

1. The meeting was resumed at 9:00 a.m. on 9.12.2014.
2. The following Members and the Secretary were present at the resumed meeting:

Mr Thomas T.M. Chow	Chairman
Mr Stanley Y.F. Wong	Vice-chairman
Mr Roger K.H. Luk	
Mr Clearance W.C. Leung	
Dr W.K. Yau	
Professor K.C. Chau	
Mr H.W. Cheung	
Mr Ivan C.S. Fu	
Mr Sunny L.K. Ho	
Mr Lincoln L.H. Huang	
Ms Janice W.M. Lai	
Mr Dominic K.K. Lam	
Ms Christine M. Lee	
Mr Francis T.K. Ip	
Director of Lands Ms Bernadette H.H. Linn	
Chief Engineer (Works), Home Affairs Department Mr Frankie W.P. Chou	
Director of Planning Mr K.K. Ling	

3. The Chairman said that as no representer had turned up, the meeting would be adjourned until representers arrived.

[The meeting was resumed at 9:37 a.m.]

4. The following representatives from Planning Department (PlanD) and representers were invited to the meeting at this point:

Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin - District Planning Officer/Fanling, Sheung Shui and Yuen Long East (DPO/FS&YLE, PlanD)

Mr Otto K.C. Chan - Senior Town Planner/Fanling, Sheung Shui 1, PlanD

Mr Kevin C.P. Ng - Senior Town Planner/Fanling, Sheung Shui 2, PlanD

FLN-R16311, KTN-R15860 – Camille Lam

Ms Camille Lam - Representer

FLN-R16918, KTN-R16467 – Chan Ka Leung

Pastor Chan Ka Leung - Representer

5. The Chairman explained the procedure of the hearing. He said that the meeting would be conducted in accordance with the “Guidance Notes on Attending the Meeting for Consideration of the Representations and Comments in respect of the Draft Kwu Tung North Outline Zoning Plan No. S/KTN/1 and the Draft Fanling North Outline Zoning Plan No. S/FLN/1” (Guidance Notes) which had been provided to all representers/commenters prior to the meeting. In particular, he highlighted the following main points:

- (a) in view of the large number of representations and comments received and more than 3,400 representers/commenters had indicated that they would either attend in person or send an authorised representative to make oral submission, it was necessary to limit the time for each oral submission;
- (b) each representer/commenter would be allotted a 10-minute speaking time. However, to provide flexibility to representers/commenters to suit their

needs, there were arrangements to allow cumulative speaking time for authorised representatives, swapping of allotted time with other representers/commenters and requesting an extension of time for making the oral submission;

- (c) the oral submission should be confined to the grounds of representation/comment in the written representations/comments already submitted to the Town Planning Board (the Board) during the exhibition period of the respective Outline Zoning Plans (OZPs) or the publication period of the representations; and
- (d) to ensure a smooth and efficient conduct of the meeting, the representer/commenter should not repeat unnecessarily long the same points which had already been presented by others earlier at the same meeting. Representers/commenters should avoid reading out or repeating statements contained in the written representations/comments already submitted, as the written submissions had already been provided to Members for their consideration.

6. The Chairman said that each presentation, except with time extension allowed, should be within 10 minutes and there was a timer device to alert the representers and representers' representatives 2 minutes before the allotted time was to expire and when the allotted time limit was up.

7. The Chairman said that the proceedings of the hearing would be broadcast on-line, and the video recording of the presentation made by the representative of PlanD on the first day of the Group 4 hearing (i.e. 13.10.2014) had been uploaded to the Board's website for the meeting and would not be repeated at the meeting. He would first invite the representers/representers' representatives to make their oral submissions, following the reference number of each representer who had registered with the Board's Secretariat on the day. After all registered attendees had completed their oral submissions, there would be a question and answer (Q&A) session at which Members could direct enquiries to any attendee(s) of the meeting.

