

**Minutes of 937th Meeting of the
Town Planning Board held on 12.6.2009**

Present

Permanent Secretary for Development
(Planning and Lands)
Mr. Raymond Young

Chairman

Dr. Greg C.Y. Wong

Vice-chairman

Mr. Nelson W.Y. Chan

Mr. David W.M. Chan

Mr. Leslie H.C. Chen

Mr. Tony C.N. Kan

Professor N.K. Leung

Professor Bernard V.W.F. Lim

Dr. C.N. Ng

Dr. Daniel B.M. To

Mr. Stanley Y.F. Wong

Mr. Alfred Donald Yap

Ms. Sylvia S.F. Yau

Mr. B.W. Chan

Mr. Walter K.L. Chan

Ms. Maggie M.K. Chan

Mr. Raymond Y.M. Chan

Mr. Y.K. Cheng

Mr. Felix W. Fong

Ms. Anna S.Y. Kwong

Professor Paul K.S. Lam

Mr. K.Y. Leung

Mr. Rock C.N. Chen

Mr. Timothy K.W. Ma

Dr. Winnie S.M. Tang

Director of Lands

Ms. Annie K.L. Tam

Deputy Director of Environmental Protection

Mr Benny Y.K. Wong

Assistant Director (2), Home Affairs Department

Mr. Andrew Tsang

Director of Planning

Mrs. Ava S.Y. Ng

Deputy Director of Planning/District

Miss Ophelia Y.S. Wong

Secretary

Absent with Apologies

Professor David Dudgeon

Mr. Edmund K.H. Leung

Dr. James C.W. Lau

Hon. Starry W.K. Lee

Professor Edwin H.W. Chan

Dr. Ellen Y.Y. Lau

Mr. Maurice W.M. Lee

Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport)

Transport and Housing Bureau

Mr. Fletch Chan

In Attendance

Assistant Director of Planning/Board
Mr. Lau Sing

Chief Town Planner/Town Planning Board
Ms. Christine K.C. Tse

Senior Town Planner/Town Planning Board
Ms. Doris S.Y. Ting

Agenda Item 1

[Open Meeting]

Confirmation of Minutes of the 936th Meeting held on 29.5.2009

[The meeting was conducted in Cantonese.]

1. The minutes of the 936th meeting held on 29.5.2009 were confirmed without amendment.

[Mr. Andrew Tsang arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

Agenda Item 2

[Open Meeting]

Matters Arising

- (a) Town Planning Appeals Abandoned

- (i) Town Planning Appeal No. 13 of 2008

Proposed Minor Amendments to an Approved Scheme of Residential Development at “Residential (Group A)” and “Residential (Group C)7” zones, 2A - 2E Seymour Road, 23 - 29 Castle Road and 4, 4A, 6 and 6A Castle Steps, Mid-levels West, Hong Kong

(Application No. A/H11/87-1)

2. The Secretary reported that the subject appeal against the decision of the Town Planning Board (the Board) to reject on review the application seeking to delete Condition (h) attached to the planning permission granted under a section 16A application (No. A/H11/87-1) was received by the Town Planning Appeal Board (TPAB) on 29.12.2008. Condition (h) stipulated that in the event that the TPAB’s decision of 25.2.2008 in Appeal No. 5/05 in respect of the originally approved scheme under Application No. A/H11/87 was set aside, the planning permission in respect of its amendment scheme approved under section 16A of the Town Planning Ordinance (Application No. A/H11/87-1) should lapse automatically without

any further act on the part of the Board. The appeal was abandoned by the Appellant on 22.4.2009 after a settlement of the Judicial Review concerning the subject site was reached between the Appellant and the Board. The abandonment had been confirmed by the TPAB on 25.5.2009 in accordance with Regulation 7(1) of the Town Planning (Appeals) Regulations.

[Dr. Daniel B.M. To arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

- (ii) Town Planning Appeal No. 26 of 2003 (26/03)
Proposed New Territories Exempted House (NTEH) (Small House)
in “Agriculture” Zone, Lots 158A and 161A1 in DD 19,
Tong Min Tsuen, Lam Tsuen, Tai Po
(Application No. A/NE-LT/287)

3. The Secretary reported that the subject appeal against the decision of the Town Planning Board (the Board) on 31.10.2003 to reject on review an application (No. A/NE-LT/287) for proposed New Territories Exempted House (NTEH) (Small House) at a site zoned “Agriculture” on the approved Lam Tsuen Outline Zoning Plan No. S/NE-LT/7 was received by the Town Planning Appeal Board (TPAB) on 30.12.2003. On 5.6.2009, the appeal was abandoned by the Appellant of his own accord. The abandonment had been confirmed by the TPAB on 10.6.2009 in accordance with Regulation 7(1) of the Town Planning (Appeals) Regulations.

