

1. The meeting was resumed at 9:00 a.m. on 28.1.2015.
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	
Professor S.C. Wong	
Mr Clarence W.C. Leung	
Dr W.K. Yau	
Professor K.C. Chau	
Mr H.W. Cheung	
Mr Ivan C.S. Fu	
Mr Lincoln L.H. Huang	
Ms Janice W.M. Lai	
Mr Dominic K.K. Lam	
Mr Stephen H.B. Yau	
Mr F.C. Chan	
Mr David Y.T. Lui	
Chief Engineer (Works), Home Affairs Department Mr Martin W.C. Kwan	
Chief Traffic Engineer/Hong Kong, Transport Department Mr C.Y. Chan	
Deputy Director of Lands (General) Mr Jeff Y.T. Lam	
Assistant Director (Environmental Assessment) Environmental Protection Department Mr K.F. Tang	

Director of Planning
Mr K.K. Ling

Presentation and Question Sessions

[Open Meeting]

3. The following representatives from the Planning Department (PlanD), commenter and commenters' representatives 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-C5332, KTN-C5332 – Lui Tsz Him

Ms Lui Tsz Him – Commenter

FLN-C4741 – 何家豪

FLN-C5162 – Doris Poon

Ms Au Yi Ling (東北城規組) – Commenters' representative

FLN-C5248 – Ng Siu Wah Francis

FLN-C5344 – 梁永達

Ms Fung Jun Yi (東北城規組) – Commenters' representative

FLN-C4780 – 高大姐

FLN-C4923 – Ng Ngai

FLN-C5175 – Yiu Chung Yim

FLN-C5268 – 王卓樂

FLN-C5278 – Hoi

FLN-C5337 – Stephanie Luk

Mr Tse Ngai (東北城規組) – Commenters' representative

FLN-C4581 – Chow Wing Chi

Mr Yu Wai Pun (東北城規組) – Commenter's representative

FLN-C4624 – Yeung Yuk Wai

Ms Tong Hiu Yan (東北城規組) – Commenter's representative

4. The Chairman extended a welcome and 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 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 authorised representatives 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 for 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 to 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;

5. 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 commenters and commenters' representatives 2 minutes before the allotted time was to expire and when the allotted time limit was up.

6. 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 commenters/commenters' representatives to make their oral submission, following the reference number of each commenter 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.

7. The Chairman then invited the commenter/commenters' representatives to elaborate on their comments.

FLN-C5332 – Lui Tsz Him

8. Ms Lui Tsz Him made the following main points:

Meeting the Housing Needs of Hong Kong People

- (a) while there was an acute housing shortage in Hong Kong, she was discontent that only a very limited area of land had been reserved in the planning scheme boundary of the North East New Territories New Development Areas (NENT NDAs) for construction of affordable housing to meet the needs of Hong Kong people. On the contrary, it was noted that a large amount of land was earmarked for low-density residential developments within the NDAs, which would lead to the suspicion that the NDAs would be developed to serve Mainlanders as their back garden;
- (b) many villagers/local residents had been living in the area covered by the NDAs for a long time and some of the youngsters living there had started building their homes and practising farming there in recent years. She preferred not to force them out for developing the NDAs to meet the needs of other Hong Kong people as the development would render the affected villagers/farmers homeless and affect their way of living;
- (c) she drew Members' attention that when the Legislative Council (LegCo) Finance Committee considered the appropriation for funds for the advance site formation and engineering infrastructure works in KTN and FLN NDAs on 27.6.2014, many young people in Hong Kong petitioned outside the LegCo Chamber. That demonstrated that the population and housing problems in Hong Kong could not be resolved by the NENT NDAs development;

Reprovisioning of the Old People Living at Dills Corner Garden

- (d) she noticed that there were a number of residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) at Dills Corner Garden (DCG). The old people living there, though retired, were energetic and vibrant, and had arranged many activities for themselves. They even took care of their own small garden and grew vegetables there. Should the Government proceed with the NENT NDAs developments, it would affect their peaceful retirement life. There was concern over where those old people would be located and

whether they could adapt to the new living environment;

[Mr David Y.T. Lui and Ms Janice W.M. Lai returned to join the meeting at this point.]

Lack of Agricultural Policy in Hong Kong

- (e) it should be pointed out that the self-sufficiency rate in food supply in Hong Kong was extremely low owing to the Government's failure in its agricultural policy. People in Hong Kong could hardly buy locally grown agricultural produce for daily consumption. In the meantime, many people in Hong Kong were concerned that toxic vegetables from the Mainland might affect the health and well being of their children and family members, but many of them could not afford to buy organic vegetables imported from overseas countries. As such, they were eager to buy locally grown vegetables which gave them confidence. Personally speaking, she preferred buying vegetables grown in the New Territories to those vegetables imported from the Mainland;
- (f) some of her friends had in recent years started practising cultivation in the rural New Territories. That had led her to believe that 'sustainable agriculture' in Hong Kong was not impossible. However, the implementation of the NENT NDAs development would destroy their homes and affect their livelihood significantly; and

Conclusion

- (g) the implementation of the NENT NDAs development would render many affected people/farmers homeless and affect their way of living significantly. They had lived there for a long time and did not want to be re-planned under the NENT NDAs development. The Board should carefully consider whether the NDAs development should proceed.