8. The Chairman then invited the representers to elaborate on their representations.

FLN-R16311, KTN-R15860 – Camille Lam

9. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Ms Camille Lam made the following main points:

- (a) the Government often claimed that the vacancy rate of private domestic units was as low as about 4.1%, which was based on the sampling survey conducted by the Rating and Valuation Department (RVD), in order to justify that there was an imminent need to proceed with the North East New Territories (NENT) New Development Areas (NDAs). The quoted figure of 4.1% was questionable since according to the 2011 Hong Kong Population Census and Hong Kong Annual Digest of Statistics (2013 Edition) provided by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), the figures of private housing (including private residential flats, other quarters in private permanent housing and non-domestic quarters) reflected that there was a significant difference of 13.3% between the number of occupied quarters and the total number of quarters. There were various reasons for counting those quarters unoccupied such as they were vacant, the owners were frequently out of Hong Kong and they had been converted into non-domestic uses. Without having a detailed breakdown of statistics to reflect various relevant factors, the use of RVD's vacancy rate of 4.1% to justify the need for the NENT NDAs was biased. With insufficient data, the Government and even the general public would make a wrong judgement on the necessity of the NENT NDAs in addressing the housing problem. The Government should understand the housing issues in Hong Kong with reference to a more comprehensive set of data;
- (b) during the previous hearing sessions, many representers had strongly

requested replacing the NENT NDAs by the Fanling Golf Course site. Instead of responding to the representers' request positively, the Government just kept on saying that the development opportunities and constraints of the Fanling Golf Course site were being examined under the 'Preliminary Feasibility Study on Developing the New Territories North' (NTN Study) and thus no particular information could be released at this juncture. The potential development of the Fanling Golf Course site and that of the NENT NDAs should not be treated as two separate issues since the former was the most feasible alternative site for the latter. Without having a concrete timeframe for releasing the findings on the development potential of the Fanling Golf Course site, it would be very difficult for the public to consider if it was really necessary to pursue the NENT NDAs as currently proposed by the Government and it would also be hard to convince the public to accept that the NENT NDAs could not be replaced by the Fanling Golf Course site. The Board should request the Government to explain in detail if the NENT NDAs could not be replaced by the Fanling Golf Course site; and

- (c) the Government had commissioned the Railway Development Strategy 2014 to explore the conceptual proposals of new railway schemes including the proposed Northern Link (NOL) to connect the existing West Rail Line and Lok Ma Chau Spur Line. While the Government released very limited information on the NOL, the private developers had already started to acquire land from local residents in the vicinity causing some recent occurrence of violent and tragical events. The planning for the NOL should not repeat the mistakes made in the planning of NENT NDAs and the Express Rail Link by withholding relevant information from the public. The Government should not withhold the information on the proposed stations at Au Tau, Ngau Tam Mei and San Tin along the NOL, and then at the very late planning stage forced the locals to accept the land-use proposals in the vicinity of these stations. The Government should conduct community impact assessment to assess the adverse impacts on the livelihood of local

residents arising from a development project, instead of simply relying on financial compensation measures in addressing the local concerns. There would be bound to be more conflicts if the Government continued to withhold the information on development projects from the general public.

[Actual speaking time : 14 minutes]

FLN-R16918, KTN-R16467 – Chan Ka Leung

10. Pastor Chan Kai Leung made the following main points :

- (a) while it was claimed that the main purpose of the NENT NDAs was to address the housing problem, there was only 6% of land for public housing development to meet the need of the grassroots while most of the remaining land was used for development of luxury housing and other non-domestic uses. With other alternative options available to address the housing problems as suggested by the Professional Commons, the Government should not spend so much effort and resources to pursue the NENT NDAs which were highly controversial. The Government had to explain why the NENT NDAs could not be replaced by the Fanling Golf Course site;
- (b) according to the Bible, God would like mankind to make good use instead of abusing the land resource. Land was divided according to tribes for them to live together and take care of one other. However, many existing dwellings and farmland would be affected by the new roads and housing developments proposed in the NENT NDAs. It would not only affect the places where the local residents had been living and practising farming for generations but also destroy their community-based relationships and cultural heritage, which could not be compensated in monetary terms or by rehousing. With such significant impacts on the living of local residents, the Government had to address if there were alternative options;