(b) Town Planning Appeal Statistics

4. The Secretary reported that as at 12.6.2009, 23 cases were yet to be heard by the TPAB. Details of the appeal statistics were as follows :

Allowed	:	24
Dismissed	:	109
Abandoned/Withdrawn/Invalid	:	132
Yet to be Heard	:	23
<u>Decision Outstanding</u>	:	<u>0</u>
Total	:	288

Agenda Item 3

[Open Meeting (Presentation and Question Session Only)]

Review of Application No. A/YL-SK/149

Temporary Open Storage of New Private Cars and Light Goods Vehicles Prior to Sale for a Period of 3 Years in “Village Type Development” zone, Lots 616 S.B RP(Part) and 617(Part) in DD 114 and Adjoining Government Land, Kam Tin Road, Shek Kong, Yuen Long

(TPB Paper No. 8374)

[The hearing was conducted in Cantonese.]

5. Ms. Amy Cheung, District Planning Officer/Tuen Mun and Yuen Long (DPO/TMYL) and the following applicant’s representatives were invited to the meeting at this point:

Mr. Lam Tsz Kwai

Mr. Chiu Wing Kong

Ms. Chiu Pong Ying

6. The Chairman extended a welcome and explained briefly the procedures of the hearing. He then invited Ms. Amy Cheung, DPO/TMYL, to brief Members on the background to the application.

7. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Ms. Amy Cheung made the following main points as detailed in the Paper:

[Messrs. Nelson W.Y. Chan and Rock C.N. Chen arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

- (a) the applicant sought planning permission for temporary open storage of new private cars and light goods vehicles prior to sale for a period of 3 years at the site (about 2,731m²) which was zoned “Village Type Development” (“V”) on the approved Shek Kong Outline Zoning Plan (OZP);

- (b) the proposal was for the storage of a maximum of about 20 vehicles and four private car parking spaces would be provided within the site. A structure had been erected on the site for office and staff room uses;
- (c) on 19.12.2008, the Rural and New Town Planning Committee (the Committee) rejected the application for the reasons that the continuous occupation of the site for open storage use was not in line with the planning intention of the “V” zone; the development was not in line with the intention of the Category 4 areas which was to encourage the phasing out of the non-conforming uses under the Town Planning Board (TPB) Guidelines No. 13E; and there were adverse departmental comments on the application;

[Mr. Y.K. Cheng arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

- (d) justifications in support of the review application had been submitted by the applicant and were set out in paragraph 3 of the Paper;
- (e) the site abutting Kam Tin Road was located at the northern fringe of the “V” zone. There were a number of open storage, warehouse and workshop uses within the “Industrial (Group D)” (“I(D)”) and “Open Storage” (“OS”) zones located to the east across Kam Tin Road and to the immediate north of the site respectively. The site was currently used for open storage of vehicles, including medium and heavy vehicles, and repair workshop without valid planning permission. To the south and southwest of the site was generally of residential character with village houses of Sheung Tsuen;

[Mr. Raymond Y.M. Chan and Professor Bernard V.W.F. Lim arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

- (f) departmental comments – the departmental comments were summarized in paragraph 5 of the Paper. The Director of Environmental Protection

(DEP) did not support the application as there were sensitive receivers located to the south and southwest of the site, and environmental nuisance was expected. The District Lands Officer/Yuen Long, Lands Department advised that his office did not receive any application for Short Term Waiver from the land owners concerned and there were no Small House applications on the site. Other concerned Government departments maintained their previous views on the application which were mainly technical in nature;

- (g) no public comment was received during the statutory publication period of the review application and its further information; and
- (h) PlanD's views – PlanD did not support the application based on the assessment in paragraph 7 of the Paper. The site was the subject of five previously approved applications (viz. the first one for public car/lorry park on a smaller site and the remaining four for temporary open storage of vehicles uses on the same site). The last two previous applications (No. A/YL-SK/110 and 127) for similar use were approved by the TPB on review on sympathetic grounds, each for a period of 12 months, in order to allow the operator to relocate his business to other suitable locations and the applicant had been advised in the last approval that no further renewal would be given. As sufficient time had already been allowed for the operator to relocate the use, there were no exceptional circumstances to further allow the applied open storage use on the site on sympathetic grounds. Although the previous applications were submitted by different applicants, the site had been occupied by the same company since the granting of the previous approvals. The continuous occupation of the site for the applied temporary open storage use would frustrate the planning intention of the “V” zone on the OZP, and not in line with the TPB Guidelines No. 13E in that the site fell within Category 4 areas, the intention of which was to encourage the phasing out of such non-conforming uses as early as possible, and there was adverse comment from DEP on the application. The application (No. A/YL-PH/582) with similar background in a site at Pat Heung, as quoted by the applicant, was

recently rejected by the Committee on 5.6.2009. There was no change in planning circumstances since the rejection of the application by the Committee on 19.12.2008.

