

Summary of Minutes of Meeting of Islands District Council

Date : 1 September 2014 (Monday)
Time : 2:00 p.m.
Venue : Conference Room, Islands District Council, 14/F., Harbour Building,
38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong.

I. Tung Chung New Town Extension Study Stage III Public Engagement - Draft Recommended Outline Development Plan

The representative of the Development Bureau gave a brief introduction of Tung Chung New Town Extension Study Stage III Public Engagement - Draft Recommended Outline Development Plan, and a representative of the Consultant briefed the meeting of the contents of the paper by powerpoint.

A member gave his opinions as follows:

- (a) He welcomed the Planning Department's decision of not pursuing further the proposal of reclaiming land in Tung Chung West. He enquired the reason for not reserving land for institution or community uses in the Draft Recommended Outline Development Plan (RODP). He said that with the increase in population, there would be great demand for community facilities, and some non-governmental and religious organizations were interested in setting up offices in Tung Chung.
- (b) There was an imbalance of land usage as residential lands made up 30%, whereas commercial and economic comprehensive development area made up only 7%. He hoped that more land would be reserved for commercial usage.

Another member gave his opinions as follows:

- (a) He was pleased that proposals raised by residents in Stage II Public Engagement were accepted, including the construction of railway stations in Tung Chung East and West. Residents were pleased with the proposed location of the railway station in Tung Chung West.

- (b) Many lands were planned for educational usage but only a few were planned for institution or community usage. He was concerned that religious or social welfare organization(s) might not have adequate land to provide services.
- (c) As land had been reserved for the construction of a sports centre in Tung Chung Area 39, he thus proposed moving the civic centre in Tung Chung Town Centre to a location in Tung Chung West reserved for the construction of a sports centre. The relocation would be favourable for the overall development of Tung Chung. Or else most large scale cultural and leisure facilities would be located in the Town Centre or Tung Chung East.
- (d) He proposed the construction of a seaside promenade from Tung Chung New Development Ferry Pier to Tung Chung Old Pier to connect Tung Chung West and Tung Chung Town Centre.

One member gave his views as follows:

- (a) He welcomed the Planning Department's decision of not reclaiming land in Tung Chung West, and instead building houses on the slopes.
- (b) He proposed more land be planned for community facilities in Tung Chung West. As there were already clinics in North Lantau Hospital, he enquired whether there was need to set up another clinic or health centre in the area. He proposed the construction of a government complex with market, sports stadium and community hall and believed that it would be welcomed by residents of Tung Chung West.
- (c) As planning of Tung Chung West would not involve reclamation, he proposed early implementation of some project items such as Town Park and construction of houses in West Valley.

A member gave her opinions as follows:

- (a) She welcomed the Government's decision to reserve land for post-secondary college and schools, and enquired whether the post-secondary college being planned would be a vocational training school to tie in with future development in Tung Chung, such as hotel, tourist, retail and catering industries. Many lands were planned for educational usages and she hoped that the capacity of existing schools

would be taken into account first before planning new schools.

- (b) She concurred with the idea of planning more commercial lands in Tung Chung North to provide more employment opportunities, so that residents would not have to commute outside the district for work.
- (c) She was concerned whether MTR Tung Chung Line would have the capacity to cope with future development in Tung Chung, as its current service capacity was almost fully utilized.

A member gave his views as follows:

- (a) He hoped that the Planning Department would reserve more land by the two sides of the water channel in Tung Chung West for village type development.
- (b) He hoped the design of the proposed Town Park would be mindful of existing graves and private lands.
- (c) The Government should improve country roads in the vicinity if it implemented the construction of low-density residential areas near the Town Park.

The Vice-chairlady gave her opinions as follows:

- (a) She was pleased that the Planning Department and Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) had taken into account opinions collected in Stage II Public Engagement and not to pursue further the proposal of reclamation in Tung Chung West.
- (b) She proposed the construction of a footway and a cycling track at the seaside promenade linking Tung Chung Town Centre and Tung Chung old areas. She hoped that the Government would make use of the planning to provide a complete cycling network to improve transport between the New Town and the rural areas. She also proposed the construction of a velodrome park.
- (c) She proposed that the Town Park should be built on the slope and that a viewing platform be constructed.

