

Legislative Council Panel on Housing

Hon SHIU Ka-chun's Letter of 30 November 2018 The Administration's Responses

This paper sets out the Development Bureau's responses to Hon SHIU Ka-chun's letter to the Chairman of the Housing Panel of 30 November 2018 on matters about implementation of housing development projects.

The Government has been adopting a multi-pronged approach to increase land supply in a sustained and persistent manner, so as to implement the Long Term Housing Strategy and facilitate the sustainable development of Hong Kong. In the short-to-medium term, through rezoning of some 210 sites and increasing development intensity, as well as Kai Tak Development, over 380 000 residential units can be provided in total. In the medium-to-long term, various New Development Area (NDA) and New Town Extension projects, together with potential railway property development projects (including Siu Ho Wan Depot and Pat Heung Depot), can altogether provide over 230 000 housing units.

Developing brownfield sites has been an important part of the multi-pronged land supply strategy, but it is by no means the only solution to address the acute demand for land. It is unrealistic to expect that resumption of private land (including brownfield sites) alone may address the serious shortage of land or to assume that all private land and brownfield sites have the potential for high-density development.

The Government shares the community's aspiration about developing more brownfield sites to increase housing supply and improve the current haphazard landscape in some parts of the New Territories. NDAs projects under planning and implementation, including those in Kwu Tung North/Fanling North, Hung Shui Kiu, Yuen Long South, etc., involve re-planning of about 340 hectares of brownfield sites for housing or other purposes. In addition, we will advance the study of some 200 hectares of brownfield sites in New Territories North. From public consultation, rezoning, to land resumption and clearance, as well as compensation and rehousing, implementation of NDA projects requires a decade or so to complete. For the NDA projects in Kwu Tung North/Fanling North, it has taken more than a decade to go through the process from planning reactivated in 2008 to the current stage where we are about to seek funding for implementation of first phase of construction works. We will also initiate a study to identify the development potential of the

remaining 760 hectares of brownfield sites. That said, these brownfield sites are scattered in different parts of the rural New Territories, and some are located in conservation areas or lack proper infrastructure. Hence, not all of them are suitable or readily available for high-density housing development.

In respect of vacant school premises (VSPs), the Government has been endeavouring to speed up the reuse of VSPs to avoid prolonged idling. According to the Central Clearing House Mechanism of VSPs, when a VSP is no longer required by the Education Bureau (EDB) for school use, EDB will inform the Planning Department and other relevant departments (such as the Lands Department and the Housing Department) to conduct a review of the relevant site to consider its suitable alternative long-term use. Pending the deployment of the VSP sites for the earmarked use, relevant departments will identify and arrange temporary or short-term uses for the VSP, where feasible, for the effective utilisation of land resources. Regarding the suggestion to utilise VSPs for transitional housing purposes, a task force under the Transport and Housing Bureau is providing one-stop, coordinated support to assist and enable more non-government institutions in pursuing transitional housing.

As regards increasing land supply, the Government announced our full acceptance of the recommendations tendered by the Task Force on Land Supply (TFLS) on land supply strategy and land supply options on 20 February. The Government will implement a number of specific measures to take forward the eight land supply options worthy of priority studies and implementation as recommended by the TFLS, including expediting brownfield development; developing 32 hectares of land east of Fan Kam Road of the Fanling Golf Course for housing development and commencing relevant detailed technical study; expediting studies on the some 1 000-hectare Kau Yi Chau artificial islands; and expediting studies on near-shore reclamation projects including Lung Kwu Tan, Sunny Bay and Siu Ho Wan. Besides, the Government will not at this stage further pursue the alternative land use of country park periphery. The Government will continue to implement a multi-pronged, robust and vision-driven land supply strategy to sustain and significantly increase land supply, with a view to providing sustained and sufficient land for meeting the development needs of Hong Kong at different time and of different uses, as well as preparing for the rainy days and building up a land reserve to provide better conditions for our housing, livelihood and long term developments.

Development Bureau
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