8. The Chairman then invited the applicant's representatives to elaborate on the application and with the aid of Powerpoint presentation, Mr. Lam Tsz Kwai made the following main points:

- (a) according to the TPB Guidelines No. 13E, the TPB would give sympathetic consideration to applications within Category 4 areas provided that the application site was previously granted with planning permission, there were no adverse comments from relevant Government departments and no local objection, and the applicant had made effort to fulfil the approval conditions of the previous planning applications. Given that the site was the subject of 5 previous applications approved for similar use since 1997, there was no public nor departmental objection to the current application except that of DEP and PlanD, and the applicant had satisfactorily complied with all the planning conditions including landscaping, provision of drainage facilities and fire services installations in respect of the previous planning approvals, planning permission should be granted again on sympathetic grounds in order to allow the relocation of the applicant's business;
- (b) the applicant could not find suitable sites for relocating his business since the last approval due to the locational requirement of his business and the long tenancy of land in the rural area;
- (c) the site was surrounded by open storage sites within the "V" zone, the adjoining "OS" and "I(D)" zones. Many of these open storage yards which existed before 1990 were still tolerated and they would not cease operation in the foreseeable future. The open storage use at the application site was not envisaged to have much environmental and other adverse impacts and should also be tolerated;

[Ms. Anna S.Y. Kwong arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

- (d) the applicant had tried hard to find a suitable site for relocation but no such site was available as no land in this locality was designated as Category 2 areas under the TPB Guidelines No. 13E and other suitable open storage sites within Category 1 areas were mostly occupied. The implementation of the TPB Guidelines No. 13E had posed unexpected hindrance to the applications for open storage use on sites within the “V” zone even for those with previous planning approvals;
- (e) the proposed use was akin to ‘Public Vehicle Park (excluding container vehicle)’ which was a Column 2 use under the “V” zone. The development was limited in scale, static in nature with no vehicle repair or dismantling activities, and was for a transitional period only. It would not contravene the planning intention of the area;
- (f) the applicant was willing to comply with the approval conditions imposed by the TPB, including those which restricted operation hours, and prohibited vehicle repairing, dismantling and workshop activities and parking/storage of medium and heavy vehicles. Moreover, he was also willing to accept and follow the comments of relevant departments, including the requirements on submission and implementation of landscape and tree preservation, drainage and fire service installations proposals and submission of building plans;

[Mr. Leslie H.C. Chen arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

- (g) the applicant had carried out the necessary landscaping and drainage works on the site. Regarding the environmental concerns of DEP, the site, which had been used for open storage of vehicles for almost 10 years and was fenced off, would not cause adverse environmental impacts to the surrounding area in particular where the residential developments were located very far away;

[Ms. Annie K.L. Tam arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

- (h) currently, the site was being used for storage/parking of less than five medium and heavy goods vehicles for a short period only. These vehicles would be removed from the site upon obtaining planning approval from the Board. Moreover, the vehicle repair workshop previously identified by PlanD had already ceased operation;
- (i) the site was owned by “tso tong” of which the land interests were collectively owned. The manager of the “tso tong” had confirmed that partition of the land for Small House development would unlikely happen in the coming 10 years and there was no intention to submit any application for Small House development on the site; and
- (j) if the application was rejected, the business had to be closed down which would then seriously affect the livelihood of his 10 employees and their families at the current time of financial tsunami.

9. Ms. Chiu Pong Ying reiterated the following main points:

- (a) her business had been in operation on the site for more than 10 years with more than 10 employees. A great sum of money had been invested on the necessary landscaping and drainage works of the site in order to satisfactorily fulfil the approval conditions of the previous applications;
- (b) in view of the financial difficulty of the operation, the land owners had not demanded for a higher rent over these years;
- (c) as the site would not be used for Small House development in the near future and the applied open storage of vehicles use would not cause any pollution to the surrounding area, a temporary approval could be granted to the application in the interim in order to better utilize the land resources; and

- (d) since the applicant was unable to find a suitable site for relocating the current business, the company had to be closed down if planning approval was not granted by the TPB. She therefore sincerely hoped that sympathetic consideration could be given to the application at this time of economic downturn in Hong Kong.

10. By referring to photos in Plan R-4 of the Paper, a Member asked whether the site had all along been used as vehicle repair workshop instead of storage of new vehicles prior to sale as currently applied by the applicant as it was noted that there were dump trucks, lorry crane and various vehicle repair equipments on the site. This Member also questioned why the storage of new vehicles would require large-scale repair equipment and why more than 10 employees were needed in view of the scale and mode of operation which involved the parking of only 80 to 100 new vehicles.

