

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)531/13-14
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/HG/1

Panel on Housing

Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 4 November 2013, at 2:30 pm
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex

Members present : Hon WONG Kwok-hing, BBS, MH (Chairman)
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH (Deputy Chairman)
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP
Hon Vincent FANG Kang, SBS, JP
Prof Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long, SBS, JP, PhD, RN
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, JP
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon WONG Yuk-man
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon KWOK Wai-keung
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen

Members absent : Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, BBS, MH, JP

Public Officers attending : **For item IV**

Mr D W PESCOD, JP
Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Miss Agnes WONG, JP
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Mr Anson LAI
Assistant Director (Strategic Planning)
Housing Department

Mr Michael LEE
Chief Housing Manager/Applications
Housing Department

For item V

Mr D W PESCOD, JP
Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing)

Ms Ada FUNG, JP
Deputy Director (Development & Construction)
Housing Department

Mr Kenneth WONG
Chief Civil Engineer (1)
Housing Department

Mr Patrick LUK
Acting Chief Architect (1)
Housing Department

Mr Bosco CHAN
Deputy Project Manager (HK Island & Islands)
Civil Engineering and Development Department

Mr David LO
Chief Engineer (Islands)
Civil Engineering and Development Department

Clerk in attendance : Ms Miranda HON
Chief Council Secretary (1)1

Staff in attendance : Mr Ken WOO
Senior Council Secretary (1)5

Miss Mandy POON
Legislative Assistant (1)1

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I. Confirmation of minutes

(LC Paper No. CB(1)141/13-14 — Minutes of the meeting held on
10 October 2013)

1. The minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2013 were confirmed.

II. Information papers issued since the meeting on 2 July 2013

2. Members noted that the following papers had been issued since the last meeting –

(LC Paper Nos. CB(1)1441/12-13(01), — Land Registry Statistics for
CB(1)1662/12-13(01), June to September 2013
CB(1)1758/12-13(01) *and* provided by the
CB(1)1868/12-13(01) Administration (press
release)

LC Paper No. CB(1)1534/12-13(01) — Referral memorandum from
the Public Complaints Office
of the Legislative Council
Secretariat regarding issues
relating to accommodation
arrangements for ethnic
minorities (Restricted to
Members)

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LC Paper No. CB(1)1604/12-13(01) — Administration's Booklet on "General Housing Policies"

LC Paper No. CB(1)1696/12-13(01) — Referral arising from the meeting between Legislative Council Members and Kowloon City District Council members on 9 May 2013 regarding the provision of alternative fuel supply in public rental housing estates (Chinese version only) (Restricted to Members))

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(1)184/13-14 (01) — List of follow-up actions

LC Paper No. CB(1)184/13-14 (02) — List of outstanding items for discussion)

3. The Chairman informed members that he and the Deputy Chairman had met with the Secretary for Transport and Housing on 28 October 2013 to discuss the work plan of the Panel for the 2013-2014 legislative session. Pursuant to the discussion, the work plan of the Panel was reflected in the "List of outstanding items for discussion" as set out in LC Paper No. CB(1)184/13-14(02).

4. Members agreed to discuss the following two items which were proposed by the Administration for discussion at the next regular meeting scheduled for Monday, 2 December 2013, at 2:30 pm –

(a) Public Housing Construction Programme 2013/14 to 2017/18; and

(b) Head 711 Item - Community Hall at Sau Ming Road, Kwun Tong.

IV. Analysis of housing situation of Waiting List applicants as at end-June 2013

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1328/12-13(01) — Letter dated 14 June 2013 from Hon WONG Yuk-man on the policy on and waiting

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time for public rental housing allocation (Chinese version only)

LC Paper No. CB(1)184/13-14(03) — Administration's paper on "Analysis of housing situation of Waiting List applicants as at end-June 2013"

LC Paper No. CB(1)184/13-14(04) — Background brief on "Housing situation of Waiting List applicants" prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat)

5. The Chairman advised that the issues raised in Mr WONG Yuk-man's letter concerning the waiting time for public rental housing ("PRH") allocation (circulated vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1328/12-13(01)) would be discussed under this item as they were closely related.