- (d) She enquired whether some project items could be implemented first, such as revitalization of Ma Wan Chung, improvement of drainage system, maintenance of country roads, etc.
- (e) She hoped that the Planning Department would re-assess the zoning of green belts so as to release land for housing development.
- (f) She was also concerned of whether the capacity of MTR Tung Chung Line would be able to meet future demand.
- (g) The population of Tung Chung would meet the requirement of building a railway station after the public housing in Area 39 was completed. She hoped that the construction of railway station would be implemented first.
- (h) She enquired whether it would be possible to construct leisure and cultural facilities at the same time as the implementation of the housing project in Area 39, so as to alleviate the shortage of facilities in the area. She concurred with the proposal raised previously by another member to move the theatre or civic centre in Tung Chung Town Centre to Tung Chung West, so that the lands in Area 1, 2, and 3 in the Town Centre could be used for underground parking or commercial purposes.
- (i) She queried whether there would be need for so many schools as the population was aging, and that many existing schools were already experiencing under-enrollment. She proposed using the land for community facilities.
- (j) She also proposed that the green belt in Area 52 in Tung Chung be used for commercial purposes.
- (k) The Planning Department should maintain contact with indigenous residents on the planning of Tung Chung West.
- (l) She hoped that the Planning Department would continue to collect opinions from residents in Stage III Public Engagement.

A member gave his views as follows:

- (a) He was pleased that the current planning had accepted some proposals raised earlier by members, such as provision of local employment opportunities.
- (b) He estimated that there would around 110 000 new jobs in the area and that many people would have to commute to work from other districts. He worried that there might be shortage of manpower.
- (c) He urged the Government to consider the distribution of population and planning of transport facilities in Tung Chung in the future, and whether MTR Tung Chung Line would be adequate to cope with future demand.

A member gave his opinions as follows:

- (a) He proposed the construction of a road near Wong Ka Wai to connect Chung Yat Street and Tung Chung Road.
- (b) He enquired how many underwater caverns there were in the proposed reclamation area, and whether there would be a road connecting Cheung Tung Road with places such as Pak Ngan Heung, Ngau Kwu Long and Tai Ho.
- (c) He enquired about the function of the proposed Tai Ho Interchange, and why Tai Ho was selected to be site for reclamation.

The representative of the Planning Department responded as follows:

- (a) He was appreciative of the support and opinions offered by members and the local people.
- (b) The current RODP was prepared based on opinions collected in Stage II Public Engagement in 2013. The planning proposal of Tung Chung East was a hybrid approach of the two themes offered for public comment in Stage II, namely Livable Town and Economic Vibrancy. Results of Stage II Public Engagement showed that the support for the two themes were very close. Thus the specialties of the two approaches were rolled into one in the current proposal.

- (c) It was the intention of the research team to provide more land for commercial usage. There would be 500 000 square metres of office space and 100 000 square metres for retailing businesses proposed in the RODP. More commercial spaces would be provided in development projects nearby, such as the Airport's North Commercial District and Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities of Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge.
- (d) With reference to the concern about adequacy of future manpower population, the research team had intended to make optimum use of land to provide more housing. With the reclamation proposal of Tung Chung West abandoned, "stepped height profile" was adopted for residential planning in Tung Chung East in order to maintain the overall planning concept.
- (e) Some members were concerned that there might be a lack of land for institution or community usage. Relevant government departments had been consulted for demand of land for such purposes, and the current proposals concerning schools, sports stadia and clinics were made after discussion with the concerned departments. The research team proposed setting aside floor spaces in public housing projects for institution or community usage. If concrete proposals were received, the research team would discuss with relevant departments and decide whether land should be reserved for religious purpose. If necessary and based on actual circumstances, appropriate adjustment to the RODP could be suggested.
- (f) The research team would carefully study the proposal of moving the civic centre in Tung Chung Area 1 to Tung Chung West.
- (g) Land was reserved for post-secondary colleges as a response to opinions gathered in Stage II Public Engagement, and also a result of discussions held with the Education Bureau. There had yet been any concrete proposal concerning future operations. Local consultation would be conducted when plans were to be implemented. The Planning Department would discuss with the Education Bureau to review the educational land usage to see if some land would be released for other uses.
- (h) The original proposal of cycling track was premised on the Tung Chung West reclamation, which would not be pursued further. If a

footway or a cycling track was to be built along the seaside, the impact on environment had to be considered. The current planning was to link Tung Chung East and West by the Town Park.

- (i) Issues of graves and burial sites would be dealt with when detailed planning and design was to be conducted. Impact on graves and private properties would be kept minimum.
- (j) Cycling track was a major item in the current planning exercise. It was initially proposed that a track of seven kilometres would be provided. Apart from pedestrian facilities, the research team would study making use of the track as a link for Tung Chung area.
- (k) Some members were concerned that private properties beside Tung Chung River would be frozen. The current proposal was preliminary and the Town Planning Board had all along regarded farming as a permitted usage. The research team would be mindful of the environment and would try to avoid affecting land for residential usage.
- (l) The research team found that Tung Chung River had certain ecological values. The analysis was concurred by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department. Studies needed to be conducted for housing development proposed nearby.

