

立法會
Legislative Council

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LC Paper No. CB(1)951/99-00
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

LegCo Panel on Planning, Lands and Works

Minutes of meeting
held on Thursday, 9 December 1999, at 10:45 am
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building

- Members present** : Hon Edward HO Sing-tin, SBS, JP (Chairman)
Dr Hon TANG Siu-tong, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon HO Sai-chu, SBS, JP
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, JP
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon WONG Yung-kan
Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBS, JP
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, SBS, JP
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
- Member absent** : Hon Ronald ARCULLI, JP
- Public officers attending** : **For item IV**
- Miss Elizabeth TSE
Deputy Secretary for the Treasury (3)
- Mr J G HERD
Principal Assistant Secretary for the Treasury(W)
- Mr C T MAK
Treasury Officer (W)
- Mrs Marigold LAU
Project Director
Architectural Services Department

Mr K K NG
Assistant Director (Property Services)
Architectural Services Department

Mr Peter YUEN
Assistant Director (Architectural) (Atg)
Architectural Services Department

Mr M F KO
Chief Technical Advisor/Subvented Projects
Architectural Services Department

Mr M C TANG
Assistant Director(Geo)/
Landslip Preventive Measures
Civil Engineering Department

Mr Albert H M TSANG
Senior Engineer/Headquarters
Drainage Services Department

Mr C. D. B. WILLIAMS
Assistant Director of Home Affairs (2)

Mr John LI
Senior Engineer/Planning
Highways Department

Mr Frank Phillips
Chief Estate Surveyor /Acquisition
Lands Department

Mr Eddie TANG
Senior Engineer/Planning
Territory Development Department

Mr K K LI
Senior Engineer/Public Works Programme
Water Supplies Department

For item V

Mr C G KO
Director of Territory Development (Acting)

Mr D J CLIMAS

Project Manager (Acting), New Territories
East Development Office
Territory Development Department

Mr K C NG
Chief Engineer (Tseung Kwan O)
New Territories East Development Office
Territory Development Department

Mr Wilson FUNG
Principal Assistant Secretary for Planning,
Environment and Lands (Planning)

Mr Steve BARCLAY
Principal Assistant Secretary for Planning,
Environment and Lands (Environment)2

Mr Geoffrey WOODHEAD
Principal Assistant Secretary for Planning,
Environment and Lands (Buildings)

For item VI

Mrs Ava NG
Deputy Director (Territorial)
Planning Development

Mr Wilson FUNG
Principal Assistant Secretary for Planning,
Environment and Lands (Planning)

Mr T K TSAO
Project Manager, New Territories North
Development Office
Territory Development Department

Clerk in attendance : Miss Odelia LEUNG, Chief Assistant Secretary (1)1

Staff in attendance : Ms Sarah YUEN, Senior Assistant Secretary (1)4

I Confirmation of minutes of meeting
(LC Paper No. CB(1)542/99-00)

The minutes of the Panel meeting held on 12 October 1999 were confirmed.

II Date of next meeting and items for discussion
(LC Paper Nos. CB(1)541/99-00(01) and (02))

2. Members agreed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting of the Panel to be held on 13 January 2000 at 10:45 a.m. -

- (a) Hong Kong 2030 - Vision and Development Strategy;
- (b) Cleaning up of environmental black spots in the New Territories;
and
- (c) Land resumption policy and related matters.

(Post-meeting note: At the request of the Administration and with the concurrence of the Chairman, (a) and (b) were subsequently replaced by "Proposed charging and penalty system for road opening works" and "Advancing the Tuen Mun Area 38 Stage 2 Reclamation" respectively.)

3. Members noted the list of follow-up actions arising from discussions at Panel meetings.

III Information papers issued since last meeting
(LC Paper No. CB(1)469/99-00)

4. Members noted the memos relating to a complaint case regarding the construction of a public toilet at the promenade off Villa Esplanada.

