

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)265/11-12
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/DEV/1

Panel on Development

Minutes of meeting
held on Tuesday, 24 May 2011, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building

Members present : Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP
Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG LAU Yau-fun, GBS, JP
Hon WONG Yung-kan, SBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, SBS, JP
Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, GBS, JP
Hon KAM Nai-wai, MH
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, JP
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yea, GBS, JP
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC
Hon Tanya CHAN
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip

Members attending: Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Dr Hon PAN Pey-chyou

Members absent : Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, SBS, S.B.St.J., JP
Dr Hon Philip WONG Yu-hong, GBS
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun

Public officers attending : **Agenda item IV**

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

Mrs Jessie TING YIP Yin-mei, JP
Deputy Secretary for Development (Works) 1

Mr Kieran O'NEILL
Principal Assistant Secretary
(Greening, Landscape and Tree Management)
Development Bureau

Dr Lawrence CHAU Kam-chiu
Head of Tree Management Office
Development Bureau

Mr KAM Chak-wing
Deputy Head of Civil Engineering Office
(Port & Land)
Civil Engineering and Development Department

Agenda item V

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

Ms Gracie FOO Siu-wai, JP
Deputy Secretary for Development
(Planning & Lands)1

Mr Andrew TSANG Yue-tung, JP
Assistant Director (2)
Home Affairs Department

Ms Alice AU YEUNG Yuet-wah
Principal Transport Officer (Urban)
Transport Department

Mr MAK Ka-wai
Regional Highway Engineer (Urban)
Highways Department

Ms Brenda AU Kit-ying
District Planning Officer (Hong Kong)
Planning Department

Agenda item VI

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

Mr WAI Chi-sing, JP
Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)

Mr HON Chi-keung, JP
Director of Civil Engineering & Development

Mr CHOW Man-tat
Deputy Project Manager (HK Island & Islands)
Civil Engineering and Development Department

Mr Ivan CHUNG Man-kit
District Planning Officer (Sai Kung & Islands)
Planning Department

Agenda item VII

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

Mr WAI Chi-sing, JP
Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)

Mr HON Chi-keung, JP
Director of Civil Engineering & Development

Mr Raymond CHAN Kin-sek, JP
Head of Geotechnical Engineering Office
Civil Engineering and Development Department

Mr LING Kar-kan
Deputy Director of Planning (Territorial)

Agenda item VIII

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

Mr WAI Chi-sing, JP
Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)

Mr HON Chi-keung, JP
Director of Civil Engineering & Development

Mr Raymond CHAN Kin-sek, JP
Head of Geotechnical Engineering Office
Civil Engineering and Development Department

Mr LING Kar-kan
Deputy Director of Planning (Territorial)

Clerk in attendance : Ms Connie SZETO
Chief Council Secretary (1)4

Staff in attendance : Ms Sharon CHUNG
Senior Council Secretary (1)4

Mr Simon CHEUNG
Senior Council Secretary (1)9

Ms Christina SHIU
Legislative Assistant (1)4

I Confirmation of minutes

(LC Paper No. CB(1)2138/10-11 -- Minutes of meeting on 22 February 2011)

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2011 were confirmed.

II Information papers issued since the last meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(1)2113/10-11(01) -- Referral from the Complaints Division regarding views on the Buildings Ordinance (Chapter 123)

LC Paper No. CB(1)2162/10-11(01) -- Administration's paper on the funding proposal for "96WC -- Water supply to Pak Shek Kok reclamation area, Tai Po -- stage 2"

LC Paper No. CB(1)2162/10-11(02) -- Administration's paper on the funding proposal for "140CD -- Reconstruction and rehabilitation of Kai Tak Nullah from Po Kong Village Road to Tung Kwong Road -- remaining works"

LC Paper No. CB(1)2225/10-11(01) -- Administration's paper on repair and replacement of aged water mains and temporary water supply

LC Paper No. CB(1)2225/10-11(02) -- Administration's paper on progress report on the work of the Tree Management Office)

2. Members noted that the above information papers had been issued since the meeting on 20 April 2011.

III Items for discussion at the next meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(1)2205/10-11(01) -- List of outstanding items for discussion

LC Paper No. CB(1)2205/10-11(02) -- List of follow-up actions)

3. Referring to the information papers on "Repair and replacement of aged water mains and temporary water supply" (LC Paper No. CB(1)2225/10-11(01)) and "Progress report on the work of the Tree Management Office" (LC Paper No. CB(1)2225/10-11(02)), Mr KAM Nai-wai and Miss Tanya CHAN proposed respectively that issues relating to the two subjects be discussed at the regular meeting of the Panel.

(Post-meeting note: The above two subjects were discussed at the meeting of the Panel on 16 July 2011.)

4. Miss Tanya CHAN said that there was public concern about the granting of property development rights of Wong Chuk Hang and Valley Road Estate sites as a form of financial assistance to the Mass Transit Railway Corporation Limited for implementing the Kwun Tong Line Extension and the South Island Line (East) projects. She suggested that the Panel should discuss issues related to land development at the two sites or consider holding a joint meeting with the Panel on Transport on the matter. The Chairman said that he would discuss the matter with the Chairman of the Panel on Transport.

(Post-meeting note: Funding arrangements of the Kwun Tong Line Extension and the South Island Line (East) projects were discussed at the special meeting of the Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways of the Panel on Transport on 17 June 2011.)

5. Members agreed that the following items be discussed at the regular meeting scheduled for 28 June 2011, from 2:30 pm to 6:30 pm --

- (a) Work of the Urban Renewal Authority;
- (b) Unauthorized building works in New Territories Exempted Houses;
- (c) Amalgamation of the Construction Industry Council and the Construction Workers Registration Authority; and
- (d) Progress report on heritage conservation initiatives.

6. Hon LEE Wing-tat suggested that the Panel should hold a special meeting to discuss item (b) above so that members would have sufficient time to deliberate related issues. The Chairman said that he would explore Mr LEE's suggestion with the Administration.

(Post-meeting note: A special meeting of the Panel was held on 20 June 2011 to discuss the control of unauthorized building works under the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123). Discussion on the progress report on heritage conservation initiatives was deferred to the meeting on 16 July 2011.)

7. The Chairman suggested and members agreed that the regular meeting scheduled for 26 July 2011 be advanced to 20 July to tie in with the schedule for the last Legislative Council ("LegCo") meeting of the current session.

(Post-meeting note: At the request of the Administration, the regular meeting in July was advanced to 16 July 2011.)

IV Development of Greening Master Plans for the New Territories

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1308/10-11(07) -- Administration's paper on development of Greening Master Plans for the New Territories

LC Paper No. CB(1)1308/10-11(08) -- Paper on Greening Master Plans prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Updated background brief))

8. The Secretary for Development ("SDEV") introduced to the Panel two key officers in the Greening, Landscape and Tree Management ("GLTM") Section of the Development Bureau -- Mr Kieran O'Neill, Principal Assistant Secretary (Greening, Landscape and Tree Management)("PAS/DEV(GLTM)") and Dr Lawrence CHAU Kam-chiu, Head of Tree Management Office ("TMO"). She added that Mr O'Neill and Dr CHAU were experts in the field with rich experience who had been recruited recently to lead the work of GLTM Section, which were established in March 2010.

