control point.

38. PAS/PL5 responded that while it would be more desirable to divert people flow to other boundary control points so as to alleviate the pressure at the Lo Wu Boundary Control Point, the Administration would optimize the facilities to enhance the level of services for commuters.

VII North East New Territories New Development Areas Planning and Engineering Study

(LC Paper No. CB(1)396/09-10(09) -- Administration's paper on North East New Territories New Development Areas Planning and Engineering Study -- Stage Two Public Engagement

LC Paper No. CB(1)396/09-10(10) -- Paper on proposed New Development Areas in North East New Territories prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief)

39. The Administration briefed members on the North East New Territories New Development Areas (NENT NDAs) with the aid of a video. SDEV said that in planning for the NENT NDAs, the Administration had made reference to the findings of a review study on the development of the Tin Shui Wai New Town. The Administration would pay greater attention to maintaining an appropriate housing mix and creating sufficient job opportunities so as to make the NENT NDAs as balanced as possible. Leisure and cultural facilities would be provided in the NENT NDAs to tie in with the intake of population. The Administration would solicit more participation from the private sector in implementing the NENT NDAs and tackle challenges such as creating a low carbon and green environment, and resolving issues arising from private land ownership.

Connectivity with nearby districts

40. Mr CHAN Kam-lam said that as the three NENT NDAs were in separate locations, how to improve their linkage to achieve a synergy effect would be an important issue. He suggested that the road infrastructure of the NENT NDAs should be further strengthened in all directions, especially northwards, because the connection between Hong Kong and Shenzhen would be much closer by 2030. Furthermore, the Administration should consider the feasibility of a railway spur line to the Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling NDA.

41. Mr WONG Sing-chi expressed similar concern on railway transport and noted that a railway station had been planned at the Kwu Tung North DNA. He said that the Administration should also consider the feasibility of a railway spur line passing through the Fanling North NDA and terminating at the Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point.

42. On connectivity and integration, the Deputy Chairman said that the NENT NDAs were close to the land to be released from the Closed Area and the Futian central business district in Shenzhen. He asked whether there would be sufficient connection and integration between these areas.

43. PAS/PL5 responded that the Kwu Tong North and Fanling North NDAs were close to each other and they could be considered as a natural extension of Sheung Shui and Fanling, thus facilitating the achievement of a synergy effect. The Administration was aware that transport infrastructure was important and therefore a railway station for the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line had been planned at the Kwu Tung North NDA. The proposed road to the Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point would also connect with the Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling NDA. AD of Plan added that constructing a railway spur line involved a number of major issues. The Administration would study the feasibility of an environmentally-friendly transport system for the Fanling North NDA in the later stage of the study. As the NENT NDAs were in close proximity to the existing Sheung Shui and Fanling new towns, there would be sufficient road infrastructure and good connectivity to the existing transport and infrastructural facilities. The planning for the NENT NDAs, the surrounding districts and the land to be released from the Closed Area were being planned holistically rather than in isolation. Also, the Administration would take into consideration the connection and integration between Hong Kong and Shenzhen. The development corridors mentioned earlier in the discussion of the Study on Land Use Planning for the Closed Area would provide opportunities for cross-boundary related economic development.

Proposed zoning and land uses

44. Mr CHAN Kam-lam said that in view of the lower land premium at the NENT NDAs, the Administration should consider the feasibility of developing those NDAs into a large scale logistics base for the financial and commercial industries, like Qianhai in Shenzhen, so as to enhance Hong Kong's competitive edge and reduce the pressure on those industries to relocate their logistics base to the Mainland. He also asked whether the Administration would reserve land in the NENT NDAs to meet the demand for small houses.

45. Expressing a similar concern on small houses, the Deputy Chairman asked whether the Administration would capitalize on the implementation of the NDAs to tackle issues related to the small house policy.

46. PAS/PL5 responded that the Kwu Tung North NDA could play a complementary role for the future developments at the Lok Ma Chau Loop. The area near the proposed railway station had been zoned as a "Comprehensive Development Area" and would be capable to accommodate business use. The planning would have the flexibility to respond to the needs of the market. AD of Plan added that 16 hectares of land at the Kwu Tung North NDA had been proposed for commercial, research and development uses and 46 hectares of land at the Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling NDA had been proposed for special industry uses. The planning for the latter would dovetail with that for the Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point. As regards the provision of land for small houses, SDEV responded that issues related to the small house policy had to be tackled through other means. The Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands) added that there were three recognized villages in the NENT NDAs, viz. Yin Kong Village, Ping Che Yuen Ha Village and Ho Sheung Heung Village, and the Lands Department had provided information on the demand of land for small houses. The consultants had taken into account the demand for village expansion in the next 10 years and such requirement had been reflected in the Preliminary Outline Development Plans (PODPs). There would be sufficient land in the village development areas of Yin Kong Village and Ping Che Yuen Ha Village to meet the demand. As regards Ho Sheung Heung Village, an additional 1.5 hectares of land would be required and the consultants had proposed to expand the existing village development area accordingly to meet the demand.