6. The Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) ("PSTH(H)") briefed members on the Administration's analysis of the housing situation of applicants on the Waiting List ("WL") as at the end of June 2013. The Assistant Director of Housing (Strategic Planning) gave a power-point presentation on the subject.

(Post-meeting note: A set of the power-point presentation materials was circulated vide LC Paper No. CB(1)230/13-14(01) on 5 November 2013.)

Average Waiting Time for general applicants

7. Dr Fernando CHEUNG commented that the Average Waiting Time ("AWT") target of around three years was misleading as the target was not applicable to the 115 600 non-elderly one-person applicants under the Quota and Points System ("QPS"). These applicants would have to wait much longer than three years. Also, the waiting time would only be counted from the date of the issuance of the acknowledgement letter bearing an application number (the so-called "blue card") instead of the time when an application was made, and the period in between could take up to half a year. Besides, the waiting time was counted up to the first flat offer only, while some WL applicants might refuse to accept the offer with legitimate reasons. Hence, there could be much difference between the AWT as publicized and the time taken for WL applicants to be actually housed from the date of application. In view of the above, Dr CHEUNG enquired about the average time taken for the various

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stages of a WL application for both general applicants and non-elderly one-person applicants under the QPS, including submitting an application, receiving the "blue card", receiving the first offer, and being housed. PSTH(H) replied that such a timetable was not available as the circumstances of each application differed. For instance, the time taken for issuing the "blue card" would be affected by the adequacy of supporting documents provided by the applicant.

8. Dr Fernando CHEUNG further pointed out that in the Consultation Document on the Long Term Housing Strategy ("the Consultation Document"), the Long Term Housing Strategy Steering Committee ("the Steering Committee") had recommended a housing supply target of 470 000 units and a ratio of 60:40 as the public/private split for the housing supply in the next 10 years. This would mean that approximately 232 000 PRH units and about 50 000 Home Ownership Scheme ("HOS") units would be made available in the next 10 years. Since there was a total of 234 300 PRH applicants as at the end of June 2013, which already outnumbered the sum of PRH units to be produced in the next 10 years, Dr CHEUNG queried if the AWT target at around three years for general applicants could be attained. PSTH(H) responded that the total supply of PRH included new production and recovery of PRH units. Currently, the supply of PRH was around 22 000 units per year, with about 15 000 new PRH units and about 7 000 units recovered from sitting tenants. It was also expected that about half of the HOS units would be taken up by sitting PRH tenants and WL applicants upon re-launching of the HOS. Therefore, in addition to new PRH units within the supply target of 470 000 units in the next 10 years, the recovery of PRH units through the sale of HOS flats should also be taken into account in maintaining the AWT target of around three years for general applicants.

9. In reply to Dr Fernando CHEUNG's question about the projection on the demand and supply of public housing in the next 10 years, PSTH(H) advised that with the relevant land resources already secured, the Administration was committed to producing about 179 000 units in the 10 year period from 2012/13 to 2021/22, inclusive of some 82 100 units expected to be made available between 2013/14 and 2017/18. In spite of the foregoing, additional units would be produced to meet the public housing share of the supply target of 470 000 units in the next 10 years.

10. Mr Christopher CHUNG said that he had received many complaints from WL applicants about not receiving any flat offer after waiting for three years or longer. He was also concerned that it was increasingly challenging for the Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HA") to attain the AWT target given the increasing number of WL applicants. He requested for a breakdown on the waiting time of WL applicants against various household sizes. PSTH(H) responded that as revealed in the distribution of waiting time of general applicants with waiting time at or above three years and without any flat offer

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(paragraph 15 of the Administration's paper), those applicants who opted for the Urban District would experience a longer waiting time than those of other district choices. The Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Housing) (DSTH(H)) added that the waiting time was also hinged on the decision of individual applicants on whether to accept a flat offer. For example, a four-person household might give up the offer of a one-bedroom unit (designed for three- to four-person households) and opt for a two-bedroom unit (designed for four-person or above households).