The representative of the CEDD responded as follows:

- (a) Upon the conclusion of Stage III Public Engagement, CEDD would study and assess with the Consultant on the construction of facilities in phases, taking into consideration factors such as the increase in population.
- (b) The current planning aimed at providing employment in Tung Chung as much as possible. The Consultant had assessed the carrying capacity of the MTR Tung Chung Line and believed that even if the future population of Tung Chung should reach 260 000, the existing railway line would be able to cope with the demand.
- (c) The proposed road P1 would not involve any construction work in Tai Ho. It was still not yet determined as to whether reclamation would be needed.

- (d) CEDD would study the proposal of building a road to connect Cheung Tung Road in the next stage.
- (e) The proposal of building a road to connect Chung Yat Street with Tung Chung Road would involve the public housing site of the Housing Department in Tung Chung Area 39. There would be a road south of Area 39 connecting the rural areas with Tung Chung Road.

A representative of the Consultant responded as follows:

- (a) There was still capacity for the MTR Tung Chung Line to increase its frequencies and as some works had yet been completed at Hong Kong Station as originally designed, there was room for increased frequencies. Based on estimated data and information of 2031, the Consultant believed that the carrying capacity of Tung Chung Line would be able to cope with future demand.
- (b) After referring to ground and soil investigation information obtained, the Consultant believed that reclamation at Tung Chung East would come across some technical difficulties concerning caverns. However, these difficulties could be overcome technically.
- (c) The Consultant would study the proposal of connecting Chung Yat Street with Tung Chung Road with the Housing Department.

Another representative of the Consultant responded as follows:

- (a) Members proposed in Stage II Public Engagement to reserve land for post-secondary education to enhance employment prospect for residents. In the current planning, low and medium density residential sites would be provided, as well as high density public and private housing.
- (b) Commercial lands being proposed would provide commercial buildings, regional shopping malls, retailing businesses and hotels, and thus it was believed that there would be diversified employment opportunities. With jobs brought about by the “bridgehead economy” of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Boundary Crossing Facilities and the Airport’s North Commercial District, it was believed that

people of various levels of qualifications and training could be employed within the area.

The Vice-chairlady said that facilities at Hong Kong Station should be enhanced as early as possible. The construction of seaside promenade was crucial to the revitalization of Ma Wan Chung and connection of Tung Chung East and West, and it should be built by making use of environmentally-friendly materials. She also hoped that the two sides of Tung Chung River could be used for housing development, and urged to Government to re-consider the proposal.

A member said that the Housing Department revealed that the public housing development in Tung Chung Area could be downsized to facilitate the construction of a road linking Chung Yat Street with Tung Chung Road. He also worried that the road from Ma Wan Chung to Lung Tseng Tau would not be able to cope with the increase of traffic brought about by the increase of population in Tung Chung Area 39. He urged the Government to open Tung Chung Road to the public.

Another member said that the traffic of Tung Chung Road had increased, and it would increase further with the future construction of houses in Tung Chung Area 39. He urged the Government to build a road connecting Chung Yat Street with Tung Chung Road to ease traffic congestion. He was also concerned that the caverns might have impact on the foundation of houses built on reclaimed land.

A member said that with the increase of mid to high level jobs in Tung Chung in the future, there would be a strong demand for housing in the area. Thus the Government should set aside land for residential purposes.

II. Land Use Review Rezoning and Home Ownership Scheme Development at Tung Chung Area 27

A member welcomed the Government's initiative to increase housing supply. He said that there were vacant parking spaces in Yat Tung Estate nearby, and proposed that the underground carpark as planned in the Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) at Tung Chung Area 27 could be used as a shopping mall. He also proposed that the land planned to be used for Phase II Development of North Lantau Hospital be temporarily converted into a soccer pitch.

Another member also welcomed the subsidized housing development plan. The Housing Department had made an assessment that the HOS project would not affect the existing road network and public transportation system. He was concerned

that no. 38 bus route would not be able to cope with the future population increase. Members had all along urged the Government to improve the transportation ancillary facilities in the area, such as introduction of minibus service. He said that improvements should be effected as soon as possible. He had reservation about the proposal of converting the land of Phase II Development of North Lantau Hospital into a soccer pitch.