[Actual speaking time : 5 minutes]

FLN-C4741 – 何家豪

FLN-C5162 – Doris Poon

9. Ms Au Yi Ling made the following main points:

Importance of Agricultural Industry to Hong Kong's Economy

- (a) Hong Kong needed agriculture and agricultural industry could assist the economic growth of Hong Kong. Being an organic food chef, she could assure that the brand name of Hong Kong as a gourmet city might vanish if agriculture no longer existed in Hong Kong. It was also noted that organic vegetarian restaurants in Hong Kong were being mentioned in some popular tourist guidebooks. Without agriculture, the tourism industry, which was one of the pillar industries in Hong Kong, would be affected adversely. Without agricultural industry in Hong Kong, she would also lose her job;

Consumers' Choices and Concerns about Food Safety

- (b) the taste of vegetables grown locally in Hong Kong was superb and different from those imported from overseas countries. Vegetarian diet or organic vegetarian diet was becoming popular in the world. One might argue that the Government could import vegetables from the Mainland in case agriculture no longer existed in Hong Kong. However, it should be noted that fertilizers and pesticides were commonly used by Mainland farmers which, apart from posing health risk to the consumers, would render the agricultural produce tasteless. People might also say that the hydroponic vegetables advocated by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) in recent years could replace vegetables grown in the traditional way but they could not. It was pointed out that hydroponic vegetables grown by artificial lighting and chemical nutrient solution were of the same taste and might pose health risk to its consumers;
- (c) she had brought some tomatoes grown by the Pioneer Farm (菜園農業先鋒田) and hoped Members could have a chance to taste them. They were completely different from those bought in the market;

Lack of Agricultural Development Policy in Hong Kong

- (d) one might say that agriculture was not important to Hong Kong as our self-sufficiency rate in food supply was as low as 2%. However, taking Pat Heung in Yuen Long as an example, it was reported that there were more than 100 farmers there. She cast doubt on the accuracy of that figure which might have under-estimated the importance of agricultural industry to the economy of Hong Kong;

- (e) she considered that the situation would be different if the Government had formulated its long-term agricultural policy. One could seldom find a city in the world like Hong Kong which had no policy on the self-sufficiency rate in food supply. In that respect, both AFCD and the Vegetable Marketing Organization (VMO) should be held responsible. The lack of agricultural policy in Hong Kong had led many land owners to speculate what their land would be planned for in the long-term by the Government and hence they were unwilling to lease the land to farmers with a longer tenure. In the meantime, farmers might consider it financially not viable to invest money in improving their agricultural infrastructure so as to enlarge the scale of economy;

Conclusion

- (f) she considered that the area covered by the NENT NDAs was very important to the economy and future of Hong Kong. Many people in Hong Kong enjoyed living in the rural area than in the urban area. She hoped Members could have the opportunity to tour around the area before making a decision on the OZPs.

[Actual speaking time : 8 minutes]

FLN-C5248 – Ng Siu Wah Francis

FLN-C5344 – 梁永達

10. Ms Fung Jun Yi made the following main points:

People affected by the NDAs Project

- (a) she was an ordinary citizen in Hong Kong and would not accept to be forced to move out from her home to a new place against her wish. She said that the Government had not considered the feelings and needs of the affected people before implementing the NENT NDAs development;
- (b) the farmers/local villagers had been living in the area covered by the NDAs for many years. They were familiar with one another and had strong social ties with the local community. Besides, they relied on the agricultural land to make their living. If the Government resumed their land and located them elsewhere, there was concern about whether they could adapt to the new living environment and whether they could continue farming at the re-provisioned site. Despite that the Government might give social welfare support and financial subsidies to the affected people, the problems encountered by them could not be all resolved;
- (c) many of the people affected by the NDAs development were old villagers/farmers, including some retired people living in the RCHEs at DCG. Although the Government said that a site had been identified for RCHE development within the NDA and they could be located there upon completion, whether those elderly people could adapt to the new living environment was a concern. Taking the Choi Yuen Tsuen in Shek Kong as an example, she learnt that some affected elderly people could not adapt to the new living environment and passed away soon after they had moved there. The Government should take into account those issues in implementing the NDAs development;

The Right to Choose their Way of Living

- (d) one might argue that the NDAs development would bring benefits to the existing residents. However, that might not be the case and the projects might very often benefit the developers only;
- (e) the Government should consider whether the land included in the NDAs

was really required for development and whether there were other means to meet the housing/development needs in the territory without affecting those people who had lived there for many years and had indicated their wish to continue to live there. The exercise of his prudential power to curb the filibuster regarding the appropriation of funds for the NENT NDAs advance works on 27.6.2014 by the Chairman of LegCo Finance Committee was a typical example of the Government not respecting the right and freedom of Hong Kong people; and

Conclusion

- (f) Members were requested to consider carefully whether the NENT NDAs were really needed for meeting the housing/development needs of Hong Kong. Even though NENT NDAs could help solve the imminent housing needs of Hong Kong, whether and how the much longer-term development needs in the territory could be addressed should also be taken into account by the Government.