9. With the aid of powerpoint presentation, PAS/DEV(GLTM) briefed members on the implementation of Greening Master Plans ("GMPs") in urban areas and the development of GMPs for the New Territories ("NT").

(Post-meeting note: The powerpoint material was circulated by email to members on 25 May 2011 vide LC Paper No. CB(1)2293/10-11(01)).

Design of greening works

10. Mr WONG Kwok-hing welcomed the Administration's efforts to develop GMPs for NT and urged the Administration to consider promoting greening works in NT areas including riversides, slopes besides roads and highways, noise barriers along highways, central dividers of roads and highways, cycling tracks, and footbridges. In particular, Mr WONG commended the greening project to beautify the noise barrier on Yeung Uk Road in Tsuen Wan which included a variety of plants forming a long and pleasant "green wall" and with automatic watering system. Given the improvement to the environment brought by the project, he considered that greening works at noise barriers was worth the resources spent.

11. SDEV thanked Mr WONG for his commendation and undertook to consider his comments and suggestions in developing GMPs for NT. She said that cost-effectiveness and maintenance were two important factors to be considered in implementing greening projects. As for the greening project on Yeung Uk Road, she said that the project involved a high cost and it would take some time for the Administration to examine the maintenance needs of the project in assessing the cost-effectiveness of the greening works.

12. Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming appreciated the Administration's efforts in implementing greening in the urban areas and welcomed the development of GMPs for NT. He pointed out that while there were constraints in implementing greening in the urban areas such as the lack of large open spaces, NT had higher potential to achieve better results in greening projects. As each of the districts in NT had distinct identities, he recommended that the Administration should develop a unique theme with representative plant or flower species for each of the nine districts in NT, or each of the four areas of NT North West, NT South East, NT North East and NT South West as mentioned in paragraph 12 of the Administration's paper, with a view to bringing refreshing looks to the landscape of NT.

13. Deputy Secretary for Development (Works)1 ("DS/DEV(Works)1") replied that taking into account the greening experience in the urban areas, the Administration would aim to develop a theme for GMP in each district in NT. For example, "Heart of Gold" had been adopted as the theme for the GMP of Central to reflect the district's distinct role as the financial centre of Hong Kong. This theme was complemented by a range of plant species with golden, yellow, orange or red flowers and foliage. In Wan Chai, where the northern coast had evolved by a series of strip-like reclamations, "rainbow" was adopted as the theme because it depicted the "strips" of different topography, land use and greening characteristics. Moreover, flowers with cheerful colour were chosen as the plant species for the GMP. She assured members that the approach of district-based GMPs with distinct greening themes would be applied in NT.

14. Referring to her experience in communicating with TMO, Miss Tanya CHAN commended the quick response of the Office to complaints and suggestions on matters related to tree management. While expressing appreciation for the design of the names of the greening themes, such as "Royal Palm Boulevard" and "Golden Kaleidoscope", for urban GMPs, she opined that it was more important for greening works to bring out the characteristics of a district. She enquired about the Administration's experience in implementing GMPs in the urban areas that were worth for consideration in developing GMPs for NT.

15. Deputy Head of Civil Engineering Office (Port and Land)/Civil Engineering and Development Department highlighted two aspects of experience gained in the implementation of urban GMPs. First, there were positive comments on greening works at road dividers to replace providing greening at roadside or iron railings. An example was the greening works along Nathan Road in Tsim Sha Tsui. The Administration had consulted the Sai Kung District Council on the same measure along some main roads in the district and had the Council's support on the proposal. Secondly, soil corridors had been built in urban areas to substitute the use of large plant pots to address problems caused by crowded underground utilities and concern from shop owners who objected the placing of large plant pots in front of their shops or properties. In NT, as there was more underground space, it was envisaged that more greening would be provided in the form of tree planting instead of using plant pots or soil corridors.

16. SDEV shared with members her observations and experience from the implementation of GMPs in the urban areas. She referred to the successful example of greening in Wan Chai and pointed out that the

greenery corner near a refuse collection point at the junction of Johnston Road and Luard Road with flowers and shrubs had added a lot of colours to an otherwise grey city environment. The project had demonstrated that greening efforts had to be made "in context" and a right choice of location could bring out the full effect of greening to the environment. Whereas in NT, given the large coverage of existing greenery in the countryside and new town developments, the scope and focus of GMPs would be different from those in the urban areas and emphasis would be placed on development of large scale greening to optimize cost-effectiveness and benefits to the environment. While she agreed that a greening theme should be developed for each district, unlike the approach taken in the urban areas with themes first worked out for individual districts followed by the selection of suitable plant or flower species, greening in NT could start with the selection of a representative plant or flower species reflecting the characteristics of the district then followed by the development of the right themes. For instance, there were views that in implementing greening for Ngong Ping, a single flower species should be selected to make a giant floral display. The Administration would consult individual District Councils on the selection of the theme plants or flowers for each district.

17. Referring to the common practice of hanging planters along footbridges in the Central and Western District, Miss Tanya CHAN suggested that the Administration should provide facilities for greening in constructing footbridges in the future.

18. In response, DS/DEV(Works)1 said that hanging planters were only used on existing footbridges. For new footbridges, planters had been built-in to facilitate greening works.

19. Mr Albert CHAN said that he had suggested replanting Chinese new year flower (中國吊鐘), which reflected the characteristics of Lantau, in Ngong Ping some years ago as serious damage had been caused to such plants during the construction of the Ngong Ping 360. Expressing dissatisfaction about the monotony in plant species in parks of Hong Kong, he stressed that district identities were essential in developing GMPs. He opined that there should be different flower or plant species for each of the 18 districts, or at least for each of the five broad areas, reflecting the characteristics of each district or area. As regards the design of garden landscape, Mr CHAN strongly recommended the adoption of simple design such as floral display of a single species of flower, rather than combinations of flower species and sophisticated design. Since the Administration had established a new professional team to take up responsibilities in greening,

landscape and tree management, he urged the Administration to develop innovative strategies in implementing greening and avoid repeating past mistakes.

20. Mr Albert CHAN further stressed the need for the Administration to take into account cost-effectiveness when implementing greening works. Referring to his experience when he was a member of the then Regional Council, he expressed concern about the high fees charged by consultants or architects in implementing greening projects, which might account for some 15% of the total project cost. He urged the Administration to exercise prudent control over the costs for developing and implementing GMPs in the urban areas and NT.

21. Drawing reference to his observations from a recent duty visit of the Subcommittee on Harbourfront Planning to the United States and Canada, the Chairman said that it was the trend in major overseas cities to integrate the design of parks or greening works with the special features of the local environment and to make use of local natural materials with a view to bringing out the history and characteristics of the district. He also suggested that, to make Hong Kong a quality city, integrated hard landscape should be implemented by improving the paving of pedestrian walks in the greening areas.