11. Mr Vincent FANG asked if the trend for students to apply for PRH once they reached the age of 18 was on the rise, as he was concerned that the WL would become even longer with such applicants. To shorten the waiting time of eligible WL applicants, he suggested that the 5 590 cases frozen for reason of residence requirement should be temporarily removed from the WL until the applicants concerned became qualified again. PSTH(H) explained that as the applicants who were students might earn an income exceeding the WL income limit after graduation, the Steering Committee had recommended in the Consultation Document that HA should devise a mechanism to review the income and assets of the non-elderly one-person applicants under the QPS in order to remove those who were no longer eligible from the WL. As regards frozen cases, PSTH(H) advised that frozen applications were allowed to remain on the WL as the status of such cases could change quickly. For example, the birth of a baby with the presence of an eligible family member might render the applicant eligible.

12. Mr WONG Yuk-man pointed out that the AWT for general applicants at 2.7 years as advised by the Administration was in stark contrast to what members had been told by WL applicants who approached them for assistance, with some having waited for six years and were yet to receive an offer. He urged the Administration to actively follow up such cases. He was of the view that the issue of long waiting time for WL applicants would unlikely be resolved in the next 10 years given the current level of PRH production. Also, the Government's failure to restrict new immigrants from coming to Hong Kong would put no end to the demand for public housing resources and hence the pressure on the WL.

13. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung was concerned that the annual average of 23 000 flats to be made available in the next five years from recovery of flats as well as new production under the Public Housing Construction Programme ("PHCP") could only meet half of the demand of the some 234 300 applicants currently on the WL. He was not optimistic that the AWT target at around three years could be attained.

14. Mr KWOK Wai-keung said that The Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions had since the last Legislative Council term advocated the construction of

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30 000 PRH units each year so that all WL applicants could be housed within three years. He asked what HA would do to meet the AWT target. Noting that 69% of the 19 200 general applicants on the WL who had waited for three years or above and were yet to receive any flat offer as at the end of June 2013 had opted for the Urban District, he urged the Administration to explain to WL applicants that their choice of the Urban District might result in a longer waiting time.

15. PSTH(H) advised that it was the Administration's stated target to produce about 20 000 PRH units per year for the five years starting from 2017/18, plus other units recovered through various initiatives. The Administration had already started planning for the production of around 28 000 public housing units per year in future. The Administration acknowledged the severe shortage in the supply of PRH and would strive to secure every piece of land appropriate for housing development, and to build as quickly as practicable.

16. In response to Mr LEE Cheuk-yan's enquiry, DSTH(H) advised that the waiting time of applicants who were housed to PRH on compassionate rehousing grounds or under the Express Flat Allocation Scheme was not counted in the AWT of the general applicants. Noting that 660 out of 1 500 applicants who were housed in less than one year had opted for the Urban District and this had outnumbered all other applicants who opted for other districts, Mr LEE Cheuk-yan sought clarification from the Administration about its findings that the majority of those with a waiting time of three years or above and were yet to receive any flat offer as at the end of June 2013 had opted for the Urban District. PSTH(H) explained that while applicants would be offered flats according to their chosen district on the WL, an applicant might be offered a flat ahead of other applicants should he switch to another district in which the flat type suitable for the applicant's family size was immediately available and the applicant concerned was willing to accept the offer.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration clarified that the waiting time of those housed through the Express Flat Allocation Scheme was counted in the calculation of AWT.)

17. Noting that 6 300 out of 14 300 general applicants who were housed between July 2012 and June 2013 had received their first offer only at or after three years, Mr LEE Cheuk-yan queried the Administration's ability to maintain the AWT target. He was also concerned that the actions against suspected abuse cases might be disturbing to PRH residents. In this connection, he requested the Administration to provide a breakdown of the about 7 000 flats recovered annually which could be made available for allocation to WL applicants.

