



香港地產建設商會

THE REAL ESTATE DEVELOPERS ASSOCIATION OF HONG KONG

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29 October 2013

Clerk to the Panel on Development
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

Attention: Mr. Anthony Chu

Dear Mr. Chu

**Panel on Development
Special meeting on 16 November 2013 to receive public views on
Hung Shui Kiu New Development Area Planning and Engineering Study
Stage 2 Community Engagement**

We thank you for your letter of 21 October on the subject and wish to provide our views on the subject as follows.

Together with the other New Development Areas, Hung Shui Kiu was identified as early as 1999 when conceptual development proposals were first put forward for public consultation. In the Consultation Digest published then, it was stated that “there is an urgent need to find more land to accommodate Hong Kong’s fast growing population”. Later on in 2007, the “Hong Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy” recommended the need to develop the various NDAs including Hung Shui Kiu NDA (“HSK NDA”) to address the long-term housing demand and provide employment opportunities. And most recently, the “Long Term Housing Strategy Consultation Document” outlines the seriousness of Hong Kong’s housing problem and proposes a “supply-led” strategy to provide timely planning and supply of land, especially to meet challenges in the medium and long term.



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We agree that there is a serious shortage of housing land and that the Government must adopt a proactive approach in order to meet Hong Kong's long term housing demand. As such, it is all the more important to unlock the full potential of the HSK NDA to accommodate the urgent need for land for our city's sustainable growth in economy and our need for more housing.

Due to its strategic location amongst Tuen Mun, Tin Shui Wai and Yuen Long New Towns and its importance in the context of the Pearl River Delta Region (PRD), Hung Shui Kiu has great potential to be developed into the regional centre of North West New Territories as well as a commercial and business hub for the PRD including Qianhai. Not only can it provide job opportunities for the HSK area, it can and should also compensate for the shortfall in employment opportunities in Tin Shui Wai, which the local residents have been facing for many years. However, the land reserved in the HSK town centre will not be adequate if it is to serve the whole North West New Territories and the PRD Region. In addition, we notice that there is little reference in the Community Engagement Digest to identify major regional connecting infrastructure such as the rail and road links with the Hong Kong International Airport, the Qianhai City Centre and the other NDAs.

We would therefore wish to highlight the following aspects:

1. The study should review the HSK NDA in a broader regional context with reference to the major regional connecting infrastructures in the PRD and enhance its function as a regional centre not just for the North West New Territories but beyond. Its strategic position could be further upgraded by the early implementation of the Northern Link (NOL) with the West Rail Kam Sheung Road Station as the connecting station, such that the East Rail Line could be linked up with the West Rail Line in the Northern NT to provide connection to the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line, thereby enhancing the current capacity and efficiency for cross-boundary traffic and ultimately facilitating further economic co-operation of the Mainland and Hong Kong. The development of the NOL strategic growth areas at Au Tau, Ngau Tam Mei and San Tin will also deliver the much needed land supply for residential and commercial purposes.



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2. In terms of importance and the need to create 100,000 new employment opportunities as proposed, the land reserved for commercial, hotel, office use under DCA4 is inadequate for such an important regional town centre. The super-sized HOS and PRH sites in the northern part of the area are out of tune with the commercial and business activities and will limit the chance of growth of the centre in the future.
3. Within DCA3, a total of 72 ha of land is reserved for logistics facilities, information technology and telecommunications industries including data centre uses, testing and certification facilities and business uses. While these industries are very land extensive, they are not labour intensive. Moreover, the skill sets required may not match with that of the local residents. There are also doubts as to whether such a large sized reserved area has been justified and supported by any study of the future land demands for these industries. Furthermore, as such types of industries are highly mechanized and automated, the suggestion in the Community Engagement Digest that “this area can become the major source of employment generation within the NDA” is questionable. Unless the demand for such land uses in this location is well justified, it would be a waste of valuable land resources to maintain such large tract of land which can be changed to commercial and business uses to complement the regional town centre development for better employment opportunities.
4. We have concerns over the proposed proportion of public and private housing mix. Although the housing mix of the subject planning area is 51% public and 49% private, yet put together with Tin Shui Wai the ratio becomes 69% public and 31% private. This overall housing mix is unbalanced and departs even from the 60/40 public/private housing ratio recommended in the recently released Long Term Housing Strategy Consultation Document. Careful consideration should be given to pursuing a more balanced overall housing mix which would be appropriate in the context of the whole region’s current population profile and socio-economic habitat so as to enhance the region’s revitalization into a healthy and balanced new town.
5. For planning initiatives to become reality in good time to meet our need for sustainable growth, there should be a strong determination in terms of a clear



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timetable and programme for implementation as well as efficient and effective coordination amongst all responsible Government departments to take these planning directions and development projects forward. The Government should set up a special task force or at least a dedicated team to co-ordinate and facilitate the early implementation of the NDA.

6. Similar to the NENT NDAs and as pointed out in the current Community Engagement Digest, much of the land (about 62%) in the Hung Shui Kiu planning area is privately owned. For speedy implementation of the development plans and avoidance of complicated and often long-drawn issues concerning resumption and negotiation, the same implementation approach as proposed for the NENT NDAs should also be adopted here, i.e., Government will resume land for public works projects, public housing developments and infrastructure works, while at the same time allow flexibility for modification of lease including in-situ exchange applications by private landowners.

Please relay the above views to the Honourable Members of the Panel and note that we shall not be attending the special meeting on 16 November.

Yours sincerely

Louis Loong
Secretary General