11. Ms. Chiu Pong Ying replied that there used to be vehicle repair activities on the site but such operation had been relocated elsewhere. The heavy vehicles on the site, as shown on photos in Plan R-4, was used for the relocation of the vehicle repair workshop.

12. Mr. Lam Tsz Kwai supplemented that some simple repairing and touching-up works might need to be carried out for some second-hand vehicles prior to resale. However, the vehicle repair activities had been relocated after knowing that such activities were prohibited on the site.

13. In response to the Chairman's enquiry on the location of the displaced vehicle repair workshop, Ms. Chiu Pong Ying said that the workshop was relocated to a site at Kam Sheung Road which was suitable for such use.

14. In response to two Members' questions on whether the applicant had made serious efforts to find suitable sites for relocating his business in the past since the granting of the first planning approval for similar open storage use on the same site in 1999, in particular after the applicant had been advised in the last approval that no further renewal would be given, Ms. Chiu Pong Ying replied that she had been searching for suitable sites in the last 10 years but the sites available were either too small or located away from a road

which were not ideal for her car selling business.

15. Mr. Lam Tsz Kwai further said that apart from the locational requirement of the business, the long lease term (normally more than five years) of land in the rural area had imposed additional constraint for the applicant to find a suitable site for relocation.

16. As the representatives of the applicant had no further comment to make and Members had no further questions, the Chairman informed them that the hearing procedures for the review application had been completed. The Board would further deliberate on the applications in their absence and inform the applicant of the Board's decision in due course. The Chairman thanked the representatives of PlanD and the applicant for attending the meeting. They all left the meeting at this point.

Deliberation Session

17. Members considered that the reasons of the Committee for rejecting the application were still valid in that the continuous occupation of the site for open storage use was not in line with the planning intention of the "V" zone; the development was not in line with the intention of the Category 4 areas which was to encourage the phasing out of the non-conforming uses under the TPB Guidelines No. 13E; and there was adverse departmental comments on the application.

18. A Member asked if it was possible for the Board to grant an approval on a temporary basis for a further period of one or two years based on sympathetic considerations in order to avoid the closing down of the business under the current situation of financial tsunami.

19. The Chairman said that the applicant had been advised very clearly that no further renewal of the approval would be given when the Board granted approval to the last application (No. A/YL-SK/127) on review for a temporary period of 12 months based on sympathetic considerations in order to allow the applicant to relocate his business to a suitable location. He considered that sufficient time had been allowed for the applicant to relocate his business and there was no exceptional circumstances which warranted a departure from the previous decision of the Committee. Members agreed.

20. After further deliberation, the Board decided to reject the application on review and the reasons were:

- (a) the continuous occupation of the site for the applied temporary open storage use was not in line with the planning intention of the “Village Type Development” zone which was to designate both existing recognized villages and areas of land considered suitable for village expansion. Land within this zone was primarily intended for development of Small Houses by indigenous villagers. No strong justification had been given in the submission to justify a departure from the planning intention, even on a temporary basis; and
- (b) the continuation of the use on the site did not comply with the Town Planning Board Guidelines No. 13E in that the site fell within Category 4 areas, the intention of which was to encourage the phasing out of the non-conforming uses, and that there was adverse departmental comment on the application.

Agenda Item 4

[Open Meeting]

Urban Renewal Strategy Review

(TPB Paper No. 8350)

[The hearing was conducted in Cantonese.]

21. The Board noted that the following Members which were related to the URA had declared interests on this item:

Mrs. Ava S.Y. Ng] being non-executive director of
as the Director of Planning Urban Renewal Authority (URA)

- Ms. Annie K.L. Tam] being non-executive directors of URA
as the Director of Lands
- Mr. Walter K.L. Chan]
- Mr. Maurice W.M. Lee : being a former non-executive director of URA
- Mr. Andrew Tsang : being an assistant to the Director of Home
as the Assistant Director of Home Affairs Affairs who was a non-executive director of URA
- Mr. B.W. Chan : being the chairman of the Appeal Board Panel
under the URA Ordinance
- Dr. James C.W.Lau : being a member of the Appeal Board Panel
under the URA Ordinance
- Mr. Nelson W.Y. Chan : being a member of Kwun Tong District
Advisory Committee (DAC) of URA
- Ms. Starry W.K. Lee : being a member of Kowloon City DAC of
URA
- Mr. Raymond Y.M. Chan]
- Professor Edwin H.W. Chan] being members of the Home Purchase
Allowance Appeals Committee
- Ms. Maggie M.K. Chan]
- Dr. Greg C.Y. Wong] having current business dealings with URA
- Professor Bernard V.W.F. Lim]

22. As the item was a briefing on Urban Renewal Strategy Review (the Review) and no deliberation was required, the Board agreed that the above Members could stay in the meeting and join the discussion. The Board noted that Mr. Maurice W.M. Lee, Dr. James C.W. Lau and Professor Edwin H.W. Chan had tendered apologies for unable to attend the meeting.