While supporting the HOS project, a member did not agree that it would have no impact on the traffic in the area. He said that roads in Area 27 were narrow and traffic was already busy. There would be an increase of traffic such as heavy vehicles in the construction period, and he urged the Government to implement appropriate measures. He said that there was a need for providing underground parking spaces for future inhabitants of the HOS development and that parking facilities nearby would not be adequate for the increased population. He hoped that the Government would provide land in the vicinity of Ma Wan New Village for residents to organize activities on festive occasions.

A member supplemented that the construction of a temporary soccer pitch would take about six months, and the land would be returned as and when Phase II Development of North Lantau Hospital was to be implemented.

The Vice-chairlady supported the HOS project and urged the Government to conduct proper planning of the roads in the area. Adequate parking spaces had to be provided in Area 27 for HOS residents. She also hoped that the area outside Tung Chung Road soccer pitch would be beautified and used as public resting facilities, and not to be included into the HOS project. The youth had great demand for sporting grounds and she hoped that construction of recreational facilities in Area 39 would commence as early as possible.

A member concurred with the view that there was a need for parking spaces and that could avoid illegal parking on streets.

A representative of the Housing Department responded as follows:

- (a) Parking spaces would be provided in accordance with Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines.
- (b) The housing development in Area 27 was a Housing Department project, and thus the carpark in Yat Tung Estate under the management of the Link could not be used by the Department.

- (c) The Housing Department learnt from the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) that there was adequate space on the recreational land in Tung Chung Area 39 for the relocation of Tung Chung Road soccer pitch, as well as for the construction of an indoor stadium.

The representative of the Development Bureau said that the Bureau would discuss with the Food and Health Bureau about the proposal of using the land for Phase II Development of North Lantau Hospital temporarily as a soccer pitch. After making reference to the timetable of the Hospital Phase II development, the Development Bureau would study the temporary usage of the land with the Planning Department and the Lands Department as appropriate.

The representative of LCSD said that there were currently two hard-surface soccer pitches in Tung Chung. If the plan for relocation of the Tung Chung Road soccer pitch was abandoned as a result of the housing project in Area 27, there would not be adequate land in Tung Chung for relocation of the soccer pitch for a relatively long period of time. LCSD was open to the proposal of using the Hospital land for temporary soccer pitch. However, the land had to be returned upon the implementation of the Hospital Phase II Development. In that case, there would only be one soccer pitch in Tung Chung and its location was relatively remote. The recreational land in Area 39 was adequate to build a five-a-side soccer pitch, apart from an indoor stadium. He requested members' prudent consideration of the proposal to relocate the soccer pitch, as the construction of indoor stadium would take a longer time.

The Chairman said that most members supported the housing project and hoped that it would be implemented the soonest possible.

III. Question on progress of Cheung Chau Sewage Collection Facilities

The representative of the Drainage Services Department (DSD) said that a consensus had been reached between DSD and CEDD to incorporate CEDD's drainage works in 197CL public works project into 354DS public works programme. DSD had almost finished the design work of the 354DS programme and CEDD was reviewing the design of the 197CL drainage works. Works could begin when the complete design was handed over to DSD. The 354DS programme would include the improvement of existing facilities of Cheung Chau Sewage Treatment Works, and DSD was conducting preliminary works.

The representative of CEDD supplemented that the Department was reviewing the design of the 197CL drainage works. It was anticipated that the complete design would be handed over to DSD at the end of the current year, so that works could be jointly implemented with 354DS.

A member enquired whether works could begin in 2016 if CEDD would hand over the design to DSD at the end of the current year. He also enquired whether gazetting of the project would be divided into four parts, and what the contents and timetable of each part would be.

The representative of DSD said that the Department had discussed with the District Lands Office, Islands, and asked the latter to gazette works not involving CEDD's village sewerage first. Information of the 354DS programme would be provided after the meeting.

Another member said that some sewerage improvement works had been completed on Cheung Chau, but residents were not able to connect with the facilities. As far as she understood it, some sewerage had yet been laid at sections of Hillside Road and she asked how DSD would deal with it.

A member enquired when Improvement of Tai O Sewerage System would begin.

The representative of DSD responded as follows:

- (a) The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) was responsible for the connection with public sewerage facilities, and residents could contact EPD when they came across such difficulties. The DSD and EPD would jointly provide assistance to residents in that respect.
- (b) In some localities of Cheung Chau, sewerage could yet been laid due to constraint of local geographical features or technical difficulties. The Department was exploring means to overcome the difficulties.
- (c) Preliminary works of Improvement of Tai O Sewerage System were being conducted. Gazetting of the works was being discussed with the District Lands Office, Islands.

A member was not satisfied with the slow progress of the Improvement of Tai O Sewerage System, and he also enquired whether remote villages would be included into the project.