[Actual speaking time : 8 minutes]

FLN-C4780 – 高大姐

FLN-C4923 – Ng Ngai

FLN-C5175 – Yiu Chung Yim

FLN-C5268 – 王卓樂

FLN-C5278 – Hoi

FLN-C5337 – Stephanie Luk

11. Mr Tse Ngai made the following main points:

Queries on the Responses made by the Government on the Northern Link

- (a) it was the third and last time that he was attending the NENT NDAs hearing meeting. The reason why he needed to make oral submission on the railway development aspect again was because the government official attending the meeting session the other day stated that a representative of the Railway Development Office, Highways

Department (RDO, HyD) had been invited to the hearing session on 26.11.2014 to provide responses to those railway development issues related to the NENT NDAs. However, after listening to the audio recording of that hearing session, he was discontent with the responses made by that government official;

- (b) he queried whether the representative of RDO, HyD, in making responses to his previous oral submission, had listened clearly to his queries and the comments made by the Chairman at the same meeting. Mr Tse recalled that at the Q&A session on 26.11.2014, the Chairman had addressed a question on whether the proposed Northern Link (NOL) could improve the east-west connectivity in the northern New Territories as both the East Rail Line and the West Rail Line seemed very congested. However, the representative of RDO, HyD only responded that NOL had been planned for a long time and the Kwu Tung Station was already in place. He had not mentioned whether the NOL could improve the congestion situation in the northern New Territories in future should the NENT NDAs development be implemented eventually;
- (c) the representative of RDO, HyD had mentioned that the proposed Shatin to Central Link (SCL) could help divert some of the railway traffic in the northern New Territories upon its completion. He had no doubt that the SCL could help divert some 20% of the East Rail Line traffic but the crux of the issue was that NOL could not help divert the rail traffic in the northern New Territories as envisaged by the Government in future;

Passenger Carrying Capacity to Cope with Future Population Increase

- (d) NOL was very important to the residents in the northern New Territories as it was understood that three train compartments would be reduced from East Rail Line train in future, resulting in the reduction of some 25% of its existing passenger carrying capacity according to the planning of the MTRC Ltd (MTRCL). In the meantime, to cope with population increase in the New Territories, MTRCL had put forward three solutions, namely increasing the train frequency, constructing new rail lines (i.e.

NOL and SCL) so that the newly increased population could be catered for by the two new rail lines in the eastern and western parts of the New Territories, and adding one train compartment to each West Rail Line train (which could increase some 14% of its passenger carrying capacity). He cast doubt on whether that slight increase in the West Rail Line's carrying capacity could cope with the population increase to be brought by the NDAs development;

- (e) Mr Tse recapitulated a feature report by the Oriental Daily on 31.10.2014 which stated that the West Rail Line had already reached its full capacity during the morning peak hours. On average, a passenger at West Rail Yuen Long Station needed to wait for about four trains before he could board the train in the morning peak hours. The situation was even worse at Kam Sheung Road and other eastbound stations. He envisaged that the situation would become much worse as two more West Rail stations would be constructed at Tuen Mun South and Hung Shui Kiu. It was doubtful as to whether that newly increased 14% passenger carrying capacity could cope with the passenger increase in the coming ten years;

Obsolete Transport Planning Standards adopted by the Government

- (f) the Government and MTRCL, up to now, still adopted the obsolete design standard in planning for railway development in Hong Kong, i.e. 6 persons (standing) per square metre ("ppsm") on average inside the train compartment, which was no longer adopted by many overseas countries. He cited that at the LegCo meeting on 3.12.2014, when being asked about the congestion situation of the West Rail Line, the Secretary for Transport and Housing (acting), Mr Yau Shing Mu, responded that according to the information submitted to the LegCo Panel on Transport Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways in February 2014, the current loading of the West Rail Line (between the critical link of Kam Sheung Road and Tsuen Wan West) was about 71% based on the design capacity of 6 ppsm. If a more comfortable design capacity of 4 ppsm was adopted, the loading of the West Rail Line would

be increased to about 99% for the same critical link. Mr Yau Shing Mu further said that upon the implementation of the improvement measures to the West Rail Line in future, i.e. the number of train compartments of West Rail Line be increased from 7 to 8, the loading of West Rail Line would be reduced to about 64% and 90% based on the design capacity of 6 and 4 pssm as currently adopted. That demonstrated that from the Government's planning perspective, the West Rail Line had not reached its maximum carrying capacity, and the Government would continue to adopt that obsolete and inhumane design standard in planning for its railway development in future;

Effectiveness of the NOL to Improve the East-West Connectivity

- (g) the design capacity of the West Rail Line had already reached its maximum when the number of train compartments was increased to 8 in future owing to the platform design limitation at Austin Station. Even if the Government had planned to further expand the Austin Station platform, the West Rail Line could only be increased up to 9 train compartments, which was the maximum platform capacity of West Rail Line stations from Tuen Mun to Nam Cheong. There was no scope to make further expansion at some of those stations due to topographic constraint. In that regard, the carrying capacity of the West Rail Line had no scope to be further increased both in the short and long-term to meet the future population increase;

- (h) the idea of easing the congestion problem of the East Rail Line by the expansion of the West Rail Line was considered impractical and not feasible. One of the reasons was that passengers might still have the chance to board the train at Yuen Long Station, which was the town centre, as some passengers might alight there for work and school. However, the situation at Kam Sheung Road was different and it was very difficult for passengers to board the train at that station. The bottleneck of the West Rail Line was Kam Sheung Road Station. He commented that when the West Rail Line train had already been fully loaded with passengers, the chance for East Rail Line passengers to

change at Kam Sheung Road West Rail Station would be slim, not to mention the rail traffic to be generated by the newly increased population at the two NDAs;