- (c) there was no population policy in Hong Kong. With a daily quota of 150 immigrants from the Mainland, the demand for housing could never be satisfied. Without a population policy, it was doubtful whether it was effective for the Government to address the housing problem by increasing the supply through various projects such as the NENT NDAs;
- (d) many people in Hong Kong were concerned about food safety nowadays, and wanted to buy local rice, which however could not be found in the market. To enhance food safety by producing more local food, the Government should encourage the development of existing farmland within the areas covered by the NENT NDAs and revitalise local farming through provision of more agricultural land. The Government should not sacrifice the health of the Hong Kong people for the development of the NENT NDAs;
- (e) the NENT NDAs would involve a development cost of more than \$100 billion. Instead of pursuing the NDAs, which involved many controversial issues, it would be more beneficial to the society as a whole if such investment could be put to the areas with more imminent need such as buying back the Western Harbour Tunnel to resolve the long standing traffic issue;
- (f) Board Members were requested to consider why there were so many representations objecting to the NENT NDAs; and
- (g) Kwu Tung was a popular spot for various outdoor activities such as cycling during holidays and weekends. With the development of luxury housing, shopping malls and roads, the NENT NDAs would completely destroy the existing village setting and natural environment, and no visitors would be interested to go there anymore. If the NENT NDAs were to be further pursued, the Government should plan for “cars-and-roads-free” new towns with preservation of local culture and

farming activities, instead of adopting a property-oriented development approach.

[Actual speaking time : 10 minutes]

11. As the representers had completed their presentations, the Chairman invited questions from Members, and he asked DPO/FS&YLE to advise on (a) why Kwu Tung north (KTN) and Fanling north (FLN) were identified as NDAs, (b) why the Fanling Golf Course was not proposed for development; and (c) the policy on agricultural resite. In response, Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin made the following main points:

- (a) the Government was aware of the public aspiration on the agricultural development. That was the first time that agricultural use was planned as an integrated part of new town development. About 95 ha of land in FLN and KTN NDAs were retained for agricultural uses including 12 ha in FLN, 45 ha in KTN and the 37 ha Long Valley Nature Park (LVNP) in KTN. In Long Valley, 37 ha of active agricultural land were designated as Nature Park, with a view to keep and protect the existing wet agricultural activities in Long Valley. Furthermore, all private land within the LVNP would be resumed by the Government to facilitate conservation of Long Valley;
- (b) in terms of housing provisions, a mix of housing land had been allocated for public and subsidised housing and various types of private housing to provide a wide range of housing choices. The overall public to private housing ratio in terms of number of flats for KTN and FLN NDAs was about 60:40 to ensure a balanced population profile in the area. In both NDAs, some sites had been reserved for public rental housing (PRH)/Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) use to meet the future demand for subsidised housing. It was expected that both NDAs could provide about 60,000 numbers of housing units in total, where 60% (about 37,000 units) of those were PRH/HOS and 40% (about 23,000 units) were private housing. Those housing units occupied about 90 ha of land with a 50:50 split between public/subsidised and

