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Panel on Development

Meeting on 28 June 2012

**Updated background brief on New Development Areas
in North East New Territories**

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the proposed New Development Areas ("NDAs") in North East New Territories ("NENT") and a summary of the concerns and views expressed by Members at meetings of the Panel on Development ("the Panel") and the Public Works Subcommittee ("PWSC") on the subject.

Background

2. The Planning and Development Study on NENT, commissioned by the Planning Department and completed in 2003, identified Kwu Tung North, Fanling North and Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling as suitable NDAs and confirmed their feasibility based on findings of various planning, engineering and environmental assessments. In view of the slower growth of population and housing demand, the NDA proposals were shelved, pending a comprehensive review of the need for strategic development areas in the "Hong Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy" ("the HK2030 Study")¹.

3. The Chief Executive announced in his 2007-2008 Policy Address the planning for NDAs as one of the ten major infrastructure projects for

¹ The HK2030 Study updates the territorial development strategy for Hong Kong with a view to recommending a spatial development pattern to respond to various social, economic and environmental needs in the next 20 to 30 years. The HK2030 Study has been completed and the findings were promulgated to the public in October 2007.

economic growth. Other than providing housing land, NDAs serve to meet other strategic land use requirement and offer development spaces for the six industries promoted under the 2009-2010 Policy Address². Taking advantage of their proximity to boundary crossing facilities, NDAs can integrate with the development of the Pearl River Delta to enhance the overall competitiveness of Hong Kong and to generate different employment opportunities.

The planning and engineering study

4. On 26 February 2008, the Panel discussed the Administration's proposal to carry out a planning and engineering study ("the P&E Study") on the NDAs in NENT. The overall objective of the P&E Study is to establish a planning and development framework for the Kwu Tung North, Fanling North and Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling NDAs (i.e. the Three-in-One NDA Scheme) to meet long-term housing, social, economic and environmental needs, and to formulate an implementation programme. On the recommendation of PWSC, the Finance Committee approved relevant funding proposal at an estimated cost of \$54.2 million on 9 May 2008. The P&E Study commenced in June 2008 and was scheduled for completion in June 2011.

5. The P&E Study includes a three-stage public engagement. The Stage One Public Engagement, which was conducted from mid-November to December 2008, was to engage the public at an early stage to generate discussions of key issues relating to the development of the NDAs. Stages Two and Three of the exercise will engage the public on the Preliminary Outline Development Plans ("ODPs") and Recommended ODPs respectively.

6. To facilitate more focused discussion in the Stage One Public Engagement, the Administration consolidated the key issues/concerns into four major topics, viz. strategic roles of NDAs, people-oriented communities, sustainable living environment and implementation mechanisms. The Administration briefed the Panel on these key issues/concerns and solicited members' views at the Panel meeting on 25 November 2008.

² The six industries are testing and certification services, medical services, innovation and technology, cultural and creative industries, environmental industries and educational services.

Main features of the Preliminary Outline Development Plans

7. On 24 November 2009, as part of the Stage Two Public Engagement of the P&E Study, the Administration consulted Panel members on the Preliminary ODPs³, the main features of which are as follows --

(a) *Development capacity and urban design*

Adopting a maximum plot ratio of 5, the NENT NDAs will provide a total of about 46 000 residential flats to accommodate a population of about 130 000. While such a scale of development is relatively lower than most of the existing new towns, it will allow greater flexibility for incorporation of various urban design features to achieve a better quality development, including a stepped building height, view corridors, wind corridors, and retention of the surrounding woodlands to provide a natural green setting.

(b) *Design for a socially integrated community*

To strive for a balanced population profile, about 41% of the total number of residential flats will be allocated for public rental housing and the remaining 59% for various types of private housing. A total of about 27 000 private residential flats will be provided.

The Special Industries Area in the Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling NDA will serve as a land bank to provide development spaces for high value-added non-polluting business/industries, as well as port back-up and logistics industries. The Commercial, Research and Development Zone planned along Fanling Highway in the Kwu Tung North NDA has the potential to be developed into various types of office and hotel uses as well as to provide development space to support the six industries. Together with the population-related economic/social facilities such as local retail, services and community facilities, the NENT NDAs will provide more than 40 000 jobs.

³ The planning proposals contained in the Preliminary ODPs are summarized in the Stage Two Public Engagement Digest, which is available on the Planning Department's website at --
http://www.nentnda.gov.hk/eng/Digest2_English.pdf

To encourage social interaction, a core activity area integrated with the open space network is proposed in each of the three NDAs. Sufficient land has been designated for commercial, shopping, public open space and various Government/Institution or Community uses.

(c) *Transport facilities*

A rail-based development approach is adopted as a planning theme in the NENT NDA development with a majority of the new population concentrated in Kwu Tung North and Fanling North. Comprehensive pedestrian and cycle track networks are provided within the NDAs to encourage walking and promote cycling so as to minimize road traffic and hence emission of carbon and other pollutants within the NDAs. Other environmental friendly modes of transport, such as trolley buses and liquefied petroleum gas/electric vehicles, will be considered for serving the NDAs. Major roads are planned at the periphery of the NDAs to minimize noise and air pollution.

