

LegCo Panel on Housing meeting on 5 June 2000 Redevelopment of North Point Estate

PURPOSE

To inform Members of the latest position of the redevelopment of North Point Estate.

PRESENT POSITION

2. At the meeting of the LegCo Panel on Housing on 3 April 2000, Members were briefed on various arrangements available for tenants affected by the redevelopment of North Point Estate. At the request of the Members, the rehousing registration which was scheduled to start on 6 April 2000 was suspended immediately after the meeting.

3. The redevelopment of North Point Estate was further discussed at a special joint meeting of the Housing Authority's three standing committees, viz. Strategic Planning Committee, Rental Housing Committee and Commercial Properties Committee on 20 April 2000. The following constraints on redevelopment projects and those affecting the redevelopment of North Point Estate, in particular, were noted by members of the three committees :-

- (a) since detailed planning of redeveloping an estate would take time, redevelopment plans of most estates under the current Comprehensive Redevelopment Programme (CRP) would normally be finalized after the announcement of redevelopment;
- (b) as to the redevelopment plan of North Point Estate, detailed technical assessments would have to be carried out to assess the technical feasibility of the redevelopment options. The Housing Authority's preferred option would be to redevelop the North

Point Estate in a wider context thereby requiring longer time for consultation with various departments and policy bureaux;

- (c) it would cause undue delay to the rehousing process by restricting the announcement of redevelopment until finalization of the redevelopment plan;
- (d) owing to site constraint of North Point Estate, phased development would restrict the disposition of the blocks and the overall planning of the housing site thereby reducing the benefits of the redevelopment especially in the enhancement of district facilities. Moreover, provision of insitu rehousing was not in line with the Housing Authority's policy;
- (e) since residents of North Point Estate could be offered rehousing locally within the same district in accordance with the current rehousing policy, issuance of Letter of Assurance would not be justified as it would affect the allocation of future housing production as well as the affected families suffering from double move within a short period of time; and
- (f) since new housing production in the Hong Kong East District would not be available in the coming few years except Hing Wah Estate (Phase I) completed in late 1999 and Oi Tung Estate at Aldrich Bay to be completed at the end of this year, tenants of North Point Estate would lose the unique opportunity of rehousing to the new estates in the Hong Kong East District in the foreseeable future if the redevelopment operation was to be held up. Moreover, many of the tenants have already indicated their willingness to move.

4. Recognizing that though it might not be feasible and practicable to announce a non-CRP project with a 5-year notice, the joint meeting of the three committees endorsed the need to give a longer period of notice to the affected tenants as far as practicable and decided that -

- (a) tenants affected by non-CRP projects would, in future, be given more than 30 months' advance notice for redevelopment;
- (b) a special Ex-gratia Allowance (SEGA) would be granted to the domestic and commercial tenants affected by all future non-CRP redevelopment projects provided that the notice of redevelopment is 30 months or less. The SEGA rates for the domestic tenants would be the same as the current rates of the Domestic Removal Allowance, whereas the SEGA rates for the commercial tenants would be equivalent to three months' exclusive rent of their existing premises; and
- (c) the target evacuation date of North Point Estate was therefore postponed from February 2002 to August 2002.

5. The tenants of North Point Estate were informed of the above new arrangements on 20 April 2000. Registration of the affected tenants of North Point Estate has resumed on 28 April 2000. So far, appointments for rehousing registration have been arranged with a registration rate of 80%.