- private housing land;
- (c) for KTN NDA, to fully utilise the rail-based infrastructure, high-density residential developments with plot ratio of 5 to 6 were planned on the northern and southern sides of the Kwu Tung MTR station. Moreover, the future Kwu Tung MTR station formed part of the proposed NOL, which was also a future station of the current Lok Ma Chau Spur Line. Space had already been reserved for the Kwu Tung MTR station along the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line, as well as the proposed high density development surrounding the future station, and hence locating NDA in KTN became a natural choice when considering possible locations for NDA;
  - (d) apart from housing provisions, there were areas reserved for community facilities such as hospitals, schools, police station and other social infrastructures in KTN. The KTN NDA also included provisions to respond to the calls for enhancing Hong Kong's economic competitiveness. About 5.8 ha of lands were reserved for Research and Development (R&D) uses which could create synergy with the development of the Lok Ma Chau Loop in close proximity to the KTN whilst about 11.7 ha of areas were reserved for Business and Technology Park along the Fanling Highway to the south;
  - (e) the FLN NDA served as an extension of the existing Fanling/Sheung Shui (FSS) New Town where residents of the FLN NDA would have convenient access to existing shops and services, G/IC facilities as well as public transport and existing road networks in the FSS area. Part of the strip of land between FSS and Ng Tung River was currently being used as open storages. Therefore inclusion of that strip of land into the NDA could be better utilised the land resources;
  - (f) while the proposed high density developments in FLN were concentrated on the east and west side of the strip where the Public Transport Interchange (PTI) was located, 12 ha of land in Fu Tei Au were reserved for agricultural uses. The FLN NDA would

accommodate about 70,000 people. The “AGR” zone in FLN was at a location that could link with the LVNP to the west as well as the “AGR” zones in the KTN further west. The reserved agricultural lands in FLN and KTN could serve as a buffer between the new developments from the rural area in the vicinity. In that connection, the Government was not intending to resume private lands falling within those agricultural zones;

- (g) about 300 ha of land, which was about half of the two NDAs, were designated for recreational, agricultural, green belt and conservation uses. The remaining half of the land area in the two NDAs were developable area of which about 30% (i.e. about 90 ha) was designated for housing development. The public-private housing split in terms of land area was about 50:50. The NDAs would provide employment opportunities with about 37,700 new jobs for the existing and future residents in the area;
- (h) given that some of the existing farmlands were located at the town centre of the NDAs or would be used for development of essential infrastructure, it would be unavoidable that some 28 ha of active farmland (i.e. 4 ha in KTN NDA and 24 ha in FLN NDA) would be affected. To facilitate agricultural resite/rehabilitation for affected farmers, about 103 ha of land in Kwu Tung South had been surveyed, of which about 34 ha fallow agricultural land were considered suitable for agricultural rehabilitation. PlanD was now working with the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) to further investigate the practicality, such as soil condition, water supply and other infrastructure necessary for turning those areas back to agricultural uses. The Government would endeavour to assist the affected farmers to rehabilitate farming;
- (i) the North East New Territories New Development Areas Planning and Engineering Study (NENT NDAs Study) conducted from 2009 to 2011 identified about 400 households in FLN and estimated that about 600

households in KTN. They would be potentially affected by the NDAs.

- (j) the area of the Fanling Golf Course was about 170 ha. The development opportunities and constraints of the Golf Course site were being examined under the on-going NTN Study. Subject to various technical assessments to be conducted, the development potential of the Golf Course site for various uses including housing development had not yet been confirmed. Similar to the NENT NDAs Study that commenced in 2008, it would be a relatively lengthy process before any proposals from the NTN Study would be presented to the TPB for consideration. Given the long study programme and that the Golf Course site was only about 170 ha, it could not be an alternative to the NENT NDAs.

12. In response to the Chairman's question on whether the Government's agricultural resite proposal was acceptable, Pastor Chan indicated that he was not in a position to answer since he was not a practising farmer of the affected area. He said that it would be subject to the views of the local farmers if they would continue farming after being resited.

13. A Member said that while some representers suggested increasing the self-sufficiency ratio on food supply from 4% to 10% to ensure food safety, it was noted that there were different views in the society that local organic produce was 3 to 4 times more expensive than imported ones which could only be affordable to wealthy people. Thus, instead of promoting local farming with subsidies, the Government should use the resources to address the imminent need of grassroots by increasing housing supply. The Member added that the statement of only 6% of land for public housing development in the NENT NDAs appeared to be misleading since a significant portion of the land in the NDAs had been reserved for green belt and agriculture purposes and half of the planned population of 170,000 would be accommodated in public housing. In response, Pastor Chan made the following points:

- (a) it would be difficult to convince the affected residents to accept that the NENT NDAs were necessary since there were only 36 ha of land for

public housing development while 54 ha of land would be developed for private housing; and

- (b) Hong Kong was not short of private housing supply. If the NENT NDAs were to address the housing problem, consideration should be given to devote all the land reserved for residential development for public housing purpose.

