

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)608/17-18(08)

Ref: CB1/PL/DEV

Panel on Development

Meeting on 27 February 2018

**Updated background brief on the Planning and Engineering Study
for Housing Sites in Yuen Long South**

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the Planning and Engineering Study for Housing Sites in Yuen Long South ("the Study") and summarizes the views and concerns expressed by Members of the Legislative Council ("LegCo") on the subject.

Background

2. Yuen Long South ("YLS"), comprising the rural land south of Yuen Long Highway, is generally characterized by haphazard low-density housing, informal industrial activities and open storage. Since YLS is located in proximity to the Yuen Long, Tuen Mun and Tin Shui Wai New Towns, and the proposed new development area in Hung Shui Kiu ("HSK"), as well as connected with the urban areas by strategic road links including Route 3 and Yuen Long Highway, the Administration considers that the area has the potential to accommodate more housing developments with higher development intensity.

The Planning and Engineering Study for Housing Sites in Yuen Long South

3. In order to review the development potential of an area of about 1 500 hectares ("ha") in YLS so as to identify housing sites in the Potential Development Areas ("the PDAs")¹ for private and public housing purposes with infrastructure improvement works, the Administration proposed to carry out the Study, and briefed the Panel on Development ("DEV Panel") on the proposal of the Study in May 2012. In July 2012, the Finance Committee, on the recommendation of the Public Works Subcommittee, approved a commitment of \$49.5 million (in money-of-the-day prices) for conducting the Study.

4. According to the Administration, the Study has included, inter alia, the preparation of the Preliminary Outline Development Plan ("PODP"), the Recommended Outline Development Plan ("RODP") and the preliminary Layout Plans. A three-stage community engagement ("ComE") programme was carried out to gauge public views on the vision and key issues of the Study with a view to formulating the RODP and the preliminary Layout Plans for YLS.

5. With reference to the views collected during Stage 1 ComE conducted between April and June 2013, the Administration had formulated the PODP for YLS. Following Stage 2 ComE conducted between May and July 2014, the Administration had revised the development proposals and prepared the draft RODP (**Appendix I**). Stage 3 ComE with focus on the draft RODP was then conducted from January to April 2016.

Draft Recommended Outline Development Plan

6. In January 2016, the Administration briefed the DEV Panel on the draft RODP. A comparison of the key development parameters of YLS proposed under PODP and the draft RODP are set out below:²

¹ The PDAs, covering an area of about 216 ha, are located to the south of the Yuen Long New Town and bounded by Yuen Long Highway, Kung Um Road and Tai Lam Country Park. The PDAs include two main parts, one in the Tong Yan San Tsuen area and the other in the Tai Tong area. (Source: [Website on "Planning and Engineering Study for Housing Sites in Yuen Long South - Investigation"](#))

² Sources: LC Paper Nos. [CB\(1\)1456/13-14\(08\)](#) and [CB\(1\)452/15-16\(06\)](#)

	PODP (formulated in May 2014)	Draft RODP (formulated in January 2016)
Total potential development area (hectare ("ha"))	About 216	223
Development area⁽¹⁾ (hectare ("ha"))	---	183
Total population	80 200 (new population about 78 000)	85 000 (new population about 82 700)
No. of new flats	26 100	27 700
Housing mix	Public 60%: Private 40%	Public ⁽²⁾ 60%: Private 40%
Employment opportunities	About 10 900	10 800
Plot ratio	1 to 5	
<u>Notes:</u>		
(1) Development Area refers to the area with planned new developments and infrastructure on the draft RODP. This excludes areas that are occupied by existing developments, roads and river channels that are retained, and the "Agriculture" and "Green Belt" zones to be kept intact.		
(2) This includes public rental housing units and subsidized sale flats.		

7. The development proposals for housing sites in YLS under the draft RODP are in **Appendix II**.

Major views and concerns expressed by Members

8. The major views and concerns expressed by LegCo Members on the subject are summarized in the ensuing paragraphs.

Objective of the development of Yuen Long South

9. Some Members expressed concern about the role of YLS in the overall development of the region and how it would complement the developments of the proposed HSK New Development Area ("NDA") and Tin Shui Wai. Some Members doubted whether the PODP for YLS had been drawn up based on the land holdings of private developers and in a way would contribute to transfer of benefits to private developers.