47. Mr WONG Sing-chi suggested that for the Fanling North NDA, the proposed public rental housing site between Wing Fai Centre and Belair Monte be swapped with the Residential Zone 3 site adjoining the Open Space site to the south of Ng Tung River so as to reduce the development density at the town centre. Otherwise, there would be strong objections from the residents concerned. For the proposed sewage treatment plant, the odour problem had to be solved before implementation. For the Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling NDA, residents were concerned whether the proposed special industries would cause any pollution. He also asked whether the Administration would have any difficulty to resume the land currently occupied for such uses as car parks and scrap yards, because if such uses continued to exist, high-end industries might be reluctant to move in. For the Kwu Tung North NDA, there should be sufficient greening at the town centre. He also urged the Administration not to relocate the existing private elderly homes in the area and allow them to continue to operate. In implementing the NENT NDAs, the Administration should ensure that rehousing and relocation issues would be handled properly. The NDAs should be designed based on the concept of an eco-city. As regards the Closed Area, he shared the view that Sha Tau Kok should be opened up.

48. SDEV noted Mr WONG Sing-chi's views. She said that community involvement was essential in the planning process and it was exactly why it was necessary to conduct public engagement exercises. The Administration would

handle rehousing and relocation issues with care. Any necessary land resumption or clearance of unauthorized buildings works would be effected based on the established policies. The Administration would have sufficient time to handle such issues because the project was still at the public engagement stage on the PODPs. There would be sufficient greening in the NENT NDAs and green building features would be implemented as appropriate. As regards site swapping in the Fanling North NDA, AD of Plan explained that the design concept was to adopt a stepped building height profile with relatively higher density and taller buildings at the town centre, and lower density, lower buildings towards Ng Tung River. However, the PODPs would be further refined to take into account Members' concerns and public comments received during the current public engagement exercise.

Community facilities

49. Mr IP Wai-ming was concerned whether there would be sufficient community facilities for public rental housing residents moving into the NENT NDAs during the early stage. He was also concerned how Sheung Shui and Fanling could support the development of the NENT NDAs because the two districts also lacked sufficient community, leisure and entertainment facilities themselves. He was worried that the lack of sufficient facilities would lead to social problems.

50. The Deputy Chairman shared the view that public rental housing should be developed in tandem with the necessary community and other facilities.

51. SDEV responded that one of the conclusions of the study on the Tin Shui Wai New Town was that in planning for a new development area, there would be more issues other than land use planning and it should be viewed from a broader perspective. The Administration would learn from the experience of the Tin Shui Wai New Town to ensure timely provision sufficient facilities in the NDAs. Implementing public rental housing projects during the initial stage of developing a new area would ensure that community facilities such as schools and community halls would be available at an early stage. The Administration would continue to adopt this approach because steering the direction of development would become more difficult if the initial stage of developing a new area was left to the private sector. AD of Plan added that private developers might however implement their developments if their proposals could accord with the finalized development plans for the NDAs.

Scale of development

52. Mr CHAN Kam-lam urged the Administration to try its best in resolving private land ownership issues, which would be a challenge in implementing the NENT NDAs. As the projected population in Hong Kong would be 8.4 million by 2030 and the NENT NDAs would only accommodate some 131 000 people, the

Administration should consider expanding their scale of development so as to cope with future housing needs and create more job opportunities.

53. Mrs Regina IP declared that the Savantas Policy Institute had given views on the implementation of the NENT NDAs. She welcomed that the Administration had accepted some of its suggestions. She shared the view that the scale of the development of the NENT NDAs should be further expanded to create more job opportunities.

54. PAS/PL5 responded that in considering the implementation of the NDAs, the Administration had taken into account the private land ownership issues. Apart from the NENT NDAs, future developments in other areas in the New Territories and redevelopment of urban districts could also help meet housing needs.

VIII Any other business

55. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 5:35 pm.