



EARTHCARE
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To: Panel on Development, Legislative Council and All Stakeholders

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Re: Hung Shui Kiu (HSK) New Development Area Planning and Engineering Study - Recommended Outline Development Plan

The "Planning and Development Study on North West New Territories" (the NWNT Study), which was completed in 2003, identified Hung Shui Kiu (HSK) as a suitable new development area (NDA) to cater for the long-term development need in Hong Kong. However, in the light of a slower growth of population and housing demand at that time which turns out to be a completely wrong projection and estimation, the HSK NDA proposal was shelved.

The "Hong Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy" has revisited the need for NDAs in the New Territories and recommended proceeding with the NDA developments to address the long-term housing demand and provide employment opportunities. The Chief Executive announced in his 2007-08 Policy Address the planning for the HSK NDA in Yuen Long and the North East New Territories NDAs as one of the ten major infrastructure projects for economic growth.

To realize sustainable development and the "people-oriented" approach:

- 1) given Hong Kong's current lead-in-water contamination scare has snowballed as a public health crisis and "social disaster" with more and more victims from all property sectors, social sectors and schools, especially children diagnosed as having development problems after assessments, therefore all

property developers, building contractors, authorized persons and their agents / key representatives should not be allowed to participate in any projects in all the NDAs or take up any official positions, until an effective and updated monitoring and quality control / assurance system for water security that is up to international standard could be implemented and ensured to be successful in protecting public health.

Water filtration devices certified by international or US standards should be provided for both new flats in HSK and refurbished flats in the existing public housing estates in Yuen Long whenever possible.

Development of seawater desalination plants should proceed as soon as possible as a major alternative and source of water supply.

- 2) The decision of MTR to ditch UK-made trains and spend H\$6 billion with mainland Chinese manufacturer to replace all first-generation, eight-car trains in one go has raised a lot of eyebrows, doubts and questions about safety concerns and quality issues. It is reported worldwide that many people and authorities from various jurisdictions are not confident about the safety standards of the mainland-made trains. The public is still expecting a full explanation about this decision where transparency, compliance, safety and accountability problems are still issues to be tackled with a lot of room for improvement in Mainland China. These MTR trains should be replaced or complemented by more sustainable transportation modes, e.g. the tram, more cycling paths etc.
- 3) Rural villages should be preserved (except animal rearing farms and industries) and alternative farmland near current homes should be provided to reduce displacement of farmers while existing industrial operators / open storage / cargo facilities could be moved indoors / into multi-storey buildings or underground in brownfield sites in HSK, Yuen Long and/or Lau Fau Shan.
- 4) To promote integration of Hong Kong and Shenzhen, divert people from the crowded situations in Sheung Shui, reduce conflicts between mainlanders and local Hongkongers and to

provide job opportunities, dedicated shopping centres (duty-free or not) with O2O / B2B / B2C capabilities could be built and an education centre to promote human rights, separation of powers and genuine democracy could be set up for tourists – tourism is a human rights issue in sustainable tourism. Tourism has become a human rights / animal rights issue not only in Hong Kong, taking into account it impacts on the environment and wildlife, the survival of local and indigenous villages / people and the wellbeing of local hosts and other cultures and cultural heritage etc. Tourists and newcomers may violate human and animal rights of a destination community. The problem of grey goods traders should be avoided in all the NDAs. Ethical tourism and trading with good practice (not at the expense of social and economic relationships) ensures sustainable development. The concepts of human rights and animal rights should be integrated into the mainstream tourism discourse.

- 5) There are areas / sites of conservational and historical / archaeological / cultural importance in HSK. HSK provides the habit and migration route for a number of birds and invertebrate species. These sites should be protected and conserved.
- 6) Last but not the least, we must equip Hong Kong for the 21st century with an agenda that projects ahead for at least 30-50 years ahead. Globalisation and rapid technological advances have demanded a completely new mindset (not just among the radical few) for the security and sustainable development of Hong Kong and our future generations.

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