10. The Administration explained that YLS was planned mainly for residential purposes and would be developed as an extension of the Yuen Long New Town. Of the some 200 ha of land in the PDAs, 170 ha were privately owned. Private land would only be acquired for public purposes for infrastructures and public housing developments. In view of the complex land ownership issues in the PDAs, the Study would carefully examine and recommend a suitable implementation approach for developing the PDAs with a view to striking a balance between respecting private land ownership and the need for development in the light of public views collected during the ComE exercises.

11. In view of the proposed housing developments in YLS, some Members asked whether the Kwu Tung North ("KTN") and Fanling North ("FLN") NDAs project would still be needed or its scope could be reduced. The Administration explained that the development of YLS had been one of the long-term measures to increase land supply and it was not a replacement of the KTN and FLN NDAs project.

Impact of the proposed development on villagers and compensation arrangements

12. Members urged the Administration to review the compensation mechanism and to address the demands of the affected parties before taking forward the YLS project. They opined that Heung Yee Kuk and the local communities should be consulted and the affected parties should be kept informed of the plans and progress of the project as well as the details of the compensation arrangements.

13. The Administration advised that the local residents had been consulted and their requests conveyed to the relevant bureaux and departments and addressed in the Study. In addition, the Administration had sent by post information about the Study to every mailing address in the area. While the planning of YLS had tried to minimize impacts on existing residents, it was unavoidable that some existing structures would have to be cleared. Suitable arrangements would be devised for all those affected by the YLS development, including special compensation and rehousing arrangements (including local rehousing), making reference to the compensation and rehousing package for the KTN and FLN NDAs project.

14. Some Members pointed out that after the announcement of the Study, due to the anticipated increase in the value of the land in the area,

some landowners had terminated the tenancies of non-indigenous residents and evicted them without compensation. These Members considered that the Administration should have conducted a freezing survey on the identities of the occupants at an earlier stage to protect them from being evicted once the planning study commenced.

15. The Administration explained that under the existing mechanism for assessment of extra-gratia allowances ("EGAs") for crops, the Administration would not undertake any freezing survey for farmers and their farming activities. It would instead post notices to invite the affected farmers to claim for EGAs nearer the time of land reversion to the Government. The Administration also advised that if an early freezing survey was to be conducted, farmers with their farming operations started on the concerned farmland after the freezing survey would not be entitled to submit claims and receive EGAs, notwithstanding that they were actually affected by the land resumption. Furthermore, the freezing survey could not override the tenancy agreements between landowners of agricultural land and their tenant farmers, as well as related tenancy arrangements. If individual farmers had moved out prior to the Government's land resumption as a result of tenancy termination, the Government still had no justification for making use of public money to grant EGAs to such farmers.

16. Some Members suggested that to assist the farmers in YLS in agricultural rehabilitation, the Administration should acquire farmland through land resumption and lease out the farmland to the farmers affected by the development project for agricultural rehabilitation.

17. The Administration advised that the arrangements for agricultural rehabilitation in YLS would be worked out by making reference to the HSK NDA project and the KTN and FLN NDAs project. In the light of the long history of cultivation in YLS and the public views collected, the large and contiguous active agricultural land in the southern part of Tong Yan San Tsuen ("TYST") would be preserved. Under the New Agriculture Policy announced by the Food and Health Bureau in January 2016, the Administration would identify sites for setting up an Agricultural Park,³ and undertake a consultancy study to identify "Agricultural Priority Areas" for long-term agricultural purposes.

³ The Administration submitted an information paper ([LC Paper No. CB\(2\)721/17-18\(01\)](#)) to the Panel on Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene on 16 January 2018 on the progress of the measures of the New Agriculture Policy, including the proposed development of an Agricultural Park in Kwu Tung South.

Arrangements for affected brownfield operations

18. Some Members relayed the concerns of the existing brownfield operators in YLS about the possible high rents for operating their businesses in the future multi-storey industrial compounds, which were proposed by the Administration to be provided in the area for accommodating some of the brownfield operations. Moreover, these operators had doubts on whether the proposed new road network in YLS could cope with the traffic growth brought about by the operations of the logistics industry in future.

19. The Administration indicated that it would conduct a study in mid-2016 to explore providing accommodation for some of the brownfield operations through development of multi-storey industrial compounds, with a view to better utilizing precious land resources. The study would cover the feasibility of conveying goods by trucks inside the multi-storey buildings, the level of rent payable by the tenants and the necessary financial arrangements.