- (i) with respect to the idea of using the East Rail Line to help divert the passenger flow of West Rail Line, Mr Tse said that it might be attractive to some passengers residing in Tuen Mun and Yuen Long areas. Given that Kwu Tung Station was the first East Rail Line station before merging Sheung Shui Station, Tuen Mun and Yuen Long residents, by using NOL, could easily go to the employment nodes in the eastern New Territories like Fo Tan, Tai Po and Pak Shek Kok areas. Although the time spent might be the same as compared with other means of public transport like buses, the use of rail link could avoid the risk of being affected by traffic congestion. However, he did not consider the arrangement a means of diverting the rail traffic but converging the rail traffic from the western to the eastern New Territories which would worsen the congestion problem at the East Rail Line;
- (j) taking into account the above, he considered that the NOL might not be able to help divert the rail traffic as originally planned. He doubted whether the proposed SCL could function to cater for the newly increased population at the NENT NDAs as well as the natural population growth in the eastern New Territories;

Feasibility of Increasing the Train Frequency

- (k) with the aid of a visualize, Mr Tse stated that while MTRCL might argue that the congestion problem could be resolved by increasing the train frequency of the East Rail Line, the situation might not be that optimistic. It should be noted that the average time of stay for boarding/alighting at the station by each East Rail train was already shortened to about one minute during the peak hours. He questioned whether there was scope to further increase the East Rail Line's train frequency in the future;
- (l) after installation of the platform screen doors, each train would need to

spend 10 seconds more for each re-opening of its doors due to incidents such as trapping of passengers' clothes or belongings. MTRCL estimated that if the Tsuen Wan Line trains needed to re-open the doors up to 12 times, then one train frequency would be lost which meant that some 2,500 passengers could not be served. MTRCL further estimated that under such circumstances, the maximum train frequency could not be attained according to its design capacity. He as of the view that if MTR Lines could not reach its design capacity due to those operational reasons, the same situation would occur in the East Rail Line trains;

- (m) the East Rail Line could provide 240 cars per hour during the peak hours. Upon completion of the proposed SCL, the service frequency during the peak hours provided by the East Rail Line would be increased to 27 trains while the number of cars would be reduced from 12 to 9 per train. Coupling with the services provided by the East-West Corridor, MTRCL estimated that the total carrying capacity from New Territories to Kowloon would be increased from 240 cars per hour to 403 cars per hour during the peak hours, representing an additional 163 cars per hour;
- (n) however, it should be noted that out of these 163 additional cars, 160 of them would come from the East-West Corridor due to the completion of the SCL. Only 3 additional cars were attributed to the North-South Corridor, which meant that the total no. of cars per hour would only be increased from 240 to 243 during the peak hours serving population in the northern New Territories;
- (o) as the proposed NOL would unlikely function as it was originally planned, even based on MTRCL's projection, the newly increased population in the northern New Territories could only be diverted/catered for by the additional carrying capacity of the East Rail Line in the next ten years, especially the section between Lo Wu, Lok Ma Chau and Sha Tin areas;
- (p) the representative of RDO, HyD had indicated that the East Rail Line

was not too congested before reaching Tai Po Market Station. However, as more and more housing sites were being planned by the Government, which would accommodate some two hundred thousand persons more upon completion, it would be more difficult for passengers at Tai Wo Market and other southbound stations to board the train in future;

- (q) MTRL might seek to provide more short distance trains departing from Tai Po Market and Fo Tan Stations to help address the problem during the peak hours. However, such arrangement would be at the expense of passengers from the northern New Territories and would lengthen their waiting time at the platforms;

The Role Played by the Shatin to Central Link

- (r) according to MTRCL, the completion of SCL could help divert some 20% of the rail traffic of the East Rail Line. However, Mr Cheung Bing Leung, Secretary for Transport and Housing, when asked about the congestion problem at the East Rail Line at a LegCo meeting on 19.3.2014, replied that upon completion of the East-West Corridor, about 20% of the southbound passengers of the East Rail Line would change to use SCL directly to East Kowloon or Hong Kong Island East which could help ease the burden of the East Rail Line. Mr Tse queried why the New Territories passengers would not use the East Rail Line to go direct to the Hong Kong Island but opt to change at Tai Wai Station for SCL which would lengthen their total travel time;

Planning for Road Infrastructure

- (s) Mr Tse recalled that at the hearing session on 26.11.2014, a Member had asked the representative of the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) whether there was any plan to construct a new cross-harbour tunnel in the future to help ease the traffic congestion problem. That CEDD's representative replied in the negative and advised that noting that the traffic capacity of the Lion Rock Tunnel would become saturated in about ten years' time, it was the Government's plan to make use of the Eagle' Nest Tunnel to help divert

the vehicular traffic. Mr Tse cast doubt on the feasibility of that proposal;

- (t) according to the information of the Transport Department, the traffic statistics of Eagle's Nest Tunnel had increased from about 18,000 vehicles (daily average) to about 50,000 vehicles (daily average) between 2008 and end 2013. Given the rapid increase in the vehicular patronage of that tunnel, there was grave concern on whether the Eagle's Nest Tunnel would have the spare capacity to divert the vehicular traffic generated by the new developments in the northern New Territories in the future;