A member said that some residents were levied with sewage charge despite not having connected to the facilities. He also requested DSD to follow up on the issue of foul smell coming from drains in Cheung Chau Town Centre.

The representative of DSD responded as follows:

- (a) DSD had all along discussed with the Consultant and relevant government departments to improve the basic design of Improvement of Tai O Sewerage System, and would implement the works as soon as possible.
- (b) If connections had not been made with the public sewerage system, no sewage charge should be levied. Members were welcome to inform the Department of wrongful charges.
- (c) The member was requested to provide detailed information of the foul smell coming from drains in Cheung Chau Town Centre.

A member said that she had maintained close contact with EPD, but EPD had not informed residents of arrangements on road sections where connections had not been made. She thus requested DSD to assist.

The representative of DSD said that he would reflect the matter to EPD.

A member said that there were two problems concerning refund of sewage charges. Firstly, residents currently using septic tanks would be refunded of sewage charges collected over the years only after the DSD's verification. Secondly, if residents had used septic tanks before and were connected to public sewerage only in recent years, the DSD would require evidence of using septic tanks before connection. He was critical of such requirement. The Department would not accept "certificate of compliance" of drainage connections issued by EPD as evidence of residents' having used septic tanks before, and refund would not be made. He said that it was very ridiculous and asked the DSD to follow up on the matter.

A member enquired whether remote villages in Tai O would be included into the Improvement of Tai O Sewerage System project.

The representative of DSD said that he would provide relevant information after the meeting.

IV. Question on burst of fresh water pipe at Nam Chung Tsuen, Tai O

A representative of the Water Supplies Department (WSD) apologized to residents and shop owners affected in the incident. He said that as the burst pipe was located in a very tight spot and repair could only be done manually using small machinery, the progress of repair was thus affected.

Another representative of WSD briefed the meeting by powerpoint of the incident, difficulties encountered in repairing, arrangement of temporary water supply and progress of pipe replacement etc.

A member enquired the reason for the existence of a large concrete thrust block on the top of the burst water pipe. On the question of the two back-up pipes, he enquired whether the water boat pumped water to the fresh water service reservoir, and then provided temporary water supply to Tai O residents. Shui Lo Cho Stream was the major source of fresh water of Tai O residents. However, many people swam there in summer and he worried that water quality would be affected. He proposed WSD to erect signs to discourage swimming at the Stream.

A member proposed supplying water from Shek Pik Reservoir to Tai O fresh water service reservoir in case of emergency, instead of using water boat.

A member was concerned of the risk of asbestos posed to maintenance staff and enquired whether there was plan to replace the entire length of the pipe with other materials.

A representative of WSD responded as follows:

- (a) Laying fresh water pipe below a large concrete thrust block was indeed not satisfactory. However, the pipe was laid some thirty years before and relevant records could not be found to explain the reason. The Department had included the replacement of the pipe into the repair programme, and other materials would be used to replace asbestos.
- (b) Swimming at Shui Lo Cho Stream was illegal and would pollute water source. However, water would be treated at Tai O Water Treatment Works before it was supplied to residents. The Department would also monitor the quality of water continuously.
- (c) Water had to be treated at Tai O Water Treatment Works first before it

was supplied to residents. Paragraph 6 of the written reply referred to Tai O Water Treatment Works breaking down or the water pipe at Shui Lo Cho Stream connecting Tai O Water Treatment Works burst. The two back-up pipes would then come into use and water boat would be deployed to pump water to the back-up water tank. Through the two back-up pipes, water would then be pumped to the fresh water service reservoir to supply water to Tai O residents.

- (d) Staff of contractors hired by the Department had to be properly trained and met requirements as laid down in relevant legislations in order to be qualified to handle asbestos.

A member said that during low tides, supplying water through water boat would be difficult. He proposed erecting warning sign(s) at Shui Lo Cho Stream to remind people that swimming in the stream was not lawful.

A member enquired whether all asbestos water pipes would be replaced.

A representative of WSD said that asbestos water pipe at the spot at issue would all be replaced.

A member proposed taking prosecution actions against people swimming at Shui Lo Cho Stream.

V. Question on road damage in front of Tung Chung Man Tung Road Municipal Services Building

The representative of the Highways Department said that on the following day of receiving the letter from the Vice-chairlady concerning the road damage at issue, staff of the Department conducted a site visit and found that the spot did not belong to the jurisdiction of the Department. The Lands Department was informed immediately and was requested to follow up with relevant department(s). In the week prior to the meeting, Lands Department requested the Highways Department to conduct a one-off repair. After discussions, the Highways Department completed the repair work for the sake of safety of many students that passed through the place.

