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For discussion on 9 January 2009

North East New Territories New Development Areas Planning and Engineering Study Stage One Public Engagement

PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to seek Members' views on the planning for the New Development Areas (NDAs) at Kwu Tung North, Fanling North and Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling (i.e. the Three-in-One Scheme) in the context of the Stage One Public Engagement which was launched on 14 November 2008.

BACKGROUND

2. The Chief Executive announced in his 2007-2008 Policy Address the planning for NDAs as one of the ten major infrastructure projects for economic growth.

3. Subsequently, the Planning Department and Civil Engineering and Development Department jointly commissioned the North East New Territories (NENT) NDAs Study in June 2008. The overall objective of the Study is to establish a planning and development framework for the Kwu Tung North, Fanling North and Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling NDAs to meet long-term housing, social, economic and environmental needs, and to formulate an implementation programme. The first population intake is scheduled for 2019.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ARRANGEMENT

4. The NENT NDAs Study will take about 30 months to complete. A proactive and continuous approach to engage the public throughout the planning process has been adopted with a view to fostering public support on and facilitating implementation of the NDA development.

5. The Study includes a three stage public engagement. The Stage One Public Engagement is to engage the public at an early stage to generate discussions of key issues relating to the development of the NDAs. Stages Two and Three of the exercise will engage the public on the Preliminary Outline Development Plans (ODPs) and Recommended ODPs respectively. The Stage One Public Engagement has commenced in mid-November 2008 for completion in January 2009.

STAGE ONE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ARRANGEMENT

6. In recent years, we have seen rising public aspirations for a higher quality living environment, more environmentally friendly design, socially integrated communities, as well as other changing planning circumstances including slower population growth and new requirements of some strategic land uses.

7. To facilitate more focused discussion in the Stage One Public Engagement, we have consolidated the key issues/concerns into four major topics as described below. They are –

(a) Strategic Roles of NDAs – In the Hong Kong 2030 Planning Vision and Strategy (HK2030 Study), the strategic location of the NDAs, being in close proximity to the boundary district, was considered as having potential for meeting strategic land use requirements, such as special industries and tertiary educational uses. With the rapid changes in the planning circumstances in Hong Kong over the last few years, we wish to seek the public's views afresh on the development themes for the NDAs.

(b) People-oriented Communities – The public has expressed strong desire for people-oriented communities. We wish to keep abreast of the public aspirations on such aspects as development of a

socially integrated and well-supported community with good physical design.

(c) Sustainable Living Environment – There is continuous call for conserving and making sustainable use of existing resources in the planning process. Our vision is to develop the NDAs into “green cities” as far as possible, incorporating such sustainable development features as low carbon emission, use of clean and renewable energy, and reliance on mass transport, etc. With this vision in mind, we would engage the public to discuss on measures to reduce undue pressures on the natural environment as well as environmentally friendly design and provision of installations to achieve a sustainable living and working environment. We wish to obtain views on the building of “green cities” through a combination of resource-saving and energy-efficient measures.

(d) Implementation Mechanisms – The extent of private land affected by the implementation of the NDAs is unprecedented. To facilitate implementation, early engagement with the public and stakeholders on a suitable implementation mechanism is required. In this regard, we have included a summary of private sector participation approaches in the engagement materials to facilitate public discussion.

8. The Stage One Public Engagement Digest including an explanatory note on the existing context, planning principles and key issues relating to the development of the NDAs. Topical Notes for each of the four topics mentioned in paragraph 7 above have been prepared to provide more details to facilitate exchange of views in the engagement exercise. The Stage One Public Engagement Digest and Topical Notes have been distributed to Members for reference.

9. The Stage One Public Engagement is an envisioning process aiming at arousing early public discussion on the key issues relating to the NDAs. At this stage, no recommendation on the use and intensity of development is set out in the public engagement materials since the NDA proposals are yet to be formulated. On the basis of on-going studies and analysis and taking into account the public comments received during the Stage One Public Engagement, key development parameters would be formulated and translated into the Preliminary ODPs. We will then consult the public on the Preliminary ODPs, with detailed development parameters and

three-dimensional illustrations of the design concepts to be provided in the Stage Two Public Engagement.

STAGE ONE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

10. We have consulted the Town Planning Board on 14 November 2008, the Development Panel of the Legislative Council on 25 November 2008 and the Planning Sub-committee of Land and Building Advisory Committee on 27 November 2008. We have also briefed other relevant Boards/Committees, including the North District Council, the relevant Rural Committees and Village Committee. Briefing sessions have also been arranged for the Hong Kong Institute of Planners, the Heung Yee Kuk and the Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong as per their invitations. A community workshop with focus group discussions on the four concerned topics was also held on 20 December 2008.

11. There is general support from the public for sustainable living environment, environmentally friendly design and striking a balance between nature/landscape conservation and land use demands. Some locals have expressed concerns on the development restrictions infringing the landowners' property rights and the risk of bird flu brought about by ecological conservation areas.

ADVICE SOUGHT

12. Members are invited to give views on the planning for development of NDAs at Kwu Tung North, Fanling North and Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling, in particular on the four focus topics set out in paragraph 7 above.

Planning Department
Civil Engineering and Development Department
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