

**Minutes of the Second Meeting of Town Planning and Development Committee
under the Seventh Term Yuen Long District Council in 2024
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region**

Date: 18 April 2024 (Thursday)

Time: 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Venue: Conference Room, Yuen Long District Council, 13/F., Yuen Long Government Offices,
2 Kiu Lok Square, Yuen Long

Present

Chairman : Mr TANG Ho-nin, MH

Vice Chairman : Mr LI Kai-lap, Riben

Members : Mr MAN Yick-yeung

Mr MAN Luk-sing, MH

Mr MAN Ka-ho, Donald, JP

Mr WONG Hiu-shan

Mr SZE TO Chun-hin

Mr YU Chung-leung

Mr LUI Kin, MH

Ms LI Ching-yee

Mr LAM Chung-yin

Mr LAM Wai-ming

Mr LAM Tim-fook

Ms LAM Wai-ming

Mr SEI Chun-hing

Mr CHUI Kwan-siu

Mr TSUI Wai-ngoi

Ms YUEN Man-yee, MH

Mr CHEUNG Wai-sum

Mr LEUNG Ming-kin

Mr LEUNG Yip-pang

Mr CHONG Kin-shing, MH, JP

Mr KWOK Wing-cheong

Mr CHAN Ka-fai

Ms CHAN Yin-kwan, Yankie

Mr CHAM Ka-hung, Daniel, BBS, MH, JP

Mr TONG Tak-chun

Mr CHING Chan-ming

Mr FUNG Chun-wing

Mr WONG Yuen-tai, MH

Mr WONG Siu-chung

Mr WONG Wing-ho, Allan

Ms LAU Kwai-yung

Mr TANG Che-keung, MH

Mr TANG Yung-yiu, Ronnie

Mr TAM Tak-hoi

Mr SO Yuen

Secretary: Miss WONG Cheuk-ying,
Cherry

Executive Officer I (District Council),
Yuen Long District Office

In Attendance

Mr YIU Kwok-wai, MH	Senior Liaison Officer (2),
Ms CHUI Po-ling, Polly	Yuen Long District Office
Mr TO Kai-cho, Joe	Engineer/16 (West), Civil Engineering and
Mr SHUM Lok-yin	Development Department
Mr TSUI Yat-him, Henry	Engineer/New Territories West (Distribution 5),
Ms KOU Yee-fung, Kit	Water Supplies Department
Mr MAK Weng-yip, Alexander	Engineer/New Territories West (Distribution 3),
	Water Supplies Department
	Professional Secretary (District Lands Office,
	Yuen Long), Lands Department
	Senior Town Planner/Tuen Mun 2,
	Planning Department

Absence

Mr SHUM Ho-kit, BBS, JP	(Absent with apologies)
Mr TANG Sin-hang	(Absent with apologies)

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Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed Members and departmental representatives to the second meeting of the Town Planning and Development Committee (“TPDC”) under the Yuen Long District Council (“YLDC”) in 2024.

2. The Chairman extended a welcome to Mr SHUM Lok-yin, Engineer/New Territories West (Distribution 5) of the Water Supplies Department (“WSD”), who was attending the meeting for the first time, as well as to Mr YIU Kwok-wai to the meeting.

3. The Chairman announced that the following two Members had submitted applications for absence from the meeting prior to the meeting:

- (1) Mr SHUM Ho-kit could not attend the meeting due to his attendance at a meeting of the Steering Committee on Primary Healthcare Development; and
- (2) Mr TANG Sin-hang could not attend the meeting due to his involvement in the Tai Ping Ching Chiu activities for 2024 in his capacity as Chairman of the Ha Tsuen Rural Committee.

According to Order 64 of the Yuen Long District Council Standing Orders, any Member who could not attend a meeting because of attendance at a meeting of a Government-appointed advisory body or for other reasons considered reasonable by the meeting was required to apply for absence from the meeting. The Committee should decide at the commencement of the meeting whether consent should be given to the applications for absence. The Chairman invited Members to decide whether to consent to the absence of Mr SHUM Ho-kit and Mr TANG Sin-hang.

4. In the absence of objections from Members, the Chairman announced that the applications for absence submitted by Mr SHUM Ho-kit and Mr TANG Sin-hang were endorsed.

Item I: Confirmation of minutes of the first meeting of the TPDC in 2024 held on 8 February 2024

5. Members unanimously confirmed the minutes of the first TPDC meeting in 2024 held on 8 February 2024.

Questions raised by Members:

Item II: Mr CHAM Ka-hung, Daniel, proposed a discussion on “Land-use amendments on the approved outline zoning plans of Yuen Long District made by the Town Planning Board (“TPB”) and the aggregate number of flats and population in public and private housing development projects as approved by the TPB under section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance” (TPDC Paper No. 7/2024)

6. The Chairman referred Members to Paper No. 7 and the written reply from the Planning Department (“PlanD”).

7. Members’ views and enquiries about the item were summarised as follows:

- (1) A number of housing development projects in Yuen Long District were scheduled for completion. Given the expectation that the population would more than double, concerns were raised about the capacity of the district’s existing transport infrastructure to accommodate the increased traffic. It was hoped that the Transport Department (“TD”) would provide additional relevant information for further discussion at the subsequent meeting so that an assessment could be made as to whether the proposed transport improvement measures for the various housing developments could cope with the projected population growth in the district.