Impact on buildings with heritage and cultural values

20. Some Members urged the Administration to conserve the buildings with a long history and special cultural values in YLS, including Kam Lan Koon, a Taoist temple with years of history but was not declared a graded historic building.

21. The Administration explained that as the existing site of Kam Lan Koon was not served by a vehicular road, a larger site abutting a planned vehicular road had been reserved for reprovisioning the temple under the PODP for YLS. The Administration undertook to consider the aspiration for in-situ preservation of the temple when preparing the draft RODP.

Connectivity

22. Some Members pointed out that the existing carrying capacity of the MTR West Rail Line ("WRL") was insufficient to cope with passengers' demand, and enquired about the transport infrastructure to be provided to meet the transport needs of the future residents in YLS.

23. The Administration explained that it was working with the MTR Corporation Limited to explore ways to increase the carrying capacity of WRL. The existing 7-car WRL trains had been gradually replaced by 8-car trains from 2016 onwards, and the hourly train frequency had been

increased from 20 to 28. As a result, the carrying capacity of WRL would increase by 60%. Moreover, a dual carriageway was proposed as the main road running in a north-south direction through the PDAs of YLS and connecting Kung Um Road to Yuen Long Highway through the improved TYST Interchange. The Administration would also study a possible new strategic highway connecting HSK NDA with the urban areas to cope with the anticipated traffic growth in Northwest New Territories, including YLS.

Provision of commercial facilities

24. Some Members considered that the commercial facilities to be provided in YLS, scattered over the "Urban Living" and the "LOHAS Living" Planning Areas, were inadequate. They were concerned that many YLS residents would crowd into the Yuen Long New Town for shopping. The Administration advised that in the draft RODP, the commercial floor area to be provided in YLS had been increased to 193 300 square metres. Mixed residential and commercial developments had been planned near the TYST Interchange, which was the "gateway" to YLS. In addition, some sites had been planned as medium- to high-density residential developments, where commercial facilities would be provided to serve the residents and to add vibrancy to the areas.

Employment opportunities

25. Some members were concerned if the job opportunities expected to be generated in the development of YLS could cater for the employment needs of its future population. The Administration advised that it aimed to increase local job opportunities in YLS with a view to reducing the time for commuting of local residents. The ratio of job opportunities to local population in HSK NDA together with YLS would be higher than that of other new towns, such as Tai Po and Tsing Yi.

Council questions

26. Five questions relating to the compensation and rehousing arrangements for villagers and farmers affected by development projects were raised at Council meetings of 15 April 2015, 2 March 2016, 12 April 2017, and 10 and 24 January 2018 respectively. The hyperlinks are in **Appendix III**.

Latest developments

27. On 8 August 2017, the Planning Department and the Civil Engineering and Development Department announced the RODP for YLS.⁴

28. At the meeting of DEV Panel to be held on 27 February 2018, the Administration will brief members on the RODP for YLS and other key recommendations of the Study on the YLS development.

Relevant papers

29. A list of relevant papers with their hyperlinks is in **Appendix III**.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
21 February 2018

⁴ Source: [Press release](#) on "Yuen Long South Recommended Outline Development Plan announced"

元朗南房屋用地規劃及工程研究——建議發展大綱草圖
 Planning and Engineering Study for Housing Sites in Yuen Long South –
 Draft Recommended Outline Development Plan



資料來源：《元朗南房屋用地規劃及工程研究——調查研究》的網站
 Source: [Website on "Planning and Engineering Study for Housing Sites in Yuen Long South – Investigation"](#)

Development proposals for Yuen Long South under the Draft Recommended Outline Development Plan

Positioning

Yuen Long South ("YLS") is located in the immediate south of Yuen Long New Town. Through comprehensive planning and improvement of connectivity, the YLS development is positioned as a southern extension of Yuen Long New Town¹ and to serve as one of the major sources of housing land supply.

2. The planning of YLS has taken account of the existing development characters and integration with Yuen Long New Town in its north and the rural and natural landscape in the surroundings. The key development proposals are set out below.