Employment Opportunities provided by the NDAs

- (u) about 37,000 job places would be provided within the NENT NDAs and land would be reserved for the development of the special industries and industries in which Hong Kong enjoyed clear advantages, apart from those job places relating to the retail/catering and security guard services. However, there was no mentioning about what specific type of industries would be developed in the NDAs and the type of job places that would be brought about by those industries;
- (v) Mr Tse recalled that the District Planning Officer of PlanD had explained previously that those industries in general referred to those operations that could be found at the Cyberport and the Science Park at Pak Shek Kok. On that basis, he considered that the job places to be provided at the NDAs would be related to the field of high-tech industries. However, according to the 2011 Population Census, the median monthly household income in the North District was only about \$10,000 which ranked last in Hong Kong. Moreover, only about 12.7% of population in the North District attained tertiary education level which ranked the fourth last in Hong Kong. In that regard, it was doubtful as to whether the job places so generated could cater for the needs of the North District's residents;

- (w) the Secretary for Development had once mentioned that taking into account the development at Hung Shui Kiu (HSK) NDA and Lok Ma Chau (LMC) Loop, a total of 150,000 new job places could be provided in the northern New Territories in future. However, it should be noted that the HSK NDA was located in the north-western part of the territory while the LMC Loop was intended to be developed for higher education as the leading land use in accordance with the Government's planning. The job places so generated would unlikely suit the needs of the North District's residents except those low skilled job places;

The Unsuccessful Examples of Other New Towns in the Territory

- (x) the NENT NDAs development would likely repeat those unsuccessful examples of new town development in the territory like Tin Shui Wai and Tung Chung new towns. Taking Tuen Mun new town as an example, it was originally developed to support the light industries in the 1970s. As such, land for the development of an industrial area had been reserved with a view to providing job opportunities within the same district for its residents. However, with the migration of the factories to the Mainland in the 1980s, many factories in Tuen Mun were closed down and a lot of its residents needed to commute to the main urban area for work, thus resulting in the severe traffic congestion on the Tuen Mun Road until the completion of the West Rail in recent years;
- (y) another example was the Tung Chung new town which was developed to support the Port and Airport Development Strategy announced in 1989. However, according to 2011 Population Census, it was known that only about 9.7% of the working population in Tung Chung could find jobs in the same district. Obviously, there was an employment mismatch in the Tung Chung. As for the Tin Shui Wai new town, it was a total failure of the Government's new town planning and had been commonly accepted as a 'town of sadness';
- (z) Mr Tse stated that Tseung Kwan O (TKO) was another unsuccessful new town example. Being situated in close proximity to the main urban area,

TKO had much less problems than the other new towns. However, since the completion of the MTR TKO Line, the public transport services in TKO new town shrunk significantly and its residents had to rely heavily on MTR services in connecting with the main urban area. On 16.12.2013, when the TKO MTR Line was found out of order, the transport connection of that new town was disrupted seriously for about five hours ;

- (aa) Based on the above examples, he was worried that the development of NDAs in the remote rural area would do more harm than good to the society. The Government should gain lessons from those unsuccessful new town development examples in the implementation of the NDAs development;

Approach adopted in Planning for the NDAs

- (bb) the reason why the two OZPs had attracted so many objections was simply because of bureaucracy and the 'top-down' approach adopted by the Government in the planning of the NDAs. Many important planning considerations had been neglected/ignored by the government officials in planning the NDAs. Whenever problems or mistakes were identified/pointed out, government officials tended to evade or deny the problems. Although opportunities had been given to the government officials during the hearing sessions to respond to the concerns of the public, the information provided was very often unconvincing;

Conflicts between Hong Kong and Mainland People

- (cc) one of the reasons why he objected to the NENT NDAs development was the conflict between Hong Kong and Mainland people since the return of Hong Kong's sovereignty to China in 1997. In a recently published survey report by the Bauhinia Foundation Research Centre on the attitude of young people in Hong Kong towards seeking employment opportunities in the Mainland, it was found that about 65% of the respondents indicated that they did not want to work in the Mainland and only about 4.9% of the respondents had initiated to find jobs in the

Mainland. The main reasons were that they had poor impression over the Mainland; they had difficulties and could not adapt to the life in Mainland cities; and they considered that the living environment in Mainland was poor;

- (dd) government officials should be well aware of the conflicts between Hong Kong and Mainland people but they still decided to proceed with the NDAs development. He considered that the reason behind was the Government would like to make use of the NDAs development to accelerate the integration of Hong Kong with the Mainland;
- (ee) in fact, there were practical difficulties for people in Hong Kong to find suitable job places in the Mainland. One might find that many professionals who had managed to find jobs in Mainland cities in the earlier years had returned to Hong Kong for work in recent years. That was because their job places had been seized by their Mainland competitors;
- (ff) Mr Tse stated that the falling of the Berlin Wall had triggered the reunification of Germany in 1989. At first, people in Germany thought that it would bring mutual benefits to people living in the two places but that was not the case. When people in East Germany could not find job places, they started to apply for social benefits from the reunited Germany which led to economic downturn of the whole country. Mr Tse was of the view that the story of Germany reunification would likely occur in Hong Kong if we continued to integrate with the Mainland in the future;

Conclusion

- (gg) he was not unsupportive of the NDAs development provided that it could meet people's needs. If the Government had the vision by moving the factories in the urban areas to the New Territories in the 1990s, there would be a lot of land available for development in the main urban area to meet development needs while people living in the new towns needed

not travel a long distance for work. By doing so, a balance could be struck on the transport infrastructure, which would also be in line with the principles of sustainable development; and

- (hh) he had been living in the North District for more than twenty years as he loved the living environment there although he needed to travel a long distance to the urban areas for work. However, he noted that his living environment and the quality of life would be affected by the NENT NDAs development and he had no choice but to voice out his grievances to the Government. He cautioned that the same situation would occur in other parts of the territory if the issues were not properly resolved.