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18. Dr KWOK Ka-ki pointed out that the various construction programmes in the pipeline along with the recovery of PRH flats would only provide 325 000 units at most in the coming 10 years. Assuming that there would be 340 000 new WL applications in the next 10 years, the Administration would have practical difficulty accommodating such a huge number of applicants, let alone the 234 300 WL applicants already on the queue. According to his own calculation, it would take nine years to make an offer to the last WL applicant currently on the queue. He therefore considered that the Administration had misled the public by claiming that the AWT target of around three years could be maintained. PSTH(H) responded that the waiting time was different for each case having regard to the specific circumstances of individual applicants. Generally speaking, a general applicant on the WL should, on average, expect to receive an offer within three years from the date of registration.

19. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung queried whether the AWT for general applicants at 2.7 years during the period under study was tailor-made by adjusting the relevant policy and methodology. PSTH(H) replied that the AWT was computed based on the established mechanism, and that the study had revealed a worsening trend of the AWT which warranted attention. The Administration had also been reporting the situation to HA's Subsidized Housing Committee.

20. In response to Mr Tony TSE's question on whether WL applicants would undergo preliminary investigation to establish their eligibility before they were put on the WL, PSTH(H) advised that preliminary vetting would be carried out for each WL application to ensure that the basic criteria were met. Detailed vetting would be conducted during the investigation stage to ensure an applicant's eligibility for allocation.

21. Mr Albert CHAN stated that the AWT was getting much longer especially for applicants opting for the Extended Urban District. Pointing out from his own experience that most WL applicants opting for the Extended Urban District were willing to accept offers at the Urban District and the New Territories, he requested the Administration to allow applicants to switch their district choices without lengthening their waiting time. PSTH(H) advised that the allocation of PRH units in different districts was dependent on the locations where the new and recovered units were available. The Administration would in any case consider the suggestion in future reviews.

22. Mr Frederick FUNG opined that the problem with the supply of PRH was caused by a sharp reduction in the production from about 35 000 to about 15 000 units per year and the recovery of units from about 20 000 to about 7 000 units per year compared with the previous terms of Government. The problem was also due to erroneous planning in respect of the provision of PRH in the previous years as evident by a higher percentage of PRH to be provided in the Urban District in the coming years. He asked whether the HA had reflected

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the above issues to the Government with a view to seeking additional manpower and land resources for resolving the problem. PSTH(H) responded that the Government's commitment made in 1997 to produce 80 000 PRH units had been achieved by 2002, and that had reduced the AWT from seven to three years. Some 20 000 units were recovered annually at that time due to the implementation of the HOS and other relevant housing schemes. It was difficult for the current Government to further reduce the AWT. Nevertheless, the Government had announced that about 100 000 PRH units would be produced for the five years from 2017/18 to meet the housing need of WL applicants.

23. Noting that there were 19 200 applicants with a waiting time of three years or above and yet to receive a flat offer as at the end of June 2013, the Chairman asked if the Administration would consider providing these applicants with transitional housing or, if impossible, rent subsidy to address their housing need. The Chairman was also concerned that in the PHCP as at June 2013, there would be no new units in the New Territories in 2017/18. He further asked whether consideration could be given to dividing the present New Territories District into New Territories East, West and North to better match the location preference of WL applicants.

24. PSTH(H) responded that the HA's analysis had revealed that WL applicants did not always accept the first and second offers as they might expect the third offer to be better. He also explained that no units would be completed in 2017/18 in the New Territories due to the absence of land resources in the area for PRH production during the corresponding year. As the Administration was seeking to produce PRH units in the Urban, Extended Urban, New Territories and Islands Districts in the coming years, there would be a better balance across the districts in the provision of PRH units. The Chairman urged the Administration to enhance inter-departmental coordination with a view to rectifying the situation. As regards the suggestion to subdivide the New Territories District, PSTH(H) responded that it would curtail the choices available for allocation to WL applicants.