The representative of District Lands Office, Islands said that upon receiving the referral, the Office looked through records and liaised with departments concerned. As searching records took time and for the sake of safety of the public, the Office requested the Highways Department to conduct a one-off repair first. For

responsibilities of management and maintenance in the future, the Department was liaising with relevant departments.

The Vice-chairlady said that she conducted a site inspection prior the meeting and found that the road surface involved in the accident had been repaired. However, there were many damaged parts nearby not yet repaired. If Lands Department could not determine which department was responsible, it should then assume the responsibility. There was another piece of land in the vicinity, and she proposed that the development of the two lands should be considered altogether. She was concerned that the Besser blocks might become loose or break up in bad weather and that many problems had yet been solved. She was disappointed that it had taken a lengthy period of time for the repair to be conducted.

Another member also expressed his dissatisfaction for the lengthy time taken for repair to be done.

VI. Question on sustainable development of Hong Kong International Airport

A representative of the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) said that they had prepared relevant information for members about the design and operation of the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) and hoped that concern and misunderstanding could be relieved. He believed that the establishment of two marine parks could produce synergy with remedial measures as proposed in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report of the three-runway project.

A representative of AAHK responded to enquiries concerning the design and operation of the HKIA as follows:

- (a) The Civil Aviation Department (CAD) had affirmed the functions of “Sky Wall”. It would enhance the efficiency of management of airspace and it would have no impact on the capacity of runway.
- (b) AAHK had never affirmed that the design capacity of dual runway operation was 86 air traffic movements (ATMs) per hour, as mentioned in the question. There were also many other reports mentioning the above runway capacity, and their source was the NAMP report of 1991. Under the dual runway system, the independent mode of operation had to be adopted in order to reach a higher capacity. Unless Hong Kong was not a member of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and would then be able to disregard its

stipulations, the independent mode of operation would not be feasible in Hong Kong. The NAMP report of 1991 also raised three main points on whether the independent mode of operation would be feasible in Hong Kong: whether ICAO would relax its safety requirements in the future; whether there would be major breakthroughs in aviation technology in the next twenty years; and that the mountains of Lantau Island would remain as an obstacle in raising the runway capacity.

- (c) CAD commissioned a consultant to conduct a study in 1994 and it was confirmed that the terrain of Lantau made it impossible for the independent mode of operation to be adopted in Hong Kong. The Consultant also confirmed that the capacity for the dual runway system in HKIA was 63 ATMs per hour. For technical reasons, the report of 86 ATMs per hour as widely circulated was proven to be infeasible.
- (d) In the “Hong Kong International Airport Master Plan 2030” (Master Plan 2030) Study of 2008, AAHK commissioned a United Kingdom consultant to study the capacity of the runways in HKIA. The Consultant proposed 46 items for improvement to enhance HKIA’s runway capacity. CAD and AAHK subsequently adopted the improvement measures and the capacity was raised from 63 to 68 ATMs per hour under “the independent segregated mode of operation”. Currently, there were 65 ATMs per hour. CAD anticipated that in 2015, ATMs would increase to the maximum of 68 per hour.
- (e) Currently, the ATMs of the dual runway airports in Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Bangkok and Singapore were from 60 to 70 per hour. Because of various restraints, none of the above airports could exceed 80 ATMs per hour. The above airports were planning the construction of a third or fourth runway. AAHK also proposed that Hong Kong should build a third runway.
- (f) Master Plan 2030 had taken into account competition from other airports in the Pearl River Delta region, development of express rail link in the Mainland, strategies of other airports and airlines, and the impact of the new operational mode on demand of airport, etc. The three-runway system as proposed by AAHK was supported by relevant data.

Another representative of AAHK responded on the impact on marine ecology caused by traffic of SkyPier high-speed crafts and works as follows:

- (a) AAHK attached great importance to the impact on marine ecology caused by traffic of SkyPier high-speed crafts. AAHK would adopt measures to mitigate the impact on Chinese white dolphins, including management of traffic of SkyPier high-speed crafts, management of crafts of the works project, such as limiting the speed of works crafts to 10 nautical miles per hour in the project area; adopting advanced design and construction methods; implementation of a series of environmental surveillance and scrutiny measures during the project period; and the establishment of marine ecology fund for supporting the conservation of Chinese white dolphins on a territory-wide basis.
- (b) Before the project began, AAHK would require high-speed crafts to divert its passage to the north of Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park at a speed below 15 nautical miles. AAHK would also maintain the existing amount of traffic to 99 trips per day.
- (c) During the operational stage, AAHK would propose the designation of 2 400 hectares as marine park linking the existing Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park, the Brothers Islands Marine park being proposed and the future marine exclusion zone near the airport island. A conservation area totaling more than 5 000 hectares would then be established. AAHK would also divert the passage of SkyPier high-speed crafts, which would also slow down when approaching Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau Marine Park.
- (d) The Government had announced on the day of the meeting that Southwest Lantau Marine Park and Soko Islands Marine Park would be set up and relevant statutory procedures were expected to be completed by early 2017, or earlier.
- (e) The conservation of Chinese white dolphins should be carried out throughout the entire Pearl River Delta Estuary, as the animals' area of activity was very wide. Upon the endorsement of the EIA Report and the issuance of environmental permit, AAHK would follow up on the initiative to conserve the Chinese white dolphins.

A member said that the EIA Report was based on the assumption that flights would take a northerly direction after taking off, otherwise noise and air quality would

be affected. He enquired how the northerly direction of flights could be ensured. Some residents worried that remedial measures adopted after the completion of the project would be of no use for Chinese white dolphins. The member asked AAHK representatives to explain further how mitigation measures could lessen the impact of works on the animal.

A member enquired whether the flights of Macao was also regulated by the “Sky Wall” of Guangzhou Military Area, and how would it compare with Hong Kong. She also enquired whether the independent mode of operation would be feasible under the three runway system.

A member enquired whether villages of Sha Lo Wan, Shan Tau and Sham Shek would still be suitable for residence if the third runway project was to be implemented, and whether indigenous residents could apply for small house construction. He opined that the construction of the third runway would take about 15 years. The Government should consider the resettlement of villagers.

A member strongly objected to the designation of the waters southwest of Lantau Island as marine park. If the Government was to implement the project, compensation should be made to villagers of Tai A Chau and Siu A Chau. The Government should also resolve their need for housing.

Another representative of AAHK responded as follows:

- (a) The 1991 report mentioned a northerly flight path, which had not been used in the dozen years or more in the past. The reason was because HKIA could not adopt the “independent mode of operation”. In conducting study of the three runway system, both AAHK and CAD had confirmed that there would be a need to use the northerly flight path and that it was feasible. He stressed that the northerly flight path had not been used in the past because there was no such need, not because it was not usable.
- (b) The question concerning “Sky Wall” should be answered by CAD. As far as he understood it, to ensure safety and effective management of flights, airplanes would need to reach a certain height in order that they could be handed over to another air control unit. This requirement was a common practice around the globe.
- (c) Both Hong Kong and Macao were subject to the regulation of “Sky Wall”. Macao did not have its own air traffic control unit, and its

Flight Information Region was managed by Hong Kong. The approach and departure of flights were the responsibility of CAD of Hong Kong, until the airplanes had landed. There were fewer flights in Macao and it thus had a lower “Sky Wall” compared with Hong Kong.

- (d) Under the three-runway system, the proposed third runway (the north runway) would be used entirely for arrivals, whereas the middle runway exclusively for departures. The south runway would adopt a mixed mode of operation, i.e. it could be used both for approach and departure. The operation of three runway system would then be optimized and it was anticipated that it could reach a maximum of 102 ATMs per hour. CAD had also confirmed that “Sky Wall” had no impact on the capacity of the runways.

Another representative of AAHK responded as follows:

- (a) Chinese white dolphins usually lived in area of 3 000 to 30 000 hectares, and the total area of reclamation at issue was 650 hectares. Thus only part of the area of dolphins’ activities would be affected. It was also mentioned in the EIA Report that the water quality in the waters southwest of Lantau would not be affected. Of the 250 Chinese white dolphins around Pearl River Delta, only some would appear in Hong Kong waters, and many mitigation measures were proposed in the EIA Report.
- (b) The EIA report had made a comparison of noise pollution under the three-runway system and that of the current situation. Under the three-runway system, noise pollution in North Lantau would be significantly improved as the south runway would be put on “stand-by” mode as much as possible from 11 pm to 7 am. After the three-runway system came into operation, the number of village houses affected by noise pollution would be greatly reduced. The AAHK would relate the demand of small house construction and other requests to relevant departments.
- (c) AAHK would co-operate with the Government in establishing the Southwest Lantau Marine Park and Soko Islands Marine Park. It would also support the conservation of Chinese white dolphins by setting up the marine ecology fund.

A member said that the designation of the waters southwest of Lantau as marine park had no practical use, and it would affect villagers of Tai A Chau and Siu A Chau. He reiterated his objection to the plan.