IV Capital Works Reserve Fund Block Allocations - provision for 2000-2001
(LC Paper No. CB(1)541/99-00(03))

5. The Deputy Secretary for the Treasury (DS for Tsy) briefed members on the Administration's paper setting out the funding to be sought from the Finance Committee (FC) via the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC) for the Capital Works Reserve Fund (CWRP) block allocations for 2000-01. Members noted that the proposed total allocation of \$8,754 million represented a 2.2% increase against the approved allocation for 1999-2000 and of which, \$449.5 million had been made to enable the Government to cater for new minor items related to municipal services in the coming financial year as well as to meet the

contractual commitments incurred by on-going projects.

6. On whether FC's approval was required for subsequent changes to projects funded by the approved block allocations under the CWRP, DS for Tsy said in response to the Chairman that to provide for a certain degree of flexibility in the use of the allocations, FC had delegated the authority to the Secretary for the Treasury (S for Tsy) to approve projects the expenditure of which did not exceed \$15 million. Any new projects which had not been approved under the block allocations would need to be approved by S for Tsy. DS for Tsy and the Assistant Director of Architectural Services (Property Services) (AD Arch S (PS)) stressed the need for such flexibility to respond expeditiously to urgent needs and changes in circumstances. The Principal Assistant Secretary for the Treasury (W) added that individual departments/bureaux reported quarterly expenditures on individual items to Finance Bureau only. This information could be made available to members upon request.

7. While appreciating the need for flexibility, the Chairman pointed out that as the ultimate authority for monitoring public expenditure, FC should at least be informed of any major deviations from the projects under the approved block allocations. DS for Tsy undertook to consider the Chairman's proposal that reports on such changes should be made to the FC on an annual basis.

(Post-meeting note: DS for Tsy confirmed at the PWSC meeting on 15 December 1999 that the Administration would provide on an annual basis a report covering the expenditure on each subhead of the block allocations with information on major deviations from the indicative list of projects attached to the relevant funding proposal.)

8. In reply to the Chairman's enquiry on the need to include project details in the submission for block allocations, DS for Tsy and AD Arch S(PS) explained that since hundreds of small projects were funded under the block allocations, only the key expenditure items had been listed as examples in the funding submission for members' reference.

9. In response to Mr HO Sai-chu's enquiry on the likelihood of changes to approved projects, DS for Tsy said that changes were normally related to project details. Only under exceptional circumstances would a planned project not be implemented or be replaced by another more urgent project. She further pointed out that in approving such changes, the Finance Bureau would consider every case on its own merits and would ensure that planned projects would not be deliberately deferred to make way for unplanned ones.

10. Dr TANG Siu-tong enquired about the authority in determining the projects to be implemented under Head 707, New Towns and Urban Area Development, and whether the relevant District Boards would be consulted. In

response, DS for Tsy referred members to Enclosure 1(g) to the paper and advised that projects under Subhead 7100CX were controlled by the Director of Territory Development, while those under Subheads 7013CX, 7014CX and 7015CX were under the purview of the Director of Home Affairs. Senior Engineer/Planning, Territory Development Department said that projects under Subhead 7100CX could be initiated by the District Boards or Territory Development Department or Planning Department (Plan D). In any case, the relevant District Boards would be consulted before proceeding with the projects. As for projects under the three subheads controlled by the Home Affairs Department (HAD), the Assistant Director of Home Affairs said that for the proposed Urban Minor Works programme, the Administration intended to set up a mechanism similar to the one currently used for the Rural Public Works Programme. At present, a district working group comprising local representatives had been set up for each of the districts in the NT. Proposals were initiated by districts working groups for the consideration of a central steering committee. The Administration would establish similar set-ups for the nine urban districts.

V Tseung Kwan O Development Phase 3 - remaining engineering works

(LC Paper No. CB(1)541/99-00(04))

11. The Director of Territory Development (Acting) (D of TD(Atg)) briefed members on the Administration's paper.

12. Addressing Mr WONG Yung-kan's concern about the impact of the proposed works on commercial fishing activities, D of TD(Atg) advised that the proposed reclamation area was already partially enclosed by seawall and the seabed was partially covered by the temporary sloping edge of the existing reclamation. Since the body of water enclosed by the existing reclamation could not be used for commercial fishing, the present proposed works should have little, if any, impact on fisheries.