Selection of plant species

22. Citing the example of planting of acacia confusa, which was not a suitable species for growing in Hong Kong, along the roadsides in some NT areas in the past, Mr CHEUNG Hok-ming pointed out that there was mismatch in the plant species and the local conditions in NT. As the life cycle of acacia confusa was about 30 years, he opined that it was the right time for the Administration to consider replacing the species in developing GMPs for NT. Miss Tanya CHAN proposed that to enhance the public's knowledge about the history and cultural tradition of individual districts in NT, local plant species should be selected in implementing GMP for each district.

23. DS/DEV(Works)1 agreed that selection of suitable plant species was an essential part in formulating GMPs. She said that TMO would consider Mr CHEUNG's suggestion about replacing acacia confusa and the Administration would consider members' suggestions in the formulation of GMPs for NT.

24. Mr Albert CHAN emphasized that the Administration should refrain from using imported plant species as they might adversely affect the growth of local species. Wedelia, which the Highways Department had stopped planting for a few years, was an example of imported species that was invasive in nature. In Central America, it was found that wedelia, which become more invasive when grown in wet environment, would kill other plants nearby. He called on the Administration to remove existing wedelia grown in districts in a progressive manner.

25. SDEV took note of members' views, and said that the Administration would respond to these views when the Panel discussed the work of TMO in the near future.

V PWP Item No. 3194SC and 6078TI -- Provision of government, institution and community facilities at the eastern part of Ex-North Point Estate site

(LC Paper No. CB(1)2205/10-11(04) -- Administration's paper on PWP Item No. 3194SC and 6078TI -- Provision of government, institution and community facilities at the eastern part of Ex-North Point Estate site)

26. With the aid of powerpoint presentation, SDEV briefed members on the Administration's proposal to seek LegCo's approval for funding of \$104.7 million for the construction of a community hall ("CH") and a covered public transport terminus ("PTT") (including a public toilet) at the eastern part of the Ex-North Point Estate ("ex-NPE(E)"). She highlighted the following points --

- (a) The North Point Estate was demolished in 2003 and the site was returned to the Government by the Hong Kong Housing Authority in 2007. The Town Planning Board ("TPB") endorsed a Planning Brief in 2009 to guide the development of the site which was amended in 2011. The western part of the site had been planned for the development of a hotel and waterfront promenade and had been included in the Application List since 2008-2009. The eastern part of the site,

i.e. ex-NPE(E), was rezoned "Comprehensive Development Area (3)" ("CDA(3)") on the North Point Outline Zoning Plan ("OZP") for public consultation in March 2010. The revised OZP was subsequently approved by the Chief Executive in Council in November 2010.

- (b) The ex-NPE(E) site was planned for commercial/residential development with a PTT, public coach park, Government, Institute and Community ("GIC") facilities, and public open space ("POS") etc. The site was included in the 2011-2012 Land Sale Programme. With funding borne by the Government under two Public Works Programme projects, i.e. Item 3194SC and Item 6078TI, the Administration would include construction of the CH and the PTT by the developer as one of the Conditions of Sale. The Government would reimburse the developer the actual cost of construction upon completion, subject to a pre-determined financial ceiling determined with reference to the construction costs of the facilities if they were to be constructed by the Government.
- (c) In addition to CH and PTT, the Administration had included some facilities at the ex-NPE(E) site, such as an integrated family services centre, a special child care centre, a POS (including a 20-metre wide waterfront promenade), etc. The developer would be responsible for the construction of the welfare facilities and POS. The cost for the welfare facilities would be financed by the Lotteries Fund, while that for POS would be met by the developer.
- (d) The developer would be responsible for the design and construction of government facilities according to the Government's specifications. The facilities would be handed over to the Administration for operation and management after completion. The proposed arrangement would enable the needed facilities to be provided to the public in a timely and integrated manner, provide better planning, and optimize the use of limited land. The developer would have to submit a Master Layout Plan showing details and locations of the various facilities to TPB for approval.
- (e) The Administration consulted the Eastern District Council ("EDC") and its relevant committees on the PTT and CH

proposals in late 2010 and May 2011 respectively and obtained support from DC members. On the CH proposal, although there were six community centres / CHs in the Eastern District, none of them was located in North Point East. The Administration's proposal therefore had support from EDC. As regards the proposed PTT, it would re-provision the existing open-air PTT situated within the ex-NPE(E) site to accommodate three short haul and 13 long haul franchised bus routes and a green mini-bus terminal.

- (f) According to the approved North Point OZP, the planning parameters of the ex-NPE(E) site included an area of about 29 265 m², a maximum domestic gross floor area ("GFA") of 53 680m², a maximum non-domestic GFA of 29 995 m² of which not less than 5 155 m² would be provided for GIC facilities, a maximum site coverage of 60% and a maximum building height of 80 metres above Principal Datum. Further to that, a POS of not less than 12 680 m² including a 20-metre wide waterfront promenade shall be provided.

Public open space

27. Mr KAM Nai-wai opined that while the proposed arrangement for the developer to construct POS at the ex-NPE(E) site would not require individual property owners of the site to contribute towards the maintenance costs, he was concerned how the public would know the exact boundaries of POS and differentiate the facility from those private open space facilities to be provided by the developer in future private developments in the area. Besides, since POS including the waterfront promenade would be designed and constructed by the developer, he questioned how the Administration could ensure the design could harmonize the local environment and enhance public accessibility to the promenade.

28. Mr Albert CHAN expressed deep regrets on the Administration's decision to convert the ex-NPE site from public housing to commercial/residential uses. Given the severe shortage of land for public housing, he criticized that the Administration was moving in the wrong direction in redeveloping the ex-NPE site. On the planning of the site, Mr CHAN shared Mr KAM's views and expressed concern about how the Administration would ensure connectivity of the facilities in the ex-NPE(E) site with other places. Given the busy pedestrian flow at the North Point Ferry Pier and PTT, he was concerned about the compatibility of these

facilities with the waterfront promenade, and possible negative impact on users of the promenade.

29. SDEV said that in the light of views from LegCo Members and the public, the Administration had reviewed the policy on POS in private developments. As POS in the ex-NPE(E) site would be handed over to the Leisure and Cultural Services Department for operation and management after completion, the problem as cited by Mr KAM was unlikely to happen. She added that, under the refined arrangements for the provision of POS in private developments, the Administration would own, manage and maintain POS situated on adjoining Government land of private residential developments to relieve individual property owners from the burden of managing and maintaining POS.

30. On the connectivity of the ex-NPE(E) site with the North Point Pier, District Planning Officer (Hong Kong) ("DPO(HK)PD") advised that the Pier had been included in the Planning Department's Hong Kong Island East Harbourfront Study. The preliminary concept was to integrate the Pier with the ex-NPE(E) site through a piazza and a 20-metre wide promenade. To facilitate pedestrian movement, the Planning Brief included the provision of landscaped walkways along Shu Kuk Street and Kam Hong Street between Java Road and the waterfront and a subway bringing pedestrians to and from North Point MTR Station. Given the rather low volume of ferry passengers, it was envisaged that the promenade and the piazza could cater the pedestrian flow. Since the ex-NPE(E) site was zoned CDA, the developer would need to submit a Master Layout Plan providing details for TPB's approval. This would ensure that the private commercial/residential developments as well as POS would blend in with the surrounding environment.