A member said that the noise pollution would be reduced only after the commission of the three-runway system, and the construction of the third runway would take more than a dozen years. During the period many improvement works would be conducted and the south runway would become busier. He was concerned whether villages in North Lantau were still suitable for people to live in. He urged the Government to resettle villagers affected.

A member enquired whether the demand for the third runway would significantly reduce if the northerly flight path would be used. She requested some clarifications from representatives of AAHK on the operation of the runways in flights taking off and landing. She said that the economic situation would have an impact on the demand for aviation transport and that the AAHK should make an assessment in that respect before implementation of the third runway project.

A member said that taking into account information provided by AAHK, he opined that the dual runway system might not be able to cope with future demand for aviation services. He enquired whether “Sky Wall” applied only to flights flying to the Mainland, whether all flights taking off would fly through the air space of the Mainland, and if flights would not fly through the air space of the Mainland, would they still be subject to restrictions of “Sky Wall”. He also requested the AAHK to be prudent in handling the issue of compensation.

A representative of AAHK responded as follows:

- (a) The Consultant had confirmed in the past that the “independent mode of operation” could not be adopted in the dual runway operation. Thus “north runway” was then only a concept on which no study had been conducted. In the three runway system, the northerly flight path would have no impact on the capacity of the runways. The hourly capacity of 102 ATMs was feasible and it had been confirmed by CAD.
- (b) There was a close link between demand for aviation and economic growth. Recent figures showed that the growth of the entire aviation market was very sound. Thus AAHK had not overestimated the demand for aviation industry.
- (c) Only about 23% of flights departing from or landing into Hong Kong

would need to use the air space in the Mainland, and over 70% of international flying routes needed not entering into the air space of China, and were therefore not subject to the restrictions of “Sky Wall”. He clarified that “Sky Wall” was not the same as flow control and it would not reduce flight efficiency. He reiterated that there was a need for the third runway in Hong Kong.

- (d) It was the responsibility of the Government to establish marine park. He believed that the Government would proceed in accordance with statutory procedures. Members and stakeholders would have the opportunity to air out their opinions, including the demand for compensation.

A member reiterated that the explanation given by representatives of AAHK was not the same as those given by AAHK over the years on flights’ taking off and landing in relation to the prevailing wind.

A representative of AAHK supplemented that generally speaking, airplanes taking off and landing into the wind. In wind speed of 5 nautical miles or less, airplanes could land in the tailwind. He explained that in the three runway system, the arrangements for landings, taking-offs and go-arounds could be handled more flexibly. At maximum, 102 ATMS could be arranged. The three runway system was anticipated to complete in 2021. Afterwards the current north runway and the future middle runway would need to be closed temporarily for a two-year improvement works. In the period, the airport would still be operating in the dual runway system. The single runway scenario would not occur again and the transitional period was from 2021 to 2023.

A member said that the response given by AAHK was not logical. She requested a clear explanation on the use of runways for landings and taking-offs, and whether such use was unrelated to the prevailing wind direction.

A member enquired whether all flights taking off and landing in Hong Kong had to subject to the restrictions of air space in the Mainland, as destinations of some flights were not China.

A representative of AAHK said that generally speaking, airplanes took off and landed into the wind. In day time, airplanes had to take off and land into the wind. In night time, in order to reduce the impact of noise on residents nearby, airplanes could take off and land in tail wind if the wind speed was below 5 nautical miles. For

safety reason, if the wind speed exceeded 5 nautical miles, airplanes had to take off and land into the wind.

A representative of AAHK reiterated that more than 70% of flights taking off from and landing into HKIA would not enter into the air space of China, and only 23% would use the Chinese air space.

A member said that she received many complaints about noise nuisance of airplanes each year starting from October, and especially against night time noise. She enquired how much time the wind speed was above 5 nautical miles in winter in Hong Kong.

A representative of AAHK said that he was not able to provide data about wind speed there and then. He explained that wind speed tended to be stronger in day time as the temperature was hot. Flights taking off between 12:00 midnight to 2:00 am would be arranged to fly westerly to reduce impact on residents in the city. In early morning, many long distance flights would arrive in Hong Kong and they would be arranged to land in the eastern direction. As far as he understood it, CAD would not have the flexibility to adjust the directions of flights taking off and landing if the wind was strong. When wind speed allowed, CAD would adjust the direction of landings and taking off to reduce impact on nearby residents.

A member requested a written reply from AAHK on questions she asked about wind speed.

The Chairman concluded that most of the members supported the construction of the third runway. He requested AAHK to take into account opinions expressed by members.

Islands District Council Secretariat
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