Long waiting time of larger households

25. Noting that most of the applicants still on the WL with longer waiting times were three- to four-person households opting for the Urban or the Extended Urban Districts, Mr Vincent FANG was concerned whether more such units would be produced accordingly to meet the demand and to attain the AWT target. Expressing a similar concern, Mr Albert CHAN commented that the lack of units for five- to six-person households had lengthened the waiting time and was thus unfair to such applicants. He urged the Administration to increase the production of larger units and allocate two units for each of such households as necessary. Mr KWOK Wai-keung also pointed out that the lack of sufficient units for larger households would in effect discourage the public

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from forming families and giving birth to babies, hence running against the Government's population policy.

26. PSTH(H) advised that HA would review the flat mix for each public housing project. Two-bedroom units would be produced as appropriate to meet the demand of bigger families. It was also HA's current practice to offer two units for a household with eight persons or more.

27. Mr WU Chi-wai expressed concern on the longer waiting time for four-person households. He pointed out that the Administration had launched two exercises in 2009 and 2010 allowing WL applicants to change their choice from Extended Urban and New Territories to the Urban District in anticipation of an increased supply of PRH flats in the Urban District. However, the applicants were not informed of the types of units that would be available. He doubted whether the exercises had lengthened the waiting time for those four-person households who applied for a change in district choice. Mr WU also urged the Administration to announce the types of units that would be available in each district under the PHCP for the next five years such that WL applicants could make the district and flat choices most appropriate to them.

28. DSTH(H) explained that the two exercises were conducted due to the projected increase in PRH supply in the Urban District. The relevant letter on the first exercise issued to the WL applicants had stated clearly that the change in district choice was only optional and would not result in shorter waiting time. In response to the views of the applicants, the letter issued for the second exercise had also provided information on the number of flats expected to be available for allocation. PSTH(H) said that the Administration would consider providing more information on the upcoming PHCP.

Waiting time for non-elderly one-person applicants

29. Mr WONG Yuk-man urged the Administration to address the imminent housing needs of the about 115 600 non-elderly one-person applicants under the QPS. Noting that the AWT target of three years was not applicable to non-elderly one-person applicants, Mr Tony TSE asked whether a target had been set to house these applicants.

30. PSTH(H) replied that the Steering Committee had recommended that the QPS be refined by increasing the annual quota for non-elderly one-person applicants under the QPS, which was currently set at 8% of the total PRH units available for allocation to WL applicants, and by allocating extra points to those above the age of 45 with a view to improving their chance to gain earlier access to PRH, and progressively extending the three year AWT target to those over 40 and then over 35. PSTH(H) further said that the circumstances of young people often changed. While they might first apply as a singleton under the QPS, their

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applications would switch to family applications as they got married. In response to Mr Tony TSE's enquiry on the timing for implementing the above recommendation, if adopted, PSTH(H) advised that after completion of the consultation on the Long Term Housing Strategy in early December 2013, and upon receiving the Steering Committee's report, the Administration would forward the relevant recommendations to the HA for consideration.

31. Pointing out that HA's Well-off Tenants Policies had caused young people to move out from their parents' PRH units and to register on the WL for PRH allocation, Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung urged the Administration to review the policies, with a view to relieving the stress on the WL. PSTH(H) responded that the circumstances of young people often changed but they did not inform the HA of the changes. The Steering Committee's recommendations would be taken into consideration in deciding how to address the situation.

Tackling abuse of Public Rental Housing

32. Mr Tony TSE urged the Administration to ensure that measures would be in place to tackle the abuse of PRH resources. Mr Vincent FANG queried the low recovery rate from the investigations on suspected abuse cases and zero/low water consumption cases conducted by the Housing Department ("HD"), which were 490 and 1 200 units out of 8 700 and 9 400 cases investigated respectively.