13. At Mr HO Sai-chu's request for details on the cost for additional works to be undertaken to avoid possible unusual settlement, D of TD(Atg) explained that the major measure proposed would include the use of pre-loading mounds. As these mounds could be reused, there would be minimal additional costs.

VI Planning and Development Studies on North East and North West New Territories

(LC Paper No. CB(1)541/99-00(05))

14. With the consent of the Chairman, the Administration showed a video on the land use proposals for the three priority development areas at Kwu Tung

North, Fanling North and Hung Shui Kiu.

15. In response to the Chairman's comment that the information paper was too general and had not outlined the uniqueness or features of each of the three priority development areas, the Principal Assistant Secretary for Planning, Environment and Lands (Planning) (PAS/PEL(P)) pointed out that as highlighted in the video show, different themes had been adopted for the development of the three areas. For example, Fanling North would be developed into a "riverside town", Hung Shui Kiu into a "gateway town" and Kwu Tung North into a "boundary town". The Chairman further enquired about the reasons for selecting the three areas for priority development and for determining the theme for each of the three areas. PAS said that the theme selected for each area had taken into account its natural resources and unique geographical feature. The Deputy Director of Planning (Territorial) (DD of Plan (T)) said that a range of assessments covering traffic, engineering, environment, etc. had been made on the three priority development areas. The information paper provided to members had not contained all the detailed technical information which were contained in voluminous technical reports. They were available for public inspection at the planning enquiry counter of the Planning Department. Explanatory statements to the Outline Development plans with more detailed information would be submitted to district organisations when they were consulted. DD of Plan (T) agreed to provide further information such as the results of traffic and environmental impact assessment studies, if required.

Employment opportunities

16. Addressing the Chairman and Mr HO Sai-chu's concern about the few employment opportunities in the three priority development areas, DD of Plan (T) explained that it would be ideal for residents to work in the home districts. However, in practice the creation of job opportunities was market driven. As demonstrated in the development of Sha Tin and Tuen Mun, even land was reserved for that purpose, this would not help create jobs. There was difficulty in providing sufficient jobs in the new towns, let alone matching the types of jobs with the characteristics of the population. Moreover, some people might invariably prefer working in the urban areas. The Administration would therefore aim at ensuring accessibility to convenient and efficient mass public transport to facilitate residents to travel to other districts to work.

17. The Chairman and Mr HO Sai-chu were unconvinced and called for conscious efforts to create more job opportunities in new towns. Mr HO said that in his view, at least one-third of the population should work in the residing districts. In response, DD of Plan (T) stressed that the issue as a whole was being examined by Planning Department in the context of the Territorial Development Strategy Review and possible measures might include providing incentives and identifying new sites for economic activities in the New

Territories (NT) and discouraging further development of such in the urban areas. As for the three priority development areas, she said that land had been reserved for possible expansion of Kwu Tung North to the south and Hung Shui Kiu to Tin Shui Wai to cater for the development of economic activities. As Hung Shui Kiu had been planned as a gateway town, land adjacent to the proposed Deep Bay Link had been reserved for business and office uses to meet the possible demand arising from cross-boundary activities. 20 ha of land had been reserved in Kwu Tung North for other specified uses and this land could be flexibly used for economic activities where necessary. There was room for economic activities in Fanling North too because it was an extension of the existing Fanling/Sheung Shui New Town. It was natural that where residential developments were located, certain level of service-type economic activities would be generated. At members' request, DD of Plan (T) agreed to provide further information on the present and projected levels of population and job opportunities in North East and North West NT.