Housing provision

3. The YLS development would provide 27 700 flats for a new population of about 82 700 which has been optimized within the constraints of the traffic and infrastructure capacity. In line with the Long Term Housing Strategy, the housing mix of 60% for public housing and 40% for private housing is adopted, and supporting infrastructure, commercial (including street-front shops), social and community facilities are planned in the new town extension for creation of a balanced community.

Residential communities of varying development intensities

4. Three residential communities with development intensities descending from north to south are planned. Each is served by an activity node with public transport interchange, commercial and community facilities, serving both the future residents of YLS and the nearby existing residents:

¹ According to the Explanatory Statement of the Draft Yuen Long Outline Zoning Plan No. S/YL/22, the planned population of Yuen Long New Town would be about 185 700. The total planned population of Yuen Long New Town and YLS would be about 270 700.

- (a) *Urban Living Planning Area*: As it is located closest to Yuen Long New Town, the development intensity is the highest with maximum plot ratio of 5.² The activity node is centrally located together with the sports centre, community hall and clinic to serve the major population cluster.
- (b) *LOHAS Living Planning Area*: Being farther from the new town and near Tai Lam Country Park in the south, the area is planned with lower development intensity of plot ratios 2.4 and 4. A local commercial site is designated to serve the community. The southern part is reserved for government uses including a sewage treatment works and a site intended for government depots. Three existing livestock farms located at the southern fringe of the Planning Area are subject to detailed assessment for compliance with the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance in respect of the identification of environmental mitigation measures and their feasibility of implementation.
- (c) *Garden Community Planning Area*: To complement the existing residential developments at Tong Yan San Tsuen ("TYST"), the area is planned for low-density developments with plot ratios of 1 and 1.5. A commercial node with mixed use developments and district open space is planned near the TYST Interchange which is the "gateway" to YLS.

5. The well-established residential communities are retained as far as possible on the plan and they are mainly located along TYST Road and Sha Tseng Road comprising low-rise residential estates, individual houses and village settlements. Low-building areas and non-building areas are incorporated in the residential zones to provide buffer to existing villages and to protect egrets' flight path respectively.

Employment belt

6. About 12 hectares of land is reserved in the northern part of TYST for storage and workshop uses with flexibility for open-storage purpose. The location near Yuen Long Highway facilitates easy access of freight traffic to the highway and avoids freight traffic penetrating the residential neighbourhoods. The area may accommodate some of the existing brownfield operations affected by the project through the possible

² The highest plot ratio for residential developments in Yuen Long New Town is 5 according to the Draft Yuen Long Outline Zoning Plan No. S/YL/22.

development of multi-storey industrial compounds or other land-efficient means, subject to the pilot case in the Hung Shui Kiu ("HSK") New Development Area ("NDA").

Transport connectivity

7. The connectivity of YLS with Yuen Long New Town and HSK NDA will be enhanced. Although YLS is located away from West Rail stations, a new road is proposed adjacent to the Yuen Long Highway allowing direct connection to a proposed public transport interchange near the West Rail Yuen Long Station area. Land has been reserved on the draft Recommended Outline Development Plan ("RODP") for the proposed environmentally friendly transport services ("EFTS") connecting to EFTS in HSK NDA (road-based or rail-based subject to further studies). Within YLS, a dual carriageway is proposed to connect Kung Um Road to Yuen Long Highway through the TYST Interchange. The Study also proposes improvements of road connections to the adjacent villages and public transport interchanges at different locations of YLS for provision of minibus, shuttle or feeder bus services and long haul bus services. Comprehensive cycle track and pedestrian networks and a scenic cycle track would be provided to encourage walking and cycling.

8. For the strategic road network, the Government would study a possible new strategic highway connecting HSK NDA with the urban area and a possible highway connecting HSK NDA with the proposed Tuen Mun Western Bypass to cope with the anticipated traffic growth in the Northwest New Territories including YLS.

Sustainable, green and liveable community

9. The draft RODP strives for creating a sustainable, green and liveable community in the new town extension. A blue-green network combining the green space network and the sustainable water management initiatives will enrich the character of YLS. The green space network is formed by the open spaces/amenities and the "Green Zone" with the largest and contiguous piece of active agricultural land and the secondary woodland preserved. The sustainable water management initiatives comprise revitalized nullahs, a new water channel with retention lake, reedbed, sewage treatment works with reuse of treated sewage effluent for non-potable purposes, and preservation of natural streams of high ecological value. Other measures to promote green mobility, energy efficient buildings and waste management plan for disposal of municipal solid waste would also be encouraged.