33. PSTH(H) responded that various measures were currently in place to tackle the abuse of PRH resources. HD had set up a special duties team and put in place a reporting system whereby tenants could report any suspected abuse cases, such as subletting, idling, and using a flat for commercial or other improper purposes. HD would also conduct a visit to each tenant once every two years to determine if a flat was occupied and occupied by the registered tenants. In addition, HD had stepped up enforcement actions through various initiatives, such as the "Taking Water Meter Readings Operation". It should be noted that water meter readings served as preliminary evidence rather than sufficient proof of PRH abuse. HD would conduct more detailed investigations into cases of zero/low water consumption.

Under-occupation of Public Rental Housing flats

34. Mr Christopher CHUNG said that he had recently received many requests for assistance from PRH tenants, including many elderly people, who received notifications from the HA requesting them to transfer to smaller units for reason of under-occupation ("UO"). He was concerned that the elderly would have difficulty adapting to a new living environment. PSTH(H) explained that the HA's policy was to encourage UO households to transfer to smaller units in order that larger units could be recovered for accommodating larger households whose waiting time was much longer. To safeguard the interest of the elderly,

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those UO households with elderly members aged 70 or above were excluded from the UO list, and other UO households would be encouraged to opt for voluntary transfer.

V. Public Works Programme Item No. B742CL – Main engineering infrastructure in association with the proposed developments at Area 56 in Tung Chung

(LC Paper No. CB(1)184/13-14(05) — Administration's paper on "Public Works Programme Item No. B742CL – Main engineering infrastructure in association with the proposed developments at Area 56 in Tung Chung")

35. PSTH(H) briefed members on the Administration's proposal to upgrade Public Works Programme Item No. B742CL to Category A for the design and construction of the engineering infrastructure to support the proposed public housing development at Area 56 in Tung Chung. The Deputy Director of Housing (Development & Construction) ("DDH(D&C)") gave a power-point presentation on the subject.

(Post-meeting note: A set of the power-point presentation materials was circulated vide LC Paper No. CB(1)230/13-14(02) on 5 November 2013.)

Design of the roadworks

36. Miss Alice MAK expressed support for the proposal to tie in with the proposed public housing development. However, she pointed out that carriageways provided for new towns, such as those for Tin Shui Wai and Tung Chung, were often very long and straight and without sufficient traffic signs. Besides, the areas along the carriageways were often rather desolate due to the lack of pedestrian crossing facilities and retail shops along such carriageways. She urged the Administration to improve the roadworks design, such as by building covers for the proposed footpath alongside the carriageway to attract pedestrian patronage, and clearly demarcate the footpath and the proposed cycle track to ensure pedestrian safety. PSTH(H) concurred with Miss Alice MAK's observations and advised that the design of future public housing projects would be improved. DDH(D&C) explained that retail shops at street level would be provided at new housing developments, including the proposed public housing development at Area 56, thus encouraging pedestrian patronage and adding vibrancy to the new towns. Miss Alice MAK requested the Administration to consult the Islands District Council ("IDC") when detailed design of the

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proposed works and the public housing development was available.

37. Mr Tony TSE indicated support for the proposal. He opined that the proposed footpath and cycle track alongside the carriageway, being dedicated facilities for local residents, should be designed in such a way as to facilitate use by them as far as practicable. He also urged the Administration to increase greening for the proposed carriageway in the detailed design. Chief Civil Engineer (1), Housing Department ("CCE(1)/HD") responded that planters would be provided alongside the proposed carriageway, and about 24 trees and 4 800 shrubs would also be planted under the project.