31. Dr PAN Pey-chyou supported the Administration's proposal in principle to provide GIC facilities including welfare and open space facilities meeting the needs of local residents. As the developer would be required to finance the construction of POS, he was concerned whether the Administration had to offer extra benefits to the developer in return, and whether the prices of the property in the future developments would be affected.

32. SDEV explained that there would not be any cash compensation nor GFA concessions to the developer for provision of POS in a private development. The policy, which had the support of the Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong, assured individual property owners

in residential developments that they would be relieved from management and maintenance responsibilities for POS. She added that property prices were affected by many factors and there might not be any relationship between property prices and the requirement for the developer to meet the construction cost of POS.

Community Hall

Venue for Cantonese opera performances

33. Mr KAM Nai-wai urged the Administration to consider enhancing the facilities of the proposed CH, including increasing the seating capacity of the hall and upgrading its lighting, audio and related facilities/equipment to meet the standards of a civic centre, to cater for Cantonese opera performances. Mr WONG Kwok-hing relayed the concerns expressed by EDC members and local residents currently staging protest outside the LegCo Building, and called for the provision of a theatre at the proposed CH so that the tradition of Sunbeam Theatre could be continued in North Point after its closure. Mr Alan LEONG remarked that Cantonese opera had become one of the world intangible cultural heritages. Given the long-established status of Sunbeam Theatre, he considered that the Administration should accede to residents' request, and enquired about the technical difficulties involved in upgrading the facilities in the proposed CH.

34. Assistant Director (2), Home Affairs Department ("AD(2)HAD") advised that CH was functionally different from a theatre, in that it was designed to serve a variety of purposes, including performances, sports activities and other community activities of organizations and residents at district level. In so far as performance was concerned, CH would provide a multi-purpose hall with a seating capacity of 450 for staging small-scale performances and other activities. While EDC members desired for a theatre, they had also supported the proposed provision of a CH. The Administration had no plan to upgrade the facilities therein to meet the standards of a civic centre. As regards the long-term development of Cantonese opera, the Administration had earmarked Yau Ma Tei Xiqu Activity Centre, Ko Shan Theatre in Hung Hom and the Xiqu Centre in the West Kowloon Cultural District as leading venues for Cantonese operas. Moreover, as explained at previous meetings with EDC members, venues for Cantonese opera performances were available on Hong Kong Island at Sai Wan Ho Civic Centre, Chai Wan Youth Square, Sheung Wan Civic Centre and Queen Elizabeth Stadium. He stressed that the need for

provision of large-scale performance venues should be assessed on a territorial basis.

35. SDEV said that while she fully understood members' concerns, she hoped that they could appreciate that the CH proposal had been worked out through a long and extensive consultation between the Home Affairs Bureau and relevant organizations. On performance of Cantonese operas at CH, she referred members to the experience of a CH in Tin Shui Wai where the hall provided therein had been used for staging cultural performances with improvement in the lighting and sound systems. She cautioned about making changes to the present proposal at this stage as they would have impacts on the planning parameters of the ex-NPE(E) site, including the GFA requirements, and hence would cause delay in the provision of the site for housing development and construction of facilities to meet local residents' needs.

36. Sharing the views of SDEV, Mrs Sophie LEUNG remarked that it would not be advisable to introduce changes to the CH proposal at this stage given that the project scope had gone through lengthy and in-depth discussions at EDC and the local community levels. She opined that the proposed scope of CH could better cater the needs of local residents.

Conference room facilities in the Community Hall

37. Mr WONG Kwok-hing conveyed the view of EDC members and local residents that more small conference rooms should be provided in the CH for owners' corporations in North Point to hold meetings. AD(2)HAD advised that the utilization rate of the multi-purpose conference rooms in the two nearest CHs, viz Causeway Bay Community Centre and Quarry Bay Community Hall, were only 43% to 48% in 2010. The Administration believed that the conference room facilities in the new CH would meet the demand from local organizations in North Point East. In addition to the conference room in CH, the multi-purpose hall could be partitioned into smaller parts to provide meeting venues for organizations.

Public transport terminus

38. While welcoming the Administration's proposal to provide a covered PTT to replace the existing open-air one in the ex-NPE(E) site, Mr WONG Kwok-hing stressed the need to provide adequate illumination and ventilation in the new PTT.

39. Regional Highway Engineer (Urban) Highways Department advised that the Administration attached great importance to the design of covered PTTs in the territory. As for the covered PTT in the ex-NPE(E) site, a budget of \$11 million had been earmarked for the provision of lighting works and associated ventilation, fire service and electrical and mechanical works in accordance with prevailing guidelines promulgated by the Environmental Protection Department on air quality for PTTs. The Administration would examine the Master Layout Plan to be submitted by the developer to ensure compliance of the design of PTT with the relevant guidelines.

Welfare facilities

40. In response to Dr PAN Pey-chyou's enquiry about the details of welfare facilities to be provided in the ex-NPE(E) site, and whether rehabilitation and training services for disabled persons would be provided in such facilities, SDEV said that as she understood, the scope of welfare facilities to be provided had been agreed between the Administration and EDC after years of discussions. These facilities included an integrated family service centre, a special child care centre cum early education and training centre, a district support centre for persons with disabilities and a day care centre for the elderly.

Concern about "wall effect"

41. Mr WONG Kwok-hing referred to the grave concern of EDC members and local residents about the impact of new developments in the ex-NPE(E) site on the air quality of the district, and urged the Administration to ensure that the future buildings would not result in "wall effect" and block air circulation.

42. DPO(HK)PD advised that the development on the ex-NPE(E) site would be subject to a rather low plot ratio, i.e. 2.86 based on the total site area, or about 5.4 if POS and road area were excluded. The low plot ratio would avoid massive building bulk from coming into being. Further, according to the Planning Brief endorsed by TPB for the site, all car parks would be provided underground, and there would be visual/air and wind corridors along Shu Kuk Street and Kam Hong Street. The maximum site coverage and maximum building height had been set at 60% and 80 metres above Principal Datum respectively. These planning parameters would help to prevent "wall effect" of buildings on the site. She reiterated that TPB

would carefully examine the Master Layout Plan on the site to be submitted by the developer.

Submission of the proposal to the Public Works Subcommittee and the Finance Committee

43. The Chairman concluded the discussion and sought members' view on the Administration's proposal to submit the funding request to the Public Works Subcommittee ("PWSC") and the Finance Committee ("FC"). Members agreed that the proposal be submitted to PWSC and FC for consideration.