23. The following representatives of the Development Bureau (DEVB), the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) and the study consultants were invited to the meeting at this point:

Mr. Laurie Lo	DEVB
Ms. Winnie So	DEVB
Mr. G. R. Butt	URA
Mrs. Sandra Mak	A-World Consulting Ltd.

24. The Chairman extended a welcome and invited the representatives to brief Members on the Paper.

25. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Mr. Laurie Lo made the following main points:

- (a) the URA was a statutory body established under the URA Ordinance in May 2001. The URA Ordinance clearly set forth the purposes, general power and duties of URA, and the implementation process of its projects;
- (b) the Government published, after public consultation, the Urban Renewal Strategy (URS) in November 2001 to provide broad policy guidelines to the work of the URA. The URS stated that the purpose of urban renewal was to improve the quality of life of residents in the urban areas. As urban regeneration involved many complex social and economic issues directly related to people's values and aspiration about quality of life, and they were changing over time, the Government decided to conduct a comprehensive review of the URS to ensure that it would continue to reflect the aspirations and priorities of the community on issues related to urban regeneration;
- (c) the Review was launched in July 2008 and would take about two years to complete. With a view to encouraging more public participation, the Review comprised three stages of public engagement. The "Stage 1 - Envisioning", which aimed at identifying key issues and agenda items for

further review after collecting feedback from the community through focus group discussions, meetings with professional organisations, and various channels, was completed in January 2009. Besides, a research into the urban renewal practices in six Asian cities (Singapore, Toyko, Seoul, Taipei, Shanghai and Guangzhou) also formed part of the Stage 1 review. The ongoing “Stage 2 - Public Engagement” (February 2009 – December 2009) would engage the general public through road shows, public forums, topical discussions, public opinion surveys, etc. to discuss the issues identified and develop possible options. At the forthcoming “Stage 3 – Consensus Building” (January 2010 – April 2010), choices and preferences on issues and options would be reviewed, and major views on how to revise URS would be identified by organising workshops with all participants involved in previous stages;

- (d) the following issues had been identified by the public during the Envisioning Stage for further review:

Vision and Scope of Urban Regeneration

- raising competitiveness, promoting economic development and improving the quality of living environment were regarded by various Asian cities as the goals of urban renewal;
- consideration should be given to (i) whether ‘district-based’ urban regeneration taking into account the needs and characteristics of the local community could be carried out; (ii) should the concept of sustainable development be included as part of urban regeneration; (iii) whether industrial areas and harbour front areas within the district should be covered in the urban regeneration planning; and (iv) should ‘organic’ regeneration be encouraged in order to allow the implementation be carried out gradually and spontaneously;

*4Rs (Redevelopment, Rehabilitation, pReservation, and Revitalisation)
Strategy in Urban Regeneration*

- it was revealed that Asian cities used to focus primarily on urban redevelopment while more calls for preservation and rehabilitation had emerged in recent years, in particular the preservation of heritage sites in Singapore was mostly related to tourist attractions;
- more thoughts should be given on (i) how to establish a right balance of 4Rs and whether such balance should be 'district-based' taking account of its own local characteristics; (ii) the roles and responsibilities of the Government, the URA and property owners with respect to building rehabilitation, heritage preservation and revitalisation; (iii) whether the URA had sufficient statutory power to effectively carry out its 4Rs strategy; and (iv) whether the URA should perform its role as an implementation agent or a facilitator in future;

Roles of Stakeholders

- further discussions on issues were required, such as (i) should the principle of 'big market, small government' be adopted in urban redevelopment; (ii) should URA assist private owners in assembling titles of the entire property in order to facilitate its redevelopment; (iii) should URA be allowed to acquire properties before commencement of project in order to avoid residents living in dilapidated buildings for prolonged period; and (iv) should individual property owners be allowed to participate in redevelopment projects by public organisations;
- based on the results of further discussion on the above issues, the prevailing URA Ordinance and URS might need to be changed so as to enable the URA to implement urban regeneration projects effectively by adopting different approaches;

Compensation and Rehousing Policies

- more in-depth discussions should be given on whether (i) it was viable to offer the owners the options of ‘flat for flat’ and ‘shop for shop’; (ii) the current cash compensation policy where the owner-occupiers were given a higher rate of compensation than the owners of vacant or tenanted residential properties should be changed; (iii) the current compensation model was still sustainable due to the reduction in financial returns of redevelopment projects resulting from the public aspirations to lower development density in urban areas; and (iv) the affected owners should be rehoused in the same district;