[Actual speaking time : 50 minutes]

[Mr David Y.T. Lui, Mr F.C. Chan, Mr Lincoln L.H. Huang and Ms Janice W.M. Lai left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

FLN-C4581 – Chow Wing Chi

FLN-C4624 – Yeung Yuk Wai

12. With the agreement of the Chairman and the consent of another commenter's representative (C4624), Ms Tong Hiu Yan, the allotted speaking time of Mr Yu Wai Pun was increased to 20 minutes. Mr Yu made the following main points:

Hearing Arrangement

- (a) this was the third time that he was attending the hearing session of the two OZPs and he considered that the hearing arrangement was unfair and inappropriate. Apart from the speaking time restriction imposed on the oral presentation of each representer/commenter/authorised representative, the large volume of representations which were not in support of the OZPs had fully reflected that the NDA development was not well received by the community. However, the Government still decided to proceed with the development;

[Ms Janice W.M. Lai returned to join the meeting at this point.]

Setting up of the Board without Democracy

- (b) the reason why he was attending the hearing session was to let the public know how undemocratic the Board was. Members of the Board were appointed by the Chief Executive who was elected through the 1,200-place Election Committee. He considered that the Board should have no authority to formulate the OZPs in respect of the two NDAs. He was also concerned that more OZPs would be/were being prepared by the Board to guide the development in other parts of the territory like Yuen Long South, Kwu Tung South, Hung Shui Kiu NDA, Kai Tak and the New Territories North;

[Mr David Y.T. Lui, Mr F.C. Chan and Mr Lincoln L.H. Huang returned to join the meeting at this point.]

- (c) Mr Yu stated that the declaration of interest by Members should have been duly made in the process of hearing the representations/comments. However, when he browsed the register of declaration of interest by Members, it was found that 13 Members of the Board still had not declared their interest in this matter. Although the Chairman had clarified that Members had already declared their interest, at the very beginning of the hearing session, which would be properly recorded in the minutes of the meeting, he said that the public needed to know about Members' interest. Such arrangement would also lead the public to suspect that there was collusion between the Government and business sector;
- (d) moreover, decision-making by the Board without voting and with the closed door deliberation arrangement indicated that there were fallacies in the statutory plan-making system. He considered that the Board had functioned like a 'rubber stamp' without the backing of public opinions. In this regard, the composition of the Board needed to be reformed in that the Board should not be chaired by a government official, and democratic

election should be introduced to the Board's composition;

Meeting the Housing Shortfall

- (e) the reason why the Government could not address the housing shortfall in Hong Kong was because there was no democracy in the public sector which led to collusion between Government and business sector. For example, it was unreasonable to learn that the split between public and private housing development under the Long Term Housing Strategy was skewed to private housing units, i.e. only about 200,000 public housing units while 280,000 private housing units would be produced in the next ten years;

- (f) the root of Hong Kong's housing shortfall was affordability but not housing supply. According to the information of the Rating and Valuation Department, there were about 48,000 vacant private housing units in Hong Kong in 2012 while the annual take-up rate was just some 7,000 units. That implied that some 7 years would be required for the property market to absorb the vacant housing units. Apart from the above, he recently learnt from a research report published by a research company that Hong Kong's property prices were 17 times the median household income of a family in Hong Kong which meant that it would take a family 17 years to save up, without spending, to buy a private housing unit in the property market;

[Mr K.K. Ling returned to join the meeting at this point.]

Failure in the Government's Housing Policy

- (g) the Government's housing policy could not meet the needs of the public. Some examples included the abandonment of rent control in Hong Kong and the Government's tolerance of the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) to operate on commercial principle. All those would lead to the failure of the Government to provide adequate and affordable housing units to the people in Hong Kong. He suggested that many project sites owned by the URA could, in fact, be used for public housing development;

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

- (h) another example was the industrial building revitalisation policy. While the Government stated that obsolete industrial buildings could be revitalised/redeveloped for more meaningful use under the policy, he noted that many industrial premises were in fact currently used by the young people for uses including workshop, production house or even domestic purpose. That policy had resulted in the discontinuation of their operations or relocation to other premises but at a much higher rental; and

Conclusion

- (i) the Board had functioned like a ‘rubber stamp’ in preparing the statutory town plans which had facilitated the collusion between Government and the business sector. That was the reason why the town planning system in Hong Kong was unsuccessful and hence both the function and role of the Board needed to be reformed;

[Actual speaking time : 20 minutes]

13. The commenter and commenters’ representatives completed their oral submission at this juncture. Before inviting questions from Members, the Chairman made the following responses to or clarifications of some of the points made during the presentations:

- (a) While respecting the views of the commenter and their representatives, he had not said that the public needed not know the information about the declaration of interest by Members during the hearing session of the two OZPs. The register of declaration of interest could be browsed by the public upon request. At each hearing session, in case Members had to declare interest on a particular item, such declaration would be properly recorded in the minutes. If the interest was considered direct, those Members would be invited to leave the meeting temporarily and would

not attend for that item;