Relocation matters

18. As regards members' concern about the relocation of existing container back-up facilities including container storage and parking areas necessitated by the development of the three areas, DD of Plan (T) said that about 55 ha of land in north Hung Shui Kiu close to the proposed Shenzhen-Hong Kong Western Corridor had already been planned for the purpose. This would consolidate existing container back-up uses at a location away from the main residential areas to minimise their environmental impacts. In addition, 104 ha of land in Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling had also been proposed for open storage and land extensive industrial uses to facilitate the re-establishment of businesses displaced by the development of Kwu Tung North and Fanling North.

19. Mr WONG Yung-kan enquired about measures to help relocate farms affected by resumption of farmland for the development of the three areas. In reply, DD of Plan (T) said that some farmland might need to be relocated to make way for new town developments. At present about 3,000 ha of land in the whole territory was specified for agricultural use. She assured members that there was adequate land in the New Territories to enable affected farmers to continue with farming activities. The Agriculture and Fisheries Department would provide relocation assistance to farmers in the form of infrastructural and technical support. In response to Mr WONG's request for the provision of specific measures to assist farming activities such as by providing preferential loans to farmers, DD of Plan (T) said that how different trades affected by Government projects should be compensated and relocated was a separate subject. Policies would be worked out to ensure consistent treatment. The Administration would welcome any trade-specific suggestions put forward by members.

Transport planning

20. Ir Dr Raymond HO expressed support for the environmental-friendly transport planning proposed for the three areas, in particular the designation of a special route for heavy vehicles in the exterior of the new towns. He enquired if this planning principle would be applied to all future transport developments. In reply, PAS/PEL(P) advised that it would be easier to adopt this planning principle for new town developments at the design stage. There were practical difficulties in applying the same to built-up areas. The Administration would try as far as practicable to separate pedestrians from vehicular traffic in future developments.

21. In reply to Ir Dr Raymond HO's on further enquiry on the modes of sustainable transport in the three areas, PAS/PEL(P) explained that the future modes of transport in the areas had yet to be determined by the Transport Bureau and the Transport Department. Factors such as the availability of other alternatives, commercial viability and acceptance by the public, etc would be taken into account. He further advised that the Transport Bureau was conducting a study on the feasibility of operating trolley buses in the territory and one of the three areas might be chosen for case study.

Land acquisition matters

22. Mr James TO pointed out that new towns would normally cluster around railway stations. As shown by past experience, when the development plan of a railway had been confirmed, developers would begin to purchase land along the railway line with a view to benefitting from possible land resumption or enhanced value of the land because of overall development in the area. He stressed the need to assess the financial costs to be incurred by Government in providing the infrastructure of new towns and acquiring the relevant land. He requested the Administration to explore the merits of requiring developers to provide part of the infrastructure in the new towns. In response, PAS/PEL(P) said that details as to how the development proposals of the three areas would be implemented had yet to be worked out. Whether land would be acquired through land exchanges or monetary compensation would be decided at a later stage having regard to the extent and types of private land involved. He undertook to brief members on the relevant implementation details after they had been finalised.

23. Mr James TO enquired about the availability or otherwise of information on the ownership of land in the three priority development areas. He said that consideration might be given to joint development where the majority of land concerned was private land. In response, PAS/PEL(P) said that despite efforts to gather the said information at the initial planning stage, developers were reluctant to disclose such details. Regarding the proposal on joint development, he said that the question of fairness would arise if the

development right of a certain site was granted to a developer on the ground that he already owned the majority of the land involved. Moreover, for the purpose of comprehensive planning of road networks and infrastructure, there was also a need to look at an area as a whole. He however assured members that the Administration was well aware of a joint development option.

24. Mr LAU Wong-fat opined that in making planning decisions, the Government had unfairly sacrificed small landowners' interests. One such example was that private land was designated as green belts and this would reduce significantly the value of the land. PAS/PEL(P) clarified that the Administration had never compromised small landowners' interest. Land was designated for different uses according to needs and resources. For example, in the case of Kwu Fong North, most residential and commercial developments would center around the railway station for easy access, whereas in Fanling North open spaces would be located along the trained Ng Tung River to form a riverside park. A potential Eco Park might be developed along the River because there was already lush vegetation there.