14. In response to a Member's question on the experience in the planning for New Town in terms of the mix of public and private housing development and how to achieve a balanced development, Ms Chin said that according to the research on the planning experience of Tin Shui Wai (TSW) conducted by the University of Hong Kong in 2008, it was identified that the housing mix that tilted towards subsidised housing was one of the factors attributing to the social and economic problem in TSW. Taking those factors into account, as well as the latest ratio from the Long Term Housing Strategy Steering Committee recommending a 60:40 public-private split in new housing production, the 60:40 ratio between PRH/HOS and private housing supply was incorporated into FLN and KTN NDAs.

15. Ms Chin continued to say that one of the themes of the NDAs was to ensure balanced provision of land for housing, employment, community facilities, commercials and open spaces for leisure activities. The planning of the NDAs had paid extra attention to provision of sufficient community facilities and a wide range of employment opportunities. The NDAs would provide about 37,700 jobs, of which about 20,000 would be jobs in the retail, services and community sectors. The NDAs were to provide a diverse range of job opportunities that required different levels of skill in order to cater for the diverse skill profiles of the future residents. Apart from making the NDA a self-contained and balanced community, the planning of the NDA also focused on external connectivity. By locating high density residential developments including PRH/HOS near to the future train station and PTIs, future residents would have easy and convenient access to public transport for travelling to other parts of the territory.

16. In response to the Chairman's query on the types of residential development in NDAs, Ms Chin said that to fully utilize the scarce land resources, most of the proposed

residential developments in the NDAs were of high density with a plot ratio of 5 to 6, and some medium-density residential developments were planned in areas closed to “Green Belt” and “Village Type Development” zones to ensure compatibility with the surrounding natural setting and existing low-rise developments in villages.

[Mr Clarence WC Leung left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

17. Regarding the query on vacancy rate raised by Ms Camille Lam in her presentation, Ms Chin clarified that according to the “Hong Kong Property Review 2013 – Preliminary Findings” prepared by RVD, the vacancy rate of all private domestic units in 2011 was 4.3%. It should be noted that for rated domestic premises completed prior to 2011, the projection of vacancies was made from the result of a 3% random sample survey of such units. The figure that Ms Lam presented was the figure from the “Hong Kong Monthly Digest of Statistics” prepared by CSD, which was calculated from the deduction between the ‘Stock of Permanent Living Quarters’ and total number of occupations. It should be noted that such figure was not comparable to the RVD’s figure. It was because the definition of the term ‘Stock of Permanent Living Quarters’ included all quarters used for residential purpose as well as quarters known to be used for residential purpose in non-residential buildings such as commercial buildings and industrial buildings, whilst quarters known to be used for non-residential purpose and those in hotels and accommodation used for inmates of institutions were excluded from the calculation. As such, calculation from CSD figures did not reflect the vacancy rate accurately as the definition of permanent living quarters was different between the two set of statistics.

18. A Member asked for the views of the representers on possible ways to release more vacant domestic units to the market and to improve the overall planning process for NDAs to minimise the conflicts with the public. In response, Ms Lam made the following main points:

- (a) the vacancy rate quoted by DPO/FS&YLE was based on RVD’s 3% random sampling survey and its reliability in reflecting the actual property market situation was doubtful; in particular, it was not sure if the survey had covered Small Houses and low-density domestic units or not. In fact, there were many ways to collect information on vacant

units such as checking a household's consumption of water and electricity, its amount of rubbish generated, or its mailbox, etc. The Government should review the approach in undertaking the vacancy survey so that more reliable data would be collected;