- (b) in view of the large number of representations and comments received, and the large number of them who had told the Secretariat that they would attend in person or send an authorised representative, it was necessary to limit the time for making the oral submission by each representer/commenter or the authorized representative. Each representer/commenter would be allotted a 10-minute speaking time for elaborating or highlighting the essential points in made in the written submission. However, the oral submission made should be confined to the grounds of representation/comment already made to the Board in writing; and
- (c) the Board would take full account of all the relevant planning considerations, the contents of the representations/comments received during the statutory publication period as well as the oral submissions made by the representers/commenters or their representative during the hearing sessions before making a decision on the representations and recommendation to the CE in C on the subject OZPs.

14. The Vice-chairman asked DPO/FS&YLE to explain if there were any traffic mitigation measures in case the traffic forecast adopted by relevant departments had under-estimated the traffic flow in future. He also requested DPO/FS&YLE to elaborate more on the split between public and private housing development adopted by the Government and how these planning assumptions were reflected in the NENT NDAs development.

[Mr Johnson M.K. Wong left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

15. In response, Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin, DPO/FS&YLE, with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, stated that population was a key consideration in the development of NENT NDAs. The intake of population would be by phases. Only a part of the area would be involved in the advanced works package, so as to allow the timely intake of the first batch of population in 2023. Amongst the 16,000 housing units to be

provided in the first phase, 13,000 would be public housing units to meet the need for local rehousing and the need of the territory for public housing. Apart from phasing of population intake, a traffic and transport impact assessment study (TIA) was also conducted. The traffic demand of the NDAs was identified, while the loading and the potential impacts on the strategic and district road networks were also assessed. Based on the TIA, it was recommended that a series of road improvement and widening works be carried out. According to the modal split of the traffic assessment, about 45% of the population commuting to other districts would travel by railway, 30% of them would travel by bus, while 25% would travel by private car or taxi. An accurate forecast had been made, and adequate buffer had also been reserved in the road and transport network to allow for some adjustment. A detailed study was also being conducted by CEDD to review the traffic demand in relation to the development schedule.

[Mr Johnson M.K. Wong returned to join the meeting at this point.]

16. Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin went on to say that in addition to the provision of local road networks, the Fanling Bypass was proposed as a strategic highway to address the potential traffic impact generated by the additional population from the future development, and to address the traffic needs of the current Fanling/Sheung Shui New Town. Similar to the Kwu Tung Station, it was scheduled to be completed in time for the first intake of population. Other road widening works such as the widening of Po Shek Wu Road in Fanling/Sheung Shui New Town and other roads connecting to the railway stations were also being reviewed comprehensively with reference to the development schedule.

17. With regard to the concerns on the capacity of the SCL and NOL to meet the future development and the effectiveness of NOL in diverting the passengers to the West Rail Line, a series of forecasts were carried out in the TIA. Further assessments would be carried out upon the intake of population starting from 2023. There was also coordination with the Transport and Housing Bureau on the railway development strategy in future, such as the extension of NOL and the facilitation of the developments of Queen's Hill and New Territories North.

18. As for the point made by Mr Bruce Tse that the capacity of the TKO Line had become saturated soon after its entering into service, Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin said that it

might be due to insufficient road transport provision but lessons were learnt. It was therefore intended that the existing infrastructure could be utilized to support the future development of KTN and FLN NDAs. There would be further examination to enhance the provision of public transport facilities in the area. For FLN NDA, the population would mainly concentrate around the two public transport interchanges (PTIs) at the eastern and western part, where public transport to the other districts would be available. For KTN NDA, a PTI would also be provided in addition to the railway station. The public transport routing and service arrangements in future were also being examined.

19. As for the flat production target promulgated under the Long Term Housing Strategy, Ms Chin explained that about 16,000 housing units would be provided in the first phase of development. The Long Term Housing Strategy promulgated in December 2014 had set a target to provide 480,000 housing units in the coming 10 years with a public and private housing ratio of 60:40, i.e. 290,000 public housing units and 190,000 private housing units. The public-private housing ratio was also adopted in the two NDAs. 60% of the units would be public housing units and would be located mainly around the PTIs or Kwu Tung Railway Station. 40% of the units would be for private housing, some of which would be located slightly away from the public transport facilities.

[Professor S.C. Wong left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

20. Ms Chin further stated that the vacancy rate of 4.3% in 2012, i.e. about 48,000 vacant units, included the units under decoration and units which were not yet issued with Certificate of Compliance or Consent to Assign after obtaining the Occupation Permit.

21. In response to the enquiry of the Chairman on the number and type of housing units to be provided within the NDAs, Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin said that among the some 60,000 units to be provided in the two NDAs, there were about 37,000 public housing units (about 60%) and about 23,000 private housing units (about 40%). Developments around Kwu Tung Station were mainly high-density in nature with a plot ratio of about 5 to 6. Public housing developments were also located mainly around Kwu Tung Station so that the future residents could be well-served by public transport. A PTI would also be provided adjacent to Kwu Tung Station. Private housing would have a plot ratio of about 3 to 4 or 5 to 6 as some of them might be located near to such rural environment as feng

shui woodland, which might not be suitable for high-density development. The provision of medium-density private housing there might provide different housing choices for the NDA residents. For FLN NDA, a high-density public housing development would be provided near to the PTI in the advance works stage for local rehousing. Areas near to the two PTIs would also be designated for high-density public and private housing developments.