Public Engagement

- residents affected by urban regeneration projects generally wished to know more about the project as early as possible, yet premature announcement of project details might invite speculators to enter the project area and unnecessarily increase the acquisition cost and lengthen the process. The issue on how to strike a balance between facilitating early public engagement and preventing speculations should be further discussed;

Social Impact Assessment and Social Service Team

- as compared with other Asian cities included in the study of Stage 1 review, Hong Kong was rather advanced in the aspect of conducting Social Impact Assessment (SIA) in the urban renewal process in that SIA was not required in these cities except Taipei where SIA was included as part of the environment assessment;
- in view of the public concerns on the independence of the social service team, the following issues would need to be further discussed: (i) how to strengthen the role of SIA; (ii) should tracking studies be conducted

to investigate whether the living condition of the affected residents had been improved by the urban renewal projects; and (iii) measures to improve the potential conflicts in the current arrangement for setting up the social service teams;

Financial Arrangement

- according to the current URS, the government's objective was to allow the urban renewal programme to be self-financing in the long run. The public therefore believed that the parties responsible for urban renewal would be forced to maximise commercial profits by maximizing development potential of the redevelopment sites which were not consistent with the increasing public aspirations for lower development density. In this regard, issues like whether the self-financing requirement of the urban regeneration programme should be continued and how to ensure long-term sustainability of the programme would need to be considered. Besides, whether the interpretation of 'self-financing' should take a broader perspective by taking into account the economic benefits that a regeneration projects might bring to the neighbourhood should also be further considered;
- (e) DEVB was rolling out various public engagement activities for Stage 2 of the Review. Backbone programmes included road show exhibitions, public forums, and topical sessions to promote more focused and in-depth discussion. It was hoped that this would help facilitate informed discussions by the public on the key issues identified, develop practicable options and forge consensus on the future direction on urban regeneration in Hong Kong.

26. A Member considered that the scale and methodology of the public engagement activities should be further enhanced to encourage more public participation. For example, road shows and public forums should also be held in the New Territories, and other electronic means such as the setting up of designated website and discussion forum should be widely used in order to solicit more views from the younger generation.

27. In response to this Member's another question on whether the Secretary for Development (SDEV) would have a discussion session with the TPB on issues related to urban renewal as previously requested by Members, the Secretary replied that the matter was being followed up and progress would be reported later.

28. Mr. Laurie Lo said that the URS Review was guided by a Steering Committee chaired by SDEV and comprised 10 independent members of different professional and community background. The Steering Committee agreed that more public, especially the youngsters, should be encouraged to express their views on urban renewal. In this regard, a designated website on URS Review had already been set up to disseminate information including the study reports, discussion papers and minutes of the Steering Committee. Moreover, an e-forum had also been included to encourage the public to express their opinions or exchange views with each others. Colleagues from DEVB, and occasionally SDEV herself, would respond to these public comments. A dedicated survey team would be stationed at the road shows to conduct questionnaire survey or interview with the public. People could also choose to record their views and upload to the URS Review website. The DEVB had also organized a number of partnership programmes by sponsoring or assisting schools, professional institutes or voluntary agencies to organize their own activities related to the Review. Reports submitted by partnership organizations which summarised the views of participants would be uploaded to the URS Review website for public inspection and comments.

[Dr. Winnie S.M. Tang left the meeting at this point.]

29. One Member appreciated that the role of the social service teams had been included as a topic under review. To enable the social service teams to be seen as more impartial in protecting the interest of residents, consideration might be given to put the teams under the supervision of a Committee duly represented by the local residents/affected parties. This Member further said that options like rehousing within the same district should be explored in order to retain the residents' existing social network. Moreover, efforts from relevant government departments should be made to provide services to maintain the security level and hygiene of the affected buildings during the relocation process. Besides, the elderly should be well informed of the supporting services provided

in order to minimize their worries, uncertainty and stress associated with relocation.

30. The Chairman said that the issues on how to strengthen the role of the social service teams and how to maintain the existing social network in the urban regeneration process would be major topics to be covered in the Review.

31. One Member said that public consultation on the Review should be carried out thoroughly and the general public should be encouraged to express their opinions. Public views collected could then be analysed and consolidated during the consensus building stage with a view to formulating the majority views to guide the future direction of the Review.

32. Another Member said that the current mode of urban renewal which mainly relied on the URA left a lot to be desired. Some incentives measures should be introduced to encourage more private participation in urban redevelopment. The URA should formulate the development parameters of a development scheme area so as to facilitate the private sectors to decide whether they would like to participate in the urban renewal projects. A more flexible approach should also be adopted by setting up funds to assist the renovation of buildings which were in better condition instead of relying on wholesale redevelopment. This Member further said that the scope of public consultation should be enlarged and there should be closer liaison with the district councils and local community groups, in particular those in the older areas like To Kwa Wan and Kowloon City, to facilitate the dissemination of information to the affected residents and other people in the vicinity and to solicit their views on urban renewal.