Transport services and facilities for Area 56 in Tung Chung

38. Pointing out that Area 56 was close to the North Lantau Highway's exit point at Tung Chung, Mr WU Chi-wai asked whether consideration had been given to providing bus stops at Area 56 to enhance residents' access to the urban area via the North Lantau Highway. CCE(1)/HD advised that upon discussion with the Transport Department ("TD"), the Administration had proposed to divert and strengthen some existing franchised bus routes in order to provide services to residents of Area 56 upon commissioning of the new public housing development. These included two routes which ran within the Lantau Island (i.e. route S56 running between Tung Chung and the Hong Kong International Airport and route 37 running between Caribbean Coast and Yat Tung Estate via Tung Chung Town Centre), and three routes to the urban area (route E21A running between Tung Chung and Ho Man Tin (via Mongkok), route E31 running between Yat Tung Estate and Tsuen Wan, and route E11S running between Yat Tung Estate and Tin Hau). The Administration would incorporate the above proposals into the annual Franchised Bus Route Development Programme for consultation with IDC accordingly. In addition, to facilitate the provision of franchised bus services in Area 56, two bus lay-bys which were about 100 metres in length in total would be provided in conjunction with the proposed carriageway.

39. Mr WU Chi-wai further asked if it was possible to provide a pedestrian network to directly connect the proposed public housing development at Area 56 with the North Lantau Highway network. Dr KWOK Ka-ki expressed a similar view.

40. CCE(1)/HD explained that Road L16 to which the proposed carriageway would be connected was linked to the existing signalized junction between Ying Hei Road and Man Tung Road where vehicles could reach the North Lantau Highway quickly. In response to Dr KWOK Ka-ki's request for providing bus and minibus stops in Area 56 for new routes to be introduced in the future, CCE(1)/HD advised that the Administration would consult IDC on the provision of new public transport services.

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41. In response to the concerns of Mr WU Chi-wai, the Administration was requested to advise the public transport services and facilities to be provided for the proposed public housing development at Area 56, including the alignment of bus routes from and to the proposed development before submitting the proposal to the Public Works Subcommittee ("PWSC") for consideration. The Administration was also requested to consider providing a pedestrian network to directly connect the proposed public housing development with the North Lantau Highway network.

42. Mr Tony TSE asked whether the proposed cycle track at Area 56 would be connected to the network of cycle tracks in Tung Chung. Expressing a similar concern on the provision of cycle tracks for the enjoyment of the local residents, Dr KWOK Ka-ki enquired if a cycle track network was provided between Tung Chung and Yam O.

43. CCE(1)/HD responded that the proposed cycle track would run from Road L16 to the existing signalized crossing between Ying Hei Road and Man Tung Road where cyclists could turn right for the existing cycle track at Ying Hei Road for connection to the cycle track network leading to the Tung Chung MTR Station as well as other parts of Tung Chung. Deputy Project Manager (HK Island & Islands), Civil Engineering and Development Department advised that while a cycle track network between Tung Chung and Yam O was currently unavailable, such network would be considered in the extended Tung Chung new town, Siu Ho Wan and Yam O under the relevant projects.

Other concerns

44. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung asked whether there were any private housing development projects in the vicinity of the proposed project. He was concerned that the infrastructure for the proposed public housing development might add value to the private housing developments nearby by providing a more comprehensive and convenient access. DDH(D&C) said that Areas 55a and 55b adjacent to Area 56 had been allocated for private housing developments, whereas Area 89 in close proximity to Area 56 had been reserved for building two schools. CCE(1)/HD added that the proposed carriageway was to connect the southern part of Road L16 with the proposed public housing development at Area 56. The southern part of Road L16 would, in accordance with the Conditions of Sale, be built by the developer of Area 55b. PSTH(H) explained that since the proposed infrastructure works would be in close proximity to the new public housing development, the Administration planned to entrust the design and construction of the works to the Hong Kong Housing Authority to ensure better coordination between the proposed works and the adjoining public housing development.

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45. Dr KWOK Ka-ki indicated support for the proposal. Pointing out that the supply of public housing was falling far short of demand, he asked whether the construction of the proposed public housing development at Area 56 could be expedited. DDH(D&C) responded that the construction works for the said public housing development had been compressed as far as practicable, and the works were anticipated to be completed by the end of 2016.

46. The Chairman concluded that members supported the submission of the proposal to PWSC.

VI. Any other business

47. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:35 pm.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
12 December 2013