[Professor S.C. Wong returned to join the meeting at this point.]

22. Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin continued to say that the concerns of many representers and commenters on agriculture were understood. In fact, it was a new idea to allow the continuation of the existing agricultural activities in the two NDAs, which was not common in the planning of the earlier generation new towns. About 100 ha of land was reserved for agricultural development, including Fu Tei Au with 12 ha of agricultural land, Long Valley Nature Park (LVNP) with wet farming at present and the agricultural land to its north and south. Their intention for agricultural use was specified in the OZPs. It was not true that the NDAs development would destroy all the current agricultural activities.

[Ms Janice W.M. Lai left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

23. The Chairman invited DPO/FS&YLE to explain further if the land zoned “Green Belt” (“GB”) within the NDAs would all be resumed by the Government and what the existing agricultural activities were in the area. Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin said that with a view to better utilizing the land resources, high-density developments were mainly designated at locations well-served by transport and infrastructure. Other areas would serve as a buffer, such as Ma Tso Lung Stream, the mountain and feng shui woodlands incorporated in the OZPs. Land within the “GB” and “AGR” zones would not be resumed and the current agricultural activities thereat could continue. 12 ha of land at Fu Tei Au in FLN NDA would also be designated for agricultural use. The long-term planning intention was specified in the OZPs to indicate to the general public that a balance of various uses would be struck in the two NDAs. Taking into account various considerations, farmlands, green areas and feng shui woodlands would also be retained in the two NDAs, apart from finding suitable land to meet the territorial needs for housing and economic developments in the medium to long term.

[Ms Janice W.M. Lai returned to join the meeting at this point.]

24. Upon the invitation of the Chairman, Ms Au Yi Ling said that for practising organic farming, it was essential for the farmers to have access to pollution-free water source in order for them to obtain the certification of the independent certification agent. She referred to the FLN OZP and was worried that the close proximity of the public housing site to the “GB” zone might affect the organic certification of the organic farmers. Ms Au quoted the oral submission made by another commenter who attended the hearing session one day before and said that the water quality of that commenter’s organic farm was being affected by the public works nearby although his farm at Tai Kong Po Tsuen was located at quite a long distance from the new railway station nearby. Given that the “GB” site was very close to the development sites in FLN, she cast doubt on whether the organic farmers could continue their organic farming practice there in future.

25. Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin, upon the invitation of the Chairman, responded that the area mentioned by Ms Au was located to the north of Ng Tung River and was used for agricultural purpose at present. It was understood that the irrigation water required for obtaining organic certificates should come from wells or natural sources rather than water mains. In fact, the advance works were mainly located on the other side of the NDA near the Fanling Bypass. Investigation works would be carried out in the detailed study by the consultant to examine the potential impact on the water sources, and there would be close coordination with AFCD.

26. Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin further said that AFCD had been supporting the farmers in the development of organic farming and providing Organic Farming Support Service. There would be close coordination with AFCD in the implementation of the NDAs development. Besides, site visits were conducted in the area and the farmers were engaged in discussions on such issues as the future development of LVNP. The potential impact on the existing farmland was an important issue and would be examined in the detailed study.

27. A Member said that the wet farming currently practised at LVNP, as far as he knew, could not obtain organic certification due to the risk of cross contamination among

different farmland through the water source. The Member pointed out that the farmers who would be affected by the NDAs were in FLN NDA but not in KTN NDA, and asked Ms Au Yi Ling if she knew any of the farmers in FLN NDA who had obtained organic certification already.

28. Ms Au Yi Ling replied that she had no information in hand but stated that some farmers in Ma Shi Po had used compost. Nevertheless, they were not keen to apply for organic certification but intended to demonstrate to its consumers how and in what way the vegetables were grown before selling to them. She invited Members to taste the agricultural produce of those farmers, including paddy rice, although they had not yet obtained organic certificates. Ms Au further pointed out that the rice grown by those farmers in the North District were welcomed by its consumers and they had no interest to obtain organic certificates.

29. The same Member remarked that organic certification in Hong Kong was undertaken by a quasi-government organisation with funding support from AFCD. Farmers who intended to obtain organic certification needed to apply to that organisation but not to AFCD or VMO in Hong Kong. Whether those farmers in Ma Shi Po would like to apply for organic certification would be up to them.

30. The same Member asked DPO/FS&YLE to explain in greater detail the landuse on top of the Kwu Tung Station along the railway on the KTN OZP. Ms Maggie M.Y. Chin stated that located at the town centre, the area on top of Kwu Tung Station was reserved for a town square which would be used as a gathering space for the future residents. High-density public and private housing would be located on its two sides. It was intended to provide a vibrant town centre and more residents could enjoy the open space at grade. It was also intended that some commercial uses could be provided along the two sides of the town square to provide a pedestrian shopping street. There would be further examination on the provision of facilities in the detailed design stage coordinated by CEDD to create an ambience for the town square. No buildings would be provided thereat. Ms Chin further confirmed that the area was zoned "Open Space (1)" on the OZP.

31. As Members had no further questions to raise, the Chairman thanked PlanD's

representatives, commenter and commenters' representatives for attending the meeting. They left the meeting at this point.

32. The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.