VI PWP Item No. 7712CL -- Planning and engineering study on the remaining development in Tung Chung

(LC Paper No. CB(1)2205/10-11(03) -- Administration's paper on PWP Item No. 7712CL -- Planning and engineering study on the remaining development in Tung Chung

LC Paper No. CB(1)2239/10-11(01) -- Issues raised at the meeting between Legislative Council Members and Islands District Council members on 12 May 2011 relating to development in Tung Chung)

44. SDEV gave a brief introduction on the Administration's paper. She said that with the aim to increase land supply for development, the Administration had rolled out a number of short and medium term measures in recent years. She believed that time was ripe for the Administration to conduct a detailed study to map out long term development in the remaining areas in Tung Chung as part of the Administration's effort to meet the housing needs of the territory.

45. With the aid of powerpoint presentation, District Planning Officer (Sai Kung & Islands) Planning Department ("DPO(SKIs)(PlanD)") briefed members on the Administration's proposal as follows --

- (a) the Administration aimed to upgrade project 7712CL to Category A at an estimated cost of \$44 million for conducting a planning and engineering study ("the Study") on the remaining development in Tung Chung and associated site investigation works;
- (b) the Study originated from the Port and Airport Development Strategy conducted in late 1980s and the North Lantau Development Study carried out in 1990, under which the development of Tung Chung new town was recommended as a supporting community for the new international airport in Chek Lap Kok. A comprehensive feasibility study for the remaining development in Tung Chung and Tai Ho completed in 1999 concluded that it would be feasible for Tung Chung to accommodate a population target of about 334 000. The Concept Plan for Lantau was formulated in 2004 and further revised in 2007 to become the Revised Concept Plan for Lantau ("Revised Concept Plan"). Under the Revised Concept Plan, the total population of Tung Chung New Town would be 220 000. The present population of Tung Chung New Town was about 82 000;
- (c) the Study would make reference to the Revised Concept Plan published in 2007, review previous studies and changes in planning circumstances, examine functional inter-relationship of Tung Chung with the adjoining areas, identify environmental issues and concerns (including conducting air ventilation assessment) and examine the population capacity of the remaining development areas. The scope of the Study also included associated site investigation, evaluation of interface with adjacent land uses and infrastructure projects, a statutory environmental impact assessment ("EIA") study, and a three-stage public engagement programme ("PEP");
- (d) the Study would enable the Administration to formulate the Recommended Outline Development Plan and Recommended Layout Plan and preliminary design of engineering works in support of the proposed developments, as well as the implementation strategies;
- (e) the remaining development in Tung Chung would be in the form of reclamation to the east and west of Tung Chung. Scale

of the reclamation would depend on the findings of the EIA study and outcomes of the Study; and

- (f) the Administration had already consulted the Tung Chung Rural Committee, Islands District Council and TPB in April 2011. They all supported the proposal to conduct the Study. The Administration had also communicated with the green groups and taken note of their concerns about possible impact of future reclamation on the ecological habitat at the basin and estuary of Tung Chung River; and
- (g) subject to approval from PWSC and FC on the proposal, the Study would commence in December 2011 and expected to be completed in 30 months.

46. The Chairman reminded members that in accordance with rules 83A and 84 of the Rules of Procedures of LegCo, they should disclose direct or indirect pecuniary interests, if any, relating to the subjects under discussion at the meeting as appropriate.

Tung Chung Area 39

47. Noting that an existing site beside Yat Tung Estate was vacant and readily available for development, Mr TAM Yiu-chung enquired whether the Administration had any plan to utilize the site for development of public housing to address the current shortage of land for housing needs. DPO(SKIs)(PlanD) advised that the site referred to by Mr TAM was Tung Chung Area 39 which had been zoned "District Open Space". The Housing Department ("HD") had commenced study to examine the suitability of the site for public housing. He added that to take forward any housing projects, it was necessary for HD to conduct detailed studies to assess possible impact of the proposed project on other existing and planned land uses nearby, air ventilation and provision of community facilities.

Construction of the Tung Chung West MTR Station

48. Mr WONG Kwok-hing expressed support for the petition currently staged by Tung Chung residents outside the LegCo Building. He expressed grave concern about the lack of any proposal to develop the Tung Chung West MTR Station in the Study. As the MTR station had been incorporated in the project scope of PWP Items 667CL and 668CL as early as in 2000, he

stressed the need for the Administration to honour its promise to construct the station as soon as practical.

49. Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) ("PS(W)") advised that the Tung Chung West MTR Station would be situated within the future reclaimed land in the remaining development of Tung Chung. Planning for the station had been included in the review of the Railway Development Strategy 2000 currently conducted by the Highways Department.

Need for conducting the Study

50. Mr WONG Kwok-hing queried the need for the Administration to carry out the Study, as the Administration had already mapped out the further development of Tung Chung in PWP Items 667CL and 668CL regarding North Lantau phase 3 development in Tung Chung and Tai Ho in 2000. DPO(SKIs)(PlanD) clarified that it was necessary for the Administration to conduct the Study in view of changing planning circumstances over the years. Citing Tung Chung Area 39 as an example, he said that as HD proposed to change the public open space into public housing, a new round of studies was required to ensure that the proposed public housing development would have no adverse impact on the provision of facilities and the local environment and air ventilation.

Environmental concerns

51. Mr WONG Kwok-hing noted that Tung Chung residents had expressed concern about the need to protect the local environment in pursuing the remaining development in Tung Chung. He urged that the Administration should ensure there would be no damage to the ecological habitat at the basin and estuary of Tung Chung River.

52. DPO(SKIs)(PlanD) responded that a statutory EIA on the remaining development in Tung Chung would be conducted as part of the Study. He assured members that due care would be exercised to protect the ecological habitat of Tung Chung River (situated to the west of the Tung Chung New Town) from reclamation and related engineering works.

53. Mr Albert CHAN enquired whether the judicial review on the EIA study of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge project would have impact on the timetables for conducting the Study and implementing the remaining development in Tung Chung. Noting the serious air pollution problem in Tung Chung which he believed was attributed by the local landscape and

high-rise buildings resulting in poor air ventilation and emissions from aeroplanes at the airport, he urged that the EIA study should cover assessment on the air pollution issues and measures to address related problems, such as enhancing greening works in future developments and stipulating requirements on air flows among building blocks.

54. PS(W) advised that as the EIA study for the remaining development in Tung Chung had not yet commenced, the court judgement in the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge project had no direct impact on the Study. As regards concern about air pollution in Tung Chung, he supplemented that there was continuous improvement in the air quality in Tung Chung since 2005. He assured members that the EIA study would include air quality assessment.

Land supply

55. Mr LEE Wing-tat expressed concern about the slow delivery of sites for housing development in the coming years. Taking the remaining development in Tung Chung as an example, he expressed concern that it might take 10 to 15 years to provide the required land for development as reclamation and lengthy statutory procedures were involved. He considered it necessary for the Administration to adopt the past approach to formulate a land disposal programme on the provision of land for housing development on a five-year basis. The programme, which included details of the available sites for development, current status and estimated timetable of delivery, was worked out and announced annually to facilitate planning and enhance public transparency. With such a programme, the public would have a better understanding of the land supply situation in the short and medium term. Mr LEE also expressed dissatisfaction that due to poor planning, sites designated for uses by individual government departments had been left idle for years. He stressed the need for the Administration to conduct a review on the situation and consider putting the sites for other uses.