33. The Chairman remarked that the role of stakeholders including that of the private owners and the URA in the urban renewal process would also be a major topic to be considered in the Review.

34. Mr. Laurie Lo said that the study of the six Asian cities conducted in Stage 1 revealed that these cities had experienced different approaches in urban renewal including government-led, private sector led, and public-private partnership and the approach adopted would vary depending on circumstances. The role of stakeholders would definitely be covered in this Review. Mr. Lo also indicated that the Administration was currently reviewing the legislation on the application threshold for compulsory order of sale of the

properties, which might have some implications to the approaches adopted. He further said that the Administration had launched the new 'Operation Building Bright' scheme to assist owners of old buildings to carry out renovation works. The Review would cover the topic on the need to put building inspection/maintenance under legislative control. On the need for closer liaison with the local groups, Mr. Lo said that DEVB had been maintaining a close contact with the Chairpersons of all district councils at different stages of the Review and had mobilized some district councils in the metro area to jointly organize public engagement activities. The road shows and public forums were planned for the metro area as it was the area affected by urban renewal projects. Members' view to extend the coverage of the public engagement activities to the New Territories would be further considered.

35. One Member commented that urban renewal which aimed at maximizing the economic return of redevelopment projects would destroy the local characteristics, cultural value and social network of the area. Consideration should be given to adopt the 'organic regeneration' approach which could preserve the existing social network and cultural value of the local areas. However, if redevelopment did not commence immediately after URA acquired the properties, it would put URA under financial risk. This Member also said that if individual owners were allowed to participate in the redevelopment projects, their roles and responsibilities had to be properly defined as they would also need to bear the financial risk.

36. Another Member said that in order to solicit wider public support, the Administration should quickly implement some small-scale urban revitalization schemes to demonstrate how urban renewal could achieve the objectives of improving the quality of life of the residents and maintaining the existing character and social network.

37. One Member commented that given urban renewal was more a social mission than a commercial enterprise, the current Government thinking of requiring urban renewal programme to be self-financed had to be changed in order to achieve the objective of improving the quality of life of residents in the urban areas. There should be a change in the mindset on the benefits brought about by urban renewal. Given the social objectives of the URA, it would not be appropriate for the URA to adopt the 'transfer of plot ratio' option, as mentioned in the information booklet, in its financial arrangement in order to avoid

displacing the high-density developments from one area to another. This Member cited a revitalization project in New York which involved the conversion of vacant textile factories into lofts for artists. This Member opined that the conversion could never be materialised if the artists were required to pay a large amount of land premium. The Government should therefore consider deregulation and to find ways to encourage private sector's participation in the urban renewal process. This would facilitate an 'organic' regeneration of the older districts in a more gradual manner, which would have less impact on the local residents and the existing community network as in the case of Soho area in Hong Kong. This Member further said that urban renewal did not necessarily require a wholesale replacement of old buildings by modern high-rise developments which would destroy entirely the existing social network and local character.

38. Another Member said that the previous redevelopment scheme carried out by URA, such as the Queen's Street Redevelopment had displaced the previous local activities and destroyed the local character. Regrettably, there was very few successful redevelopment schemes that could demonstrate how the urban renewal process could improve the quality of life of residents while maintaining the existing character and social network of a district. This Member also said that the study on Asian cities conducted under Stage 1 of the Review should also make reference to some successful urban renewal projects in cities such as New York, Manchester and London. Many previous urban renewal projects undertaken by a single organization had violated the principles of sustainable development regarding the need to maintain diversity. This Member said that there was currently a mismatch in the perception between the URA and the public on the areas in need of redevelopment and hence the future URS should adopt a bottom-up approach taking into account the views expressed by the public.

[Mr. Andrew Tsang left the meeting at this point.]

39. One Member remarked that most of the issues which required further review as specified in the information booklet attached to the Paper were closely related to the fundamental issue of financial arrangement. The self-financing model currently adopted by the URA should be reviewed if there was a change in the URS. The community should be asked to consider whether they were willing to pay for urban renewal. This Member further said that the information contained in the information booklet regarding the

experience in other Asian cities was too brief.

[Mr. Alfred Donald Yap left the meeting at this point.]