10. Partial decking of the northern section of Yuen Long Nullah is recommended for both traffic improvement and for revitalization of the water body as an urban and landscape feature, after balancing the diverse public views. Along the Nullah, Kung Um Road and Kiu Hing Road will be upgraded to a standard 2-lane carriageway in each direction with one-way circulation to improve the traffic flow with landscaped footpaths along both roads. The southern section of the Nullah would be fully revitalized without decking with amenity walkways and cycle tracks which would be linked to the scenic cycle track along the hillside in the LOHAS Living Planning Area.

Source: [LC Paper No. CB\(1\)452/15-16\(06\)](#)

Appendix III

Planning and Engineering Study for Housing Sites in Yuen Long South

List of relevant papers

Council/Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Development	22 May 2012	<p><u>Administration's paper</u> on "PWP Item No. 752CL – Planning and Engineering study for Housing Sites in Yuen Long South — consultants' fees and site investigation" (LC Paper No. CB(1)1875/11-12(04))</p> <p><u>Minutes of meeting</u> (LC Paper No. CB(1)2522/11-12)</p>
Public Works Subcommittee	13 June 2012	<p><u>Administration paper</u> on "752CL — Planning and Engineering Study for Housing Sites in Yuen Long South — consultants' fees and site investigation" (LC Paper No. PWSC(2012-13)35)</p> <p><u>Minutes of meeting</u> (LC Paper No. PWSC81/11-12)</p>
Panel on Development	22 January 2013	<p><u>Administration's paper</u> on "2013 Policy Address — Policy Initiatives of Development Bureau" (LC Paper No. CB(1)428/12-13(03))</p> <p><u>Minutes of meeting</u> (LC Paper No. CB(1)735/12-13)</p>
Panel on Development	23 April 2013	<p><u>Administration's paper</u> on "Planning and Engineering Study for Housing Sites in Yuen Long South — Investigation – Stage 1 Community Engagement" (LC Paper No. CB(1)862/12-13(05))</p> <p><u>Minutes of meeting</u> (LC Paper No. CB(1)1787/12-13)</p>

Council/Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Development	22 July 2013	<p>Administration's paper on "Proposed enhancements to the general ex-gratia compensation and rehousing arrangements for development clearance exercises" (LC Paper No. CB(1)1543/12-13(02))</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)640/13-14)</p>
Finance Committee	15 November 2013 6 December 2013	<p>Administration's paper on "Capital Works Reserve Fund — Head 701 — Land Acquisition" (FCR(2013-14)33)</p> <p>Minutes of meeting on 15 November 2013 (LC Paper No. FC55/13-14)</p> <p>Minutes of meeting on 6 December 2013 (LC Paper No. FC50/13-14)</p>
Panel on Development	7 July 2014	<p>Administration's paper on "Planning and Engineering Study for Housing Sites in Yuen Long South — Investigation — Preliminary Outline Development Plan and Stage 2 Community Engagement" (LC Paper No. CB(1)1456/13-14(08))</p> <p>Minutes of special meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)12/14-15)</p>
Legislative Council	15 April 2015	<p>Hansard — written question (No. 8) on "Assisting Farmers affected by Resumption of Agricultural Lands to Relocate their Farms" (P. 8480 – P. 8482)</p>

Council/Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Development	26 January 2016	<p>Administration's paper on "Planning and engineering study for housing sites in Yuen Long South — Investigation — Draft Recommended Outline Development Plan and Stage 3 Community Engagement" (LC Paper No. CB(1)452/15-16(06))</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)812/15-16)</p>
Legislative Council	2 March 2016	<p>Hansard — written question (No. 8) on "Sustainable development of agriculture and fisheries which are affected by development projects " (P. 6100 – P. 6108)</p>
Legislative Council	12 April 2017	<p>Hansard — written question (No. 12) on "Farmers affected by development plans" (P. 5986 – P. 5995)</p>
Legislative Council	10 January 2018	<p>Hansard (Floor) — oral question (No. 1) on "Compensation and rehousing arrangements for villagers affected by development projects" (P. 11 – P. 18)</p>
Legislative Council	24 January 2018	<p>Hansard (Floor) — written question (No. 9) on "Assistance and compensation for farmers affected by development plans" (P. 67 – P. 71)</p>