25. Mr LAU Wong-fat reiterated that the Government had been treating individual landowners and large developers differently. He said that once the land of small owners was sold to large developers, land use could always be changed to residential or commercial purposes. Mr James TO and Mr TAM Yiu-chung shared Mr LAU's concerns. Mr TO urged the Administration to devise measures to avoid the recurrence of Tung Chung scenario where large developers acquired most of the land in advance and benefited from substantial increase in land value once the area was earmarked for development. DD of Plan (T) stressed that planning proposals at study stage had along been regarded as confidential information. Once the recommended proposals were made, they would be made known to the public. This would ensure that nobody would have an edge over others. The same principle had been applied in the case of studies regarding the three priority development areas.

Population projections

26. The Chairman said that the Third Comprehensive Transport Study (CTS-3) projected a population of 8.9 million in 2016. He questioned why the Planning Department had adopted a population projection of 8.3 million in 2011 for the Studies under discussion. In response, DD of Plan (T) explained that for long-term strategic planning, the Planning Department would normally adopt a population forecast on the high side. Different planning options would be made for different scenarios on the basis of different population forecasts. However, at the project implementation stage of development proposals when financial commitments were assessed, reference would be made to the latest population forecasts from the Census and Statistics Department. As far as the Studies were concerned, as the three areas were intended to be developed in 2008/09, a population forecast by 2011 had been

adopted for reference.

27. Mr LEE Wing-tat urged the Administration to improve the average living space per person in planning the population to be accommodated in the three areas. In reply, DD of Plan (T) advised that this had already been taken into account in planning the three areas. The planned average area of flats in Hung Shui Kiu was 50 sq. metres with each estimated to house 2.1 persons on average. The figure was 60 sq. metres for Fanling North and Kwu Tung North.

28. Responding to Mr LEE Wing-tat's enquiry on any plans to accommodate further population growth in Hung Shui Kiu in consideration of its easy access to the urban areas through a future rail link, DD of Plan (T) said that land had been reserved for possible extension of the area to Tin Shui Wai New Town having regard to the high carrying capacity of West Rail Phase I which would serve the area. As such, high-density residential developments had been planned, especially in the immediate vicinity of the railway station.

29. Mr TAM Yiu-chung supported the planning of new towns along the railway lines and that the town centre should be around the railway station. Mr LEE Wing-tat said that the planning of Tseung Kwan O was poor and the living environment was worse than some urban built-up areas. DD of Plan (T) pointed out that Tseung Kwan O was a valley surrounding by hills. Hung Shui Kiu was different in geographical environment. It was a plain free from physical constraints. The Administration had learnt from the Tseung Kwan O experience and had adopted a lower residential plot ratio for the three areas. Compared with a residential plot ratio of 8 for Tseung Kwan O, that for Kwu Tung North and Hung Shui Kiu was 6.5. An even lower residential plot ratio ranging from 5 to 6.5 had been recommended for Fanling North.

Other concerns

30. Members noted with concern the proposed scattered school sites in Hung Shui Kiu. Mr LEE Wing-tat enquired if the concept of school estates could be applied in the planning of the three areas. In response, DD of Plan (T) assured members that the concept would be implemented where practicable. For example, the land to the left of Hung Shui Kiu's Site R2(PSPS) earmarked for education could be developed into a school estate accommodating three schools. Land was also reserved for the development of four secondary schools north of Woodland Crest in Fanling North into a school estate. At the request of the Chairman and Mr LEE Wing-tat, DD of Plan (T) agreed to consider locating the three schools presently separated by a road in Hung Shui Kiu's Site RR4 together.

31. The Chairman noted that different colours had been used to describe land use of the same nature in the development plans for the three areas and opined that this would cause confusion. DD of Plan (T) explained that the

Studies were done by different consultancy firms. She concurred that a consistent colour index should be adopted as far as practicable.

VII Any other business

32. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:40 pm.

Legislative Council Secretariat
9 February 2000