(d) *Energy efficient design*

With a view to creating a sustainable living environment, various energy-efficient measures are proposed, which include the effluent reuse system and the use of renewable energy in all the three NDAs. Land has been reserved for the installation of a District Cooling System in the Commercial, Research and Development Zone of the Kwu Tung North NDA and the Special Industries Area of the Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling NDA. Green building design will be encouraged in order to minimize adverse impacts on the environment, reduce the use of natural resources, and achieve the target of low carbon emission.

Concerns and views expressed by members

8. The major concerns and views expressed by members during the relevant discussions at meetings of the Panel and PWSC are summarized as follows --

Planning strategies

- (a) The planning of the NENT NDAs should take into account the growth of population and traffic arising from the opening up of the Frontier Closed Area and the proposed new Boundary Control Point at Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai.
- (b) The development of the NENT NDAs should be under careful control and should not be made at the expense of the existing natural environment.
- (c) The NDAs should be designed with due regard to their unique characteristics.

Zoning and land uses

- (d) Land use planning for the NENT NDAs should aim at providing a diversified life for the residents and a vibrant street environment.
- (e) 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.
- (f) The Administration should capitalize on the implementation of the NDAs to tackle issues related to the small house policy.
- (g) Consideration should be given to allocating land for container open storage use.

Scale of development

- (h) The projected population in Hong Kong will be 8.4 million by 2030 but the NENT NDAs will only accommodate some 130 000 people. The Administration should consider expanding their scale of development so as to cope with future housing needs and create more job opportunities.

Land resumption

- (i) The Administration should strive to resolve private land ownership issues and ensure that rehousing and relocation of existing occupants would be handled properly.

Connectivity

- (j) As the three NENT NDAs are in separate locations, how to improve their linkage to achieve a synergy effect will be an important issue.
- (k) While a railway station has been planned at the Kwu Tung North NDA, the Administration should consider the feasibility of a railway spur line to the Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling NDA, or to the Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point via the Fanling North NDA.
- (l) With their proximity to the land to be released from the Frontier Closed Area and the Futian central business district in Shenzhen, the NENT NDAs should be well connected with these areas.
- (m) The road infrastructure of the NENT NDAs should be further strengthened in all directions, especially northwards, to meet future needs for stronger connection between Hong Kong and Shenzhen.

Community facilities

- (n) Even at the early stage of development of the NDAs, there should be sufficient community facilities for public rental housing residents. Otherwise, the lack of sufficient facilities will lead to social problems.

Public engagement arrangements

- (o) As the development of the NENT NDAs aims to address housing needs and cater for economic growth, the consultation should be a territory-wide exercise.
- (p) The Administration should ventilate the emotions of parties holding different views in conservation and development.

- (q) The pace of public engagement can be slower so as to fully gauge the aspirations of society on how best to implement the NDAs.

Implementation approach

- (r) The Public-Private Partnership approach being considered by the Administration for implementing NENT NDAs might be led by developers, putting the Administration in a passive position.
- (s) The Administration must ensure fairness and transparency in the implementation process.

Recent development

- 9. The Administration plans to brief the Panel on the Recommended ODPs at the meeting on 28 June 2012.
- 10. A list of relevant papers is in the **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
21 June 2012

New Development Areas in North East New Territories

List of relevant papers

Council/Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Development	26 February 2008	<p>Administration's paper on "North East New Territories New Development Areas -- Planning and Engineering Study" (LC Paper No. CB(1)860/07-08(03)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/plw/papers/dev0226cb1-860-3-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)1276/07-08) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/plw/minutes/de080226.pdf</p>
Public Works Subcommittee	23 April 2008	<p>PWSC(2008-09)2 on the funding proposal on "Review studies on North East New Territories New Development Areas: consultants' fees and site investigation" http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/fc/pwsc/papers/p08-02e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. PWSC93/07-08) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/fc/pwsc/minutes/pw080423.pdf</p>
Finance Committee	9 May 2008	<p>FCR(2008-09)7 on "Recommendations of the Public Works Subcommittee made at its meeting held on 23 April 2008" http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/fc/fc/papers/f08-07e.pdf</p>

Council/Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
		Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. FC12/08-09) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/fc/fc/minutes/fc080509.pdf
Panel on Development	25 November 2008	Administration's paper on "North East New Territories New Development Areas -- Planning and Engineering Study -- Stage One Public Engagement" (LC Paper No. CB(1)232/08-09(12)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/papers/dev1125cb1-232-12-e.pdf Background brief (LC Paper No. CB(1)232/08-09(13)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/papers/dev1125cb1-232-13-e.pdf Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)817/08-09) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/minutes/dev20081125.pdf
Panel on Development	24 November 2009	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(09)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/dev/papers/dev1124cb1-396-9-e.pdf Background brief (LC Paper No. CB(1)396/09-10(10)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/dev/papers/dev1124cb1-396-10-e.pdf Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)1124/09-10) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/dev/minutes/dev20091124.pdf