56. SDEV advised that in recent years, the Administration had been facing increasing challenges in providing land for various developments. Due to rising aspirations of LegCo Members and the public for a stable land supply, the Administration had been taking proactive actions and enhancing efforts to overcome obstacles with a view to expediting the land development process. These had included speeding up revision of outline zoning plans, facilitating urban renewal projects and pressing ahead the planning of New Development Areas in NT. As for land supply in the years

to come, she said that the Administration was moving in line with the directions and findings of the "Hong Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy". Tseung Kwan O and the Kai Tak Development would become the major sources of land supply in the next few years. Sites in Kai Tak would be delivered for implementation of the "flat-for-flat" scheme of the Urban Renewal Authority and other private housing projects in 2012 and 2013 respectively. The Administration would continue to pursue the planning and engineering studies on the remaining development in Tung Chung and New Development Area in Hung Shui Kiu. Meanwhile, other means such as urban renewal, rezoning of current land uses and revitalization of old industrial buildings would help increase land supply. As regards land which had been planned for GIC purpose, the Administration would exercise due care in developing the sites. In changing the designated uses of the concerned sites, the Administration needed to consider the interests of relevant stakeholders and consult their views.

Submission of the proposal to the Public Works Subcommittee and the Finance Committee

57. The Chairman concluded the discussion. Members in general supported the Administration's proposal to seek endorsement of PWSC for upgrading the project to Category A in June 2011 and the funding approval of FC in July 2011.

VII Increasing land supply by reclamation and rock cavern development

(LC Paper No. CB(1)2205/10-11(05) -- Administration's paper on increasing land supply by reclamation and rock cavern development

LC Paper No. FS21/10-11 -- Fact sheet on "A summary of local press reports on increasing land supply by reclamation and rock cavern development from 1 October 2009 to 18 May 2011" prepared by the Research Division of the Legislative Council Secretariat)

VIII Findings of the Study on the Enhanced Use of Underground Space in Hong Kong

(LC Paper No. CB(1)2205/10-11(06) -- Administration's paper on findings of the Study on the Enhanced Use of Underground Space in Hong Kong)

58. At the request of the Administration, members agreed that discussion on items VII and VIII (which were inter-related) be merged.

59. SDEV advised that the Administration was planning to conduct relevant studies and a public engagement ("PE") exercise on increasing land supply by reclamation outside Victoria Harbour and rock cavern development. The initiative was a visionary attempt to provide land to meet Hong Kong's social and economic needs in the long run. The Financial Secretary had announced in his 2011-12 Budget Speech that an amount of about \$300 million would be allocated for the studies and the PE exercise. In March 2010, the Civil Engineering and Development Department ("CEDD") commissioned a strategic planning and technical study on "Enhanced Use of Underground Space in Hong Kong" ("CEDD's Study") to facilitate planned development of underground space in promoting the use of rock caverns as part of Hong Kong's pursuit of sustainable development. SDEV added that to gather first-hand information on the use of underground space in overseas countries, she had led a delegation to visit facilities located in rock caverns in Oslo, Norway in September 2010. Some delegation members also visited Helsinki, Finland to learn more about the subject. The Administration considered that the subject of enhanced use of caverns required further study and public consultation.

60. With the aid of a powerpoint presentation, PS(W) and the Director of Civil Engineering and Development ("DCED") briefed the Panel on the Administration's plan to conduct further studies and the PE exercise on the subject.

(Post-meeting note: The powerpoint material was circulated to members on 25 May 2011 vide LC Paper No. CB(1)2293/10-11(04)).

61. PS(W) highlighted that land supply needed to be increased in the long run to cater for population growth, support the Administration's initiatives to develop the six industries, and build up a "land bank" to enable Hong Kong to capture windfall opportunities for economic development projects. While reclamation had been a well-established means to generate land for various developments before 2004, following the enactment of the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance (Cap. 531) in 1997 and the Court of Final Appeal's ruling in 2004, reclamation within Victoria Harbour to create new land was legally constrained. It was necessary to explore the feasibility of two possible means of increasing land supply namely, reclamation on an appropriate scale outside Victoria Harbour and rock cavern development.

62. PS(W) added that, in the light of the limited capacities of existing fill banks and mud pits, solutions had to be worked out to handle the surplus public fill generated from major infrastructure projects and contaminated sediments produced from dredging of harbour fairways and other marine works. According to CEDD's research, reclamation at near-shore locations could accommodate both surplus public fill and contaminated sediments, thus help to resolve their disposal problems.

63. DCED advised that CEDD's Study completed in March 2011 had highlighted the significant opportunities and benefits for enhancing the use of rock caverns as part of Hong Kong's sustainable development strategy. The key technical findings of the study were as follows --

- (a) About 64% of Hong Kong's land areas were potentially suitable for cavern development;
- (b) A stock taking exercise had identified over 400 existing government facilities that had potential for relocating to rock caverns in line with the potential land uses listed in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines;
- (c) A preliminary ranking system for individual facilities had been developed to highlight the relative merits of relocating these facilities, which showed that some government facilities had high potential for relocation to rock caverns subject to detailed planning and engineering studies to assess their overall feasibility;
- (d) Preliminary technical feasibility assessments had broadly demonstrated that cavern schemes could be implemented to

house some suitable existing government facilities, including Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works and Mount Davies and Kennedy Town Fresh Water Service Reservoirs, thereby releasing land for other beneficial and compatible uses; and

- (e) Five strategic cavern areas, Mount Davis, Lion Rock, Sha Tin (Shek Mun), Tuen Mun (Lam Tei) and Lantau Island (Siu Ho Wan), each of more than 20 hectares in size with potential to accommodate multiple facilities, had been identified.

64. On the way forward, PS(W) said that the Administration would commence the consultancy for the preliminary feasibility studies and a two-stage PE exercise on the two options in July 2011. TPB, District Councils ("DCs"), the Land Development Advisory Committee, etc. would be consulted before launching Stage 1 PE exercise in the third quarter of 2011. Initially, 20 potential sites for reclamation, five potential sites for contaminated sediment disposal facilities at near-shore locations, and 20 potential cavern sites would be identified. In mid 2012, with broad technical assessment and public views collected during Stage 1 PE exercise, the Administration would shortlist seven potential sites for reclamation, three sites for contaminated sediment disposal facilities and eight potential cavern sites for further study and discussion with the public in Stage 2 PE exercise. The aim was to finalize a list of selected sites for reclamation and cavern development by October 2012.

