

CB(1)124/13-14(01)

**Planning and Lands Branch
Development Bureau
Government Secretariat**

17-18/F, West Wing,
Central Government Offices
2 Tim Mei Avenue, Admiralty,
Hong Kong

Tel : 3509 8810

Fax : 2868 4530

政府總部
發展局
規劃地政科

香港金鐘添美道二號
政府總部西翼十七及十八樓



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21 October 2013

Clerk to Panel on Development
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn: Ms Sharon Chung)

Dear Ms Chung,

**North East New Territories
New Development Areas Project**

Regarding the follow-up actions arising from the meetings of the Panel on Development (the Panel) in respect of the North East New Territories New Development Areas (NENT NDAs) project, we would like to provide the responses below.

NENT NDA Project

We briefed Members of the Panel on the NENT NDAs project and addressed Members' questions at the meetings of the Panel on 15 and 22 July as well as the special meetings of the Panel held to hear public views on 25, 26, 30 and 31 July. Specifically, we published the results of the Stage 3 Public Engagement (PE3) of the NENT NDAs Planning and Engineering Study (the NENT NDAs Study) and the revised Recommended Outline Development Plans (RODPs) formulated for the Kwu Tung North (KTN) and Fanling North (FLN) NDAs. We have also

announced the implementation arrangements for the project, including the implementation approach and the compensation and rehousing arrangements for the affected households and farmers. The details are included in the Panel paper LC Paper No. CB(1)1461/12-13(01), which includes the PE3 Report and Information Digest of the revised development proposals of KTN and FLN NDAs.

The issues as identified in the follow-up actions arising from the earlier Panel meetings on 8 and 15 December 2012, including the need for the NDAs, re-planning of Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling NDA, increasing the development intensity and proportion of subsidised housing, applying “Hong Kong Property for Hong Kong People” measure, Long Valley Nature Park, amendments to the RODPs, assistance to affected farmers, implementation approach, and compensation and rehousing arrangements, have been taken into consideration in finalizing the development plan of the NENT NDAs project as set out in the Panel paper. Detailed responses to some specific or local issues have also been provided in the PE3 Report (see Appendix to this letter for the references to the Report).

Our responses to a number of issues, including those arising from the Panel meetings on 15 and 22 July 2013, are set out in the following paragraphs.

Demographic Features of the NDAs

The assumptions for the population structure of the two NDAs have made reference to the situations in the Territory. The provision of community facilities is in accordance with the requirements of the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines. Such facilities will be provided in phases to tie in with the population intake at the various development stages.

Employment Opportunities

The KTN and FLN NDAs will create about 37,700 new employment opportunities. There will be a wide range of job opportunities coming from the commercial, research and development uses (about 17,100), retail and services uses within composite

commercial/residential developments (about 15,400) and various government, institution and community facilities (about 5,200). These employment opportunities can cater for workers of different levels of skills, and will be provided in a timely manner according to the development programme of the NDAs. Moreover, there will also be jobs created in the future Lok Ma Chau Loop development, which is quite near to the KTN NDA.

Farmers on Waiting List and Land for Agricultural Rehabilitation

There are currently about 260 people on the waiting list under Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department's Agricultural Land Rehabilitation Scheme. The Government does not have information on the amount of fallow farmland across the territory that may be available for agricultural rehabilitation. To assist genuine farmers affected by the NENT NDAs development, the relevant departments have surveyed about 103 ha of farmland and identified about 34 ha of fallow farmland in Kwu Tung South that may be suitable for agricultural rehabilitation/resite. We will continue with such efforts with a view to locating more suitable fallow farmland nearby for agricultural rehabilitation purpose.

Acquiring Private Agricultural Land to Further Assist the Affected Farmers

This Bureau is working closely with the Food and Health Bureau in considering measures to assist genuine farmers affected by the development of the KTN and FLN NDAs for agricultural rehabilitation/resite.

Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point (LT/HYW BCP) Project

The preferred option for the connecting road link of the LT/HYW BCP project (i.e. the alignment leading to Tolo Highway) was recommended in 2008 for further planning and engineering study having regard to a number of factors including planning and land matters, environmental issues, transport planning, impact on the local community, engineering criteria, implementation programme and costs [LC Paper No. CB(1)90/08-09(05) refers]. Over the years, circumstances such as compensation allowances have been changed and it would be out of context

to make comparison at this juncture. To take the project forward for timely completion, the project team has been focusing on the resumption and compensation matters for the preferred alignment only and has not compared government funds under the three options based on new circumstances.

Fanling Golf Course

We have separately provided the Government's response on the suggestion to explore development at the Fanling Golf Course and incorporate the area of the golf course in the planning of the NENT NDAs via our letter of 21 October 2013 in response to the motion passed by the Panel at its meeting on 22 July 2013.

Regarding whether Principal Officials are members of the Hong Kong Golf Club, please refer to the Register of Executive Council Members' Interests in the link of <http://www.ceo.gov.hk/exco/chi/interests.html>.

Declaration of Interest

We have separately provided the Government's response on the matter of SDEV's declaration of interest in relation to the NENT NDAs project under the relevant systems in response to the motion passed by the Panel at its meeting on 26 July 2013.

Visits by Secretary for Development (SDEV) and Communication with Stakeholders

Throughout the three stages of public engagement exercises of the study on NENT NDAs, DEVB, the Planning Department and the Civil Engineering and Development Department together with the study consultants have extensively engaged stakeholders and consulted them on the NENT NDAs project at various planning stages. These include for instance workshops, public forums, public meetings and roving exhibitions.

In this connection, during and after the third stage public engagement exercise in the second half of 2012, SDEV participated in an

open public consultation forum and had meetings with various stakeholder groups to discuss issues relating to the project. After the announcement of the revised RODPs and other implementation arrangements of the NENT NDAs project on 4 July 2013, SDEV has also briefed various stakeholder groups, including the North District Council, relevant Rural Committees, local concerned groups, affected villagers, farmers and business undertakers, on the revised proposals for the project and listened to their views.

The Government will continue to communicate and liaise with relevant stakeholders and affected parties on the NENT NDAs project. In order to facilitate the local residents in understanding the proposals and planning rationales of the revised RODPs, the Information Digest and a leaflet on compensation arrangements for the NENT NDAs project have been mailed to all addressees within the KTN and FLN NDAs through the Hongkong Post Circular Service.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Michael Chan', written in a cursive style.

(Michael CHAN)
for Secretary for Development

Appendix

The PE3 Report of the NENT NDAs Study (Enclosure 1 of Panel Paper LC Paper No. CB(1)1461/12-13(01)) has already provided responses to some of the follow-up actions arising from the Development Panel meeting on 15 December 2012. The page references in the PE3 Report in respect of the relevant issues are listed below:

- Expansion of Village Type Development Areas (p.77)
- Preservation of Existing Green Belt (p.42)
- Use of Land in Fu Tei Au (p.58 and p.90)
- Urban Design (p.37)
- Wa Shan Tsuen (p.90-91)
- Tin Ping Shan Tsuen (p.89-90 and 93-95)
- Removal of Ancestral Graves (p.67 on compensation for clearance of graves)
- Benefits of the Project (p.5-6)
- Impact on Existing Businesses (p.67-68)