- (b) the Government should take a holistic approach in solving the housing issue, including examining measures to encourage the property owners to make available their properties for rental in the market as well as tackling the pressure on housing demand caused by the large number of overseas university students and non-permanent Hong Kong residents from the Mainland;
- (c) the Government should not jump to the conclusion quickly that it was necessary to proceed with the NENT NDAs. It could hardly convince the affected residents unless it was demonstrated that all other means for resolving the housing issue had been exhausted. For instance, the Small House Policy, which was subject to abuse, should be reviewed. The Government should also make use of the brownfield sites which could be resumed for public housing development; and
- (d) it was over-simplified to say that the TSW case was merely due to the high proportion of public housing development. In fact, the crux of the matter was that there had been no proper planning to facilitate the development of local economic activities and thus forcing the local residents to commute to the urban area for employment.

19. In response to the Chairman's queries on the Government's effort in utilising brownfield sites, Ms Chin said that in Hong Kong, brownfield sites were broadly referred to areas currently occupied for open storage and rural industrial uses. Those areas were mostly located far away from urban centres with relatively low rent. There were also residential structures found in those brownfield sites. There were existing brownfield sites in the study areas under the Hung Shui Kiu New Development Area Planning and Engineering Study (Hung Shui Kiu Study) and Planning and Engineering Study for Housing Sites in Yuen Long South (Yuen Long South Study).

20. Ms Chin continued to say that the Hung Shui Kiu Study had briefly identified about 250 ha of brownfield land in Hung Shui Kiu with uses ranging from port backup uses to rural industries. These uses had been providing employment opportunities and indeed an important element that contributed to the Hong Kong's overall economic competitiveness. The Government was currently investigating possible measures to address the needs of these industries and recommendations would be submitted to the Board for Members' consideration. However, the major construction works for the NENT NDAs were anticipated to commence in 2018 to allow the first population intake in 2023, and Phase 1 of the Advanced Works Package could provide 16,000 new residential units including 13,000 public housing units. Up to the end of March 2014, there were around 250,000 numbers of PRH applications registered on the Waiting List. Amongst all applications, about 122,000 were general waiting list applicants whilst about 125,000 were non-elderly one-person applicants. There was a genuine need to proceed with the NENT NDAs as soon as possible in order to meet the acute shortfall of housing supply. For the land supply through developing brownfield sites in the Hung Shui Kiu Study and the Yuen Long South Study, substantial time would still be required to undertake relevant technical assessments and public consultation as well as to address the concerns on compensation and relocation arrangements. They could not replace the need for developing the NENT NDAs.

[Ms Christina M. Lee left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

21. A Member said that the Fanling Golf Course served an important role in maintaining Hong Kong as an international city with balanced and diversified developments, and asked the representers about their views on the need and importance of the golf course in sustaining Hong Kong's position as an international city and financial centre. In response, Pastor Chan said that without the support of empirical data, it was difficult to assess the importance of the Fanling Golf Course in terms of its contribution to Hong Kong's economy. It was more a matter of value judgment, i.e. whether it was necessary to attract more wealthy people to Hong Kong, or to take care of the people in need. In fact, there were other important factors affecting Hong Kong's competitiveness such as environmental quality and preservation of natural environment and cultural heritage. Ms Lam supplemented that the international image of a city nowadays was more

reflected by its levels of Gini index, democracy, integrity and freedom of speech, rather than the availability of recreational facilities for the enjoyment of the wealthy people. The affected residents could hardly accept the NENT NDAs unless all the alternative options had been explored by the Government. For the brownfield sites, she said that the Government needed to formulate new policy to provide financial incentives such as setting up foundation funds to encourage the existing landowners/operators to undertake environmental rehabilitation.