Reclamation outside Victoria Harbour

65. Mr LEE Wing-tat said he held an open attitude towards the options to increase land supply through reclamation outside Victoria Harbour and rock cavern development. Noting that there were other means of land supply including redevelopment of the built-up areas, re-zoning of current land uses, Kai Tak Development, further development in Tung Chung, and the three New Development Areas in NT, he strongly requested the Administration to review the existing conditions in land supply and work out the projections in demand and supply of land in the next five to 10 years to serve as a blueprint for land development. Moreover, many concerned parties, including environmental groups, had urged for conservation of the coastline and enhanced protection for the marine ecology. Information on the current and projected land supply and demand conditions would enable the public to better understand the challenges in the land development process and the genuine need to explore the two options for creating more land to meet various uses. Mr LEE further referred to a recent news report

quoting the government source that resumption of the House Ownership Scheme ("HOS") would hinge on reclamation outside Victoria Harbour to create the necessary land. He considered such comments an attempt to exert pressure on people, including himself, who advocated the resumption of HOS. In his views, HOS flats could be provided in a variety of sites and resumption of HOS was independent of the subject of reclamation. He said that SDEV should make clarification on the matter.

66. SDEV clarified that resumption of HOS and reclamation to increase land supply were two separate subjects. She stressed that the option of reclamation outside Victoria Harbour aimed to increase land supply in the longer term and handle surplus public fill and contaminated sediments. As regards rock cavern development, other than increasing land supply, it would be a good option for accommodating those "Not-in-My-Backyard" facilities like sewage treatment works and refuse transfer stations.

67. SDEV stressed the need for the Administration to adopt a multi-pronged approach in creating land with different options meeting targets within different timeframes to cater housing and economic development needs of Hong Kong. It would be impractical to rely only on existing means for a stable land supply since the Administration did not have full control over means such as redevelopment and land resumption, and challenges including concerns about building height, development density, nature and heritage conservation, problems with land resumption, compensation and clearance, etc. would constrain and delay the land development process. The Administration believed that reclamation and rock cavern development were feasible options for increasing land supply to meet development needs where the Administration could play a leading role in the process to generate positive results. To facilitate building of a general consensus on related issues, the Administration would provide information to the public including the existing conditions and issues of land supply and demand, as well as the pros and cons of the two options during the PE exercise. Acknowledging environmental groups' concerns over reclamation, the Administration also hoped that the PE exercise would provide a platform for rational discussion.

68. Noting from the powerpoint material that possible reclamation sites, such as Southwest Tsing Yi and Lung Kwu Tan, were concentrated in the West of the territory, the Chairman enquired about the reasons involved. PS(W) explained that those were examples of possible sites considered by the Administration previously when it conducted a territory-wide site search for reclamation outside Victoria Harbour.

69. In order to preserve the coastline, the Chairman suggested that the Administration could consider reclamation in the form of individual islands leaving waterways between the newly created land and the shore areas. This approach could help preserve the shore line and also create more waterfront areas for public enjoyment and other uses. He understood that the approach had been widely adopted in the Netherlands, and was pleased to note that Kai Tak Development had adopted a similar approach.

70. PS(W) advised that reclamation would not be carried out at areas where there were legal requirements to preserve the coastline and said that the Administration would take into account the Chairman's views in conducting further studies on reclamation outside Victoria Harbour. He pointed out that Chek Lap Kok, where the Hong Kong International Airport was located, was formed by reclamation and the reclamation project had not altered the previous coastline.

71. Mr Albert CHAN agreed that it was necessary for the Administration to commence the relevant studies and public engagement exercise on the two options. As regards the option of reclamation, in order to facilitate planning, he suggested that the Administration should work out projections on the amount of surplus public fill to be generated in the next few years and a list of potential sites for implementing near-shore reclamation. Suitable sites should be identified over the territory so as to avoid high transportation cost of surplus public fill across districts, and reduce nuisance caused to the environment during long-haul transportation. He further urged the Administration to consider using surplus public fill instead of marine sand for the future reclamation works for the third runway of the airport as the latter material would cause great damage to the natural environment.

Rock cavern and underground space development

72. While agreeing that the Administration should undertake further study on the use of rock cavern, Mr LEE Wing-tat was concerned that this option for producing land would involve substantial cost. Furthermore, he opined that the Administration should make use of the land released by relocating existing government facilities to rock caverns for provision of community facilities. This would help solve problems arising from deficiencies in town planning and address local residents' concerns about inadequate facilities provision, thus winning the support of DCs and local organizations for concerned proposals.

73. SDEV said that bringing benefits to the community was among the objectives to be achieved by relocating government facilities to caverns. Although the cost for developing caverns would be high, studies had shown that the option was financially viable as valuable land could be released from relocating existing facilities to caverns. For example, if the Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works were relocated, 28-hectare waterfront land could be released for residential development, and recreational facilities such as cycling tracks and waterfront parks to improve the living environment of the district.

74. Mr Albert CHAN was of the view that the Administration should formulate a strategy to introduce innovative uses of caverns besides re-housing government facilities, such as provision of emergency shelters for people in nuclear accidents; explore opportunities for promotion of local community economy; and create jobs for local residents. With the potential benefits to the local community, the option of cavern development would win public support. Citing Sham Tseng Sewage Treatment Works as an example, he opined that if the plant were to be relocated to caverns, the released land could be developed into a tourist attraction with hotels and restaurants, or a leisure area, bringing vibrancy and opportunities for economic development to the local community.

75. SDEV said that in conducting the relevant studies, the Administration would consider how to integrate cavern development with opportunities to promote the local community economy. She highlighted the recommendation of CEDD's Study that private sector participation should be facilitated in developing cavern areas, and added that private sector participation might bring opportunities to local community economy.

76. Ms Cyd HO expressed concern about the feasibility in developing caverns and underground space in Hong Kong. She pointed out that while the cold and dry weather in North Europe might be conducive to the development of underground facilities, the hot and wet weather in Hong Kong would be a major obstacle as underground facilities would require a large amount of energy for providing ventilation. She opined that in-depth research should be conducted in the use of underground space in overseas countries, including those in North Europe where the weather was very different from Hong Kong. She further expressed concern that most of the facilities to be located underground or in caverns would be those unwelcomed or "Not-in-My-Backyard" facilities, and enquired about the criteria for selecting facilities for relocation.

77. Head of Geotechnical Engineering Office/CEDD ("Head of GEO/CEDD") advised some underground facilities such as underground food storage would not required large amount of power for ventilation and studies had found that underground food storage could save 60% to 80% energy vis-à-vis that constructed above the ground. According to the Hong Kong Observatory, the temperature of underground areas in Hong Kong remained very stable, with an average temperature of 21 to 23 degrees Celsius over the year, thus allowing a wide range of uses to be made for underground space. As regards the relocation of "Not-in-My-Backyard" facilities to underground space, he said that besides reducing adverse impact on the environment, this could enhance the quality of life for the public since the above-ground land so released would be developed into more beneficial uses such as open spaces, community as well as recreational and leisure facilities.

78. Ms Cyd HO sought information on the some 400 existing government facilities identified by CEDD's Study that had the potential for relocation to rock cavern areas. Head of GEO/CEDD explained that the study had identified 435 existing facilities preliminarily suitable for relocation to caverns in line with the potential land uses listed in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines. The majority of these facilities were salt water and fresh water service reservoirs. The Administration planned to conduct further studies to finalize the list of facilities suitable for relocation to rock cavern areas. Overseas experience also revealed that storage facilities for food, wine, archives and dangerous goods, as well as research laboratories and data centres were notable examples of facilities housed in cavern areas.