40. In response to Members' views regarding the research on the six Asian cities conducted in Stage 1 of the Review, Mr. Laurie Lo said that the information booklet was only a summary and the full study report (together with an executive summary) which included detailed information on the background, rationale, methodology and findings of the research was available on the website for public inspection. Although the research team had only conducted visits to the six Asian cities, extensive literature review on the urban renewal experience of other European and American cities had also been included in the study report. It was considered that the urban renewal experience of the selected Asian cities, which had similar political and social background and were at comparable development stages as Hong Kong, might be more relevant. Additional research on the successful experience of the revitalisation project at Southbank in London would also be incorporated in the study in response to the views expressed of the public. Regarding Members' concern on whether urban renewal would improve the quality of living of the affected residents, Mr. Lo said that the affected tenants and the owner-occupiers would either be provided with subsidized housing or cash compensation as appropriate but as most residents had been relocated to other districts, it would be difficult to assess whether their quality of living had been improved. In this regard, DEVB had recently commenced two studies on the affected residents with a view to identifying the problems they met.

41. A Member said that the scope of the above study should be expanded to include the residents living in the vicinity of the urban renewal projects as the changes brought about by such projects would also affect their living environment.

42. Mrs. Sandra Mak remarked that the currently proposed public engagement activities should already be sufficient to fulfil the objectives of the URS review which was at a strategic level. Mrs. Mak also said that further effort could be made to enhance the dedicated website and the attractiveness of the eForum.

43. As Members had no further questions/comments to raise, the Chairman asked the representatives of DEVB, URA and the study consultants to take note of Member's

views in the URS Review and thanked them for attending the meeting. They left the meeting at this point.

[Professor Bernard V.W.F. Lim and Professor Paul K.S. Lam left the meeting at this point.]

Agenda Item 5

[Open Meeting]

Information Note and Hearing Arrangement for Consideration of Representations to the Draft Tsing Yi Outline Zoning Plan No. S/TY/23

(TPB Paper No. 8349)

[The meeting was conducted in Cantonese.]

44. Dr. Winnie Tang, being a member of Kwai Tsing District Council, had declared interest on this item. As the item was procedural in nature and no deliberation was required, she could be allowed to stay in the meeting. The Board noted that Dr. Tang had already left the meeting.

45. The Secretary briefly introduced the Paper. The draft Tsing Yi Outline Zoning Plan No. S/TY/23 was exhibited for public inspection on 20.2.2009. 5 valid representations with no comment was received. Since the 5 representations were similar in nature and all related to the same amendment, and no comment on the representations had been received, it was considered more efficient for the full Board to hear the representations collectively in its regular meeting.

46. The Board decided to consider the representations by the Board itself and to hear the representations collectively.

Agenda Item 6

[Open Meeting]

Proposed Amendments to the Draft Quarry Bay Outline Zoning Plan No. S/H21/26 Arising from the Consideration of Objections No. 164, 293, 294 and 296

(TPB Paper No. 8351)

[The meeting was conducted in Cantonese.]

47. The Secretary reported that the following Members had declared interest on this item:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| Dr. Greg C.Y. Wong | - | owning a flat at the Orchards and Kornhill |
| Dr. James C.W. Lau | - | his spouse owning a flat at Taikoo Shing |
| Professor Paul K.S. Lam | - | owning a flat at Nam Fung Sun Chuen |
| Mr. Tony C.N. Kan | - | owning a flat at Grand Promenade |
| Mr. Raymond Y.M. Chan | - | having current business dealings with Swire Pacific Ltd. (Objector No. 296 is a subsidiary of Swire Pacific Ltd.) |
| Dr. Daniel B.M. To | - | being a Eastern District Council member |

48. As the item was procedural in nature and no deliberation was required, the Board agreed that they could be allowed to stay in the meeting.

49. The Secretary briefly introduced the Paper. On 15.5.2009, the Board gave further consideration to the objections to the proposed amendments of the draft Quarry Bay Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) under section 6(6) of the pre-amended Town Planning Ordinance (the Ordinance) and decided to propose amendments to partially meet Objections No. 164, 293, 294 and 296. The amendments to the relevant parts of the Plan, Notes and Explanatory Statement of the OZP had been clearly set out paragraph 3 of the Paper and the Secretariat had carefully scrutinized the proposed amendments which were considered in order.

50. After deliberation, the Board:

- (a) agreed that the proposed amendments to the draft Quarry Bay OZP No. S/H21/26 as shown on Amendment Plan No. O/S/H21/26-A at **Annex B** and the draft Notes at **Annex C** of the Paper were suitable for notification under s.6(7) of the Ordinance;
- (b) agreed to adopt the proposed amendments to the Explanatory Statement of the draft Quarry Bay OZP No. S/H21/26 in relation to Amendment Plan No. O/S/H21/26-A at **Annex D** of the Paper and that it should be attached to **Annexes B and C** of the Paper for notification under s.6(7) of the Ordinance; and
- (c) agreed to the suggested form of notification of the proposed amendments as set out in paragraph 5 of the Paper.

Agenda Item 7

[Open Meeting]

Any Other Business

[The meeting was conducted in Cantonese.]

51. There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 11:00 a.m.