22. The Chairman asked DPO/FS&YLE to advise if (a) clearance of brownfield sites would be involved in the NENT NDAs; and (b) the NENT NDAs could be replaced by the Fanling Golf Course site; and (c) there would be other source of land supply to meet the Long Term Housing Strategy (LTHS)'s target of providing 470,000 housing units in the coming 10 years. In response, Ms Chin made the following main points:

- (a) the FLN and KTN NDAs were a long-term planning exercise. The Territorial Development Strategy Review conducted as early as 1990s suggested studying the potential for strategic growth in NENT. From 2008, the NENT NDAs Study conducted three rounds of public engagement exercise. The planning for the NDAs had been revised to take into account the public views received from each round of the engagement exercise. For example, after the third round public engagement exercise, not only had the plot ratio of PRH sites surrounding train station and PTIs been increased, extra sites were also identified for conversion to PRH uses. Those changes were the results of the Government responding to the calls for additional PRH supplies as raised during the public engagement exercise;
- (b) the NENT NDAs would affect some 51 ha of brownfield sites including the land currently occupied by open storage and rural industries. Some of those brownfield sites in FLN and KTN were also located in the future town/district centre where high density residential use was proposed. As such, the NDA would help transform land-uses from rural workshops to residential use;

- (c) the Government was actively examining the development opportunities and constraints of the Fanling Golf Course under the on-going NTN Study. In fact, there were a host of factors to consider in exploring the development of the golf course for residential purposes such as whether the entire site would be for development, the appropriate development intensity, the provision of infrastructure and the compatibility with the surrounding areas, etc. It would take considerable time to complete the technical assessments and the public engagement exercise; and
- (d) while other planning studies were now in progress, the NENT NDAs would be the major source of housing supply in the medium term, with 16,000 housing units available upon its first phase development. There would be in total 300 ha of developable land made available. The approval of the FLN and KTN OZPs became crucial in terms of meeting the targeted housing supplies in a timely manner.

23. A Member said that most of the existing brownfield sites were disused farmland and the existing or rehabilitated farmland could also be abandoned and become brownfield sites in future, and asked for the views of the representers on the need to retain the existing farmlands within the NDAs. In response, Pastor Chan said that the possible conversion of the existing farmland into brownfield sites could not be taken as a ground of justification for the NDAs. The Government should consider reducing the development scale of the NDAs with a view to retaining more existing green belt and farmland areas. Instead of using 60% of the housing land for private housing, the Government should provide more public housing.

24. A Member asked how the production of 470,000 housing units in the coming ten years as set out in the LTHS could be achieved without taking forward the NENT NDAs and whether the reservation of land for roads in the NDAs was necessary to facilitate its internal/external traffic connections. In response, Ms Lam made the following main points:

- (a) the rights and livelihood of the affected local residents, who were the underprivileged, had not been properly protected throughout the

planning process for the NENT NDAs. The Government had not yet fully justified the selection of the NDAs; and

- (b) with the first population intake in 2023, the NENT NDAs could only meet the latter part of the LTHS's production target of 470,000 units in the coming ten years. To meet such target, it was necessary for the Government to identify other sources of housing sites, and thus the Government should expedite its review of the Small House Policy and the studies on releasing the development potential of the brownfield sites.

25. The Chairman remarked that the Government had been working full swing to identify housing sites on a territory-wide basis to meet the LTHS's housing target, and the Board had been loaded with many rezoning proposals for housing development in various districts. It was thus misleading to claim that no effort had been made to identify housing sites other than those in the NENT NDAs.

26. A Member said that the provision of private housing in the market would help to reduce the polarization of wealth through the appreciation of private property value. In response, Pastor Chan said that the speculation in property market was in fact one of the main reasons causing polarization of wealth since the land/property owners were able to make profits by controlling the private housing supply. For ordinary people in Hong Kong, by owning a domestic unit, they only intended to meet the basic need for accommodation rather than for asset value appreciation. The scale of the private housing development in NENT NDAs should be reduced so that more land could be reserved for existing farmland and public housing to meet the need of the grassroots.

27. As Members had no further questions to raise, the Chairman thanked the government representatives and representers for attending the meeting. They left the meeting at this point.

28. The meeting was adjourned for a short break at 11:25am.

Any Other Business

[Confidential Item. Closed Meeting]

29. This item was recorded under confidential cover.
  
30. There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 12:45pm.