79. PS(W) added that CEDD's Study had identified five strategic cavern areas with potential to accommodate multiple facilities. These included Mount Davies, Lion Rock, Sha Tin (Shek Mun), Tuen Mun (Lam Tei) and Lantau Island (Siu Ho Wan). Consideration would first be given to re-house existing government facilities located near these strategic cavern areas to the areas if such facilities were found to be suitable for relocation in Administration's further studies.

Planning issues

80. Mr WONG Kwok-hing expressed support for the Administration's plan to increase land supply by reclamation and rock cavern development to address the acute shortage of land for meeting future housing and economic

needs. As the excavated materials from rock caverns could be used for reclamation, the two options could complement each other. Noting that Finland and Singapore had developed master plans for the development of underground space, he asked whether the Administration would formulate such plan for Hong Kong stipulating the targets and timetable for action, and whether a similar development plan would be devised for implementing reclamation.

81. PS(W) explained that the Administration planned to conduct a two-stage PE exercise in the coming two years to gauge public views on the two options, with relevant studies on the preliminary identified sites in parallel. On the basis of public views from the PE exercise and findings from technical studies, the Administration hoped to draw up master plans for reclamation and cavern development with the lists of selected sites. He supplemented that relevant studies were required to find out the readiness of infrastructure facilities at preliminary identified reclamation sites and work out a strategic plan for systematic relocation of existing facilities to caverns, to formulate a policy framework to facilitate private sector involvement in rock cavern development, and to examine related legal, administrative, and technical issues of the two options, etc. If a general consensus on the selected sites for reclamation could be reached as early as upon the completion of Stage 1 PE engagement exercise next year, the Administration would start the detailed studies and planning on the selected sites in advance of the schedule.

82. Ms Cyd HO commented that regardless of the means to increase land supply, what concerned the public most was affordable housing. If increase in land supply would ultimately bring in residential units that were hardly affordable as they were now, the public would have little interest in any new initiatives for land creation. In the light of current high property prices, little hope for resumption of HOS and shortage of public housing supply, she urged that the Administration should formulate a policy to provide affordable housing for the public.

Public engagement

83. Noting that there were a lot of controversial issues related to the two options, Ms Cyd HO opined that it was important for the public engagement exercise to be a knowledge-based discussion process. She stressed the need for the Administration to provide the public with sufficient information about the pros and cons as well as the issues to be tackled in reclamation and the development of underground space. It would be undesirable if the

public were only given superficial information and simply asked whether they were in support of the creation of land through the two options. Given that the two options would have far reaching implications on Hong Kong, they should be taken forward in a cautious manner for Hong Kong's economic benefits in the long term, instead of for resolving short-to-mid term land supply problems.

84. Sharing Ms HO's view, SDEV said that the Administration recognized that the PE exercise should be a knowledge-based communication process. She advised that under the current work plan, a substantial period of time would be allocated for engaging public views, including enhancing their understanding, and arousing their interest as well as soliciting their views on the related issues. The Administration had been liaising with professional institutions and academic bodies to discuss joint efforts in organizing some public engagement activities. She added that during the past week, two seminars on geotechnical engineering were held in Hong Kong which had provided useful discussion forums for professionals and academics to keep them abreast of latest situation in rock cavern development. The Administration had contacted the organizers to express support for holding more seminars and discussion forums on the subject in Hong Kong. For secondary schools, rock cavern development would be an interesting topic for students under the subject of geography. The Administration would engage school teachers and students in the upcoming engagement activities to arouse their interest and discussion on the subject.

85. Mr Alan LEONG enquired about details of the PE exercise and the way forward after the exercise. PS(W) elaborated the deliverables and timeline for the exercise and further detailed study after the exercise. He advised that during Stage 1 of the PE exercise, which envisaged to commence in the 4th quarter of 2011, the Administration would provide the public with the basic information on the two options and brief them on related issues as well as the findings of the preliminary studies. Guiding principles and criteria for site selection would be discussed and worked out. The target was to identify 20 potential sites for reclamation, five potential sites for contaminated sediment disposal facilities and 20 potential cavern sites. After the completion of Stage 1 exercise, technical assessment would be conducted on the identified sites to shortlist seven reclamation sites, three disposal facilities sites and eight cavern sites. Subject to the outcome of Stage 1 exercise, Stage 2 exercise would start in the 3rd quarter of 2012 the earliest. During Stage 2 exercise, the Administration would share and discuss with the public on the results of the technical assessment of the

shortlisted sites to evaluate their suitability. It was expected that Stage 2 exercise would be completed by the end of the 3rd quarter of 2012, and the lists of selected sites would be finalized by October 2012. The Administration would then draw up master plans for the two options, commence detailed environmental and engineering studies on the selected sites, as well as detailed planning for the relocation of selected public facilities to caverns. On rock cavern development, promulgation of a master plan concerned would enable the Administration to make advanced preparation for development at certain cavern areas, such as introducing administrative measures to protect the areas from other works and uses, and examining legal issues related to the development of underground space at certain sites where necessary.

86. Mr Alan LEONG suggested that the Administration should encourage discussions on land development issues and ways to increase land supply in Hong Kong at advisory committees, primary and secondary schools when the preliminary list of identified sites for reclamation and cavern development was released during Stage 1 of the PE exercise. The Administration should share with the public through these discussions the concepts, principles and difficulties in the land development process. As land was a scarce and valuable resource in Hong Kong and land development was an important issue of public concern, he emphasized that sufficient background information and discussion opportunities should be provided to the public to allow them to have a better understanding about the subject.

87. SDEV agreed that the upcoming PE exercise should have a wide coverage and reach out to various parties including professional bodies, DCs and schools. The consulting parties should be given sufficient information to facilitate deliberation and discussion on the issues involved. The Administration was in dialogue with professional bodies and tertiary institutions to involve them in the upcoming public engagement process. Funds would be made available under the budget of \$300 million for undertaking further studies and the PE exercise to support various public education activities.

88. Miss Tanya CHAN suggested that the Administration should brief concerned DCs on the two options and the identified potential sites as soon as possible in order to facilitate early planning and avoid clashes in land uses. For instance, she had written to the Development Bureau suggesting that the land on top of the Mount Davies Service Reservoir be open for public use and proposed that the issue be discussed at a meeting of the

Central and Western District Council. If concerned DCs could be informed of the Administration's plan to reserve certain sites for reclamation or cavern development in the long run, works to turn these sites into short-term uses could be avoided to save public money.

89. PS(W) replied that the Administration would disseminate the information provided to the Panel to all DCs after the meeting, and would arrange briefing sessions for DCs to seek their views at the earliest. DCED said that the Administration was aware of Miss Tanya CHAN's proposal on the use of the site at the Mount Davies Service Reservoir. The Administration would be pleased to brief the Central and Western District Council on the proposal to develop the Mount Davies cavern area. As it would take some time before the final list of sites was drawn up, he said that the Central and Western District Council should not be worried about temporary uses at the Mount Davies site.

IX Any other business

90. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 5:52 pm.