(Post-meeting note: A written reply from the TD was forwarded to the TPDC by the Secretariat on 29 May 2024.)

- (2) A query was raised regarding the number of housing development projects that had been regarded as for temporary use, which was always permitted under the Outline Zoning Plans (“OZPs”) of Yuen Long District, thereby exempting them from obtaining planning permission from the TPB;
- (3) In light of the Government’s previous invocation of the Land Resumption Ordinance to reclaim land in the district for the development of public housing, a question was raised as to whether the Ordinance would continue to be invoked for the same purpose, and whether the land in Yuen Long Town would be developed on the basis of the 7:3 ratio of public to private housing;
- (4) It was noted that the Government’s traffic assessments and traffic improvement measures were largely specific for individual housing development projects, with no comprehensive planning in place to address the overall traffic conditions in Yuen Long District. Due to the imminent completion of multiple development projects in the district, Members suggested that the Government undertake an overall review of the district’s planning;

- (5) An enquiry was made as to the specific timetable for each of the housing development projects;
 - (6) A question was raised regarding the rationale for developers to persist in applying to the TPB for development projects, despite repeated objections from the Rural Committee (“RC”) concerned with regard to the congestion on Kam Sheung Road in Pat Heung. Members also enquired about the approval results of the planning application for the construction of a logistics warehouse in the vicinity of Ng Ka Tsuen; and
 - (7) The construction of a new road was deemed a necessary measure to address the traffic issue in Pat Heung, which was situated at a considerable distance from both the existing Kam Sheung Road Station on the MTR Tuen Ma Line and the forthcoming Ngau Tam Mei Station on the Northern Link (“NOL”).
8. A consolidated reply provided by Mr Alexander MAK of the PlanD was as follows:
- (1) In both cases, namely when an application was submitted to the TPB for modifying the OZP and when an application for planning permission was submitted by members of the public under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance, the PlanD would engage in consultation with the TD on the potential traffic impacts of the development project in question, as well as with District Councillors and relevant RCs in accordance with the existing mechanism and statutory procedures;
 - (2) In taking forward a housing development project, the Government would take into account and ensure compliance with the relevant schedules pertaining to transport infrastructure projects in the district;
 - (3) A number of substantial transport infrastructure and improvement projects in Yuen Long District were either already in progress or scheduled to commence imminently. These included Route 11, the widening of Yuen Long Highway, road improvement works in Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen and Yuen Long South New Development Areas (“NDAs”), as well as improvement works at Tin Shui Wai West Interchange, Tong Yan San Tsuen Interchange and Shap Pat Heung Interchange. It was expected that the traffic conditions in the district would gradually improve following the completion of the transport infrastructure and improvement works;
 - (4) In regard to the issue of traffic congestion on particular roads, it would be advisable for Members to convey their concerns to the TD;
 - (5) In general, if the land or buildings fell within the boundaries of the Yuen Long New Town OZP, the temporary use (expected to last 5 years or less) of the land or buildings would always be permitted and there would be no need to comply with the zoning use or the Notes of the OZPs nor to obtain planning permission from the TPB, provided that other relevant legislation, the terms and conditions of the government leases and any other government requirements were complied with;
 - (6) The PlanD would undertake a review of the actual developments in the district to ensure the timely updating of the OZPs;

- (7) The Town Planning Ordinance did not limit the number of applications for planning permission submitted by an applicant. However, in instances where an application pertained to individual uses or developments with the potential to impact on the surrounding environment, drainage and traffic, the applicant might be required to conduct a technical assessment of the impacts of the proposed uses or developments and then submit a technical assessment report to the TPB for their perusal. In processing each application, the TPB would take into account a number of factors, including the overall planning, the potential environmental impacts (such as on traffic and the environment) and public opinion; and
- (8) In recent years, the PlanD had rezoned land in the Yuen Long District OZP for the development of public housing in several occasions to meet the urgent public demand for such type of housing. In general, the ratio of public to private housing supply in NDAs was 7:3.

9. The Chairman concluded that Members were supportive of housing development in Yuen Long District, but expressed concern about the traffic problems that such developments could cause. In light of this, he requested that the TD furnish the TPB with the proposals of traffic improvement measures associated with the housing development projects in Yuen Long District approved by the TPB from 2018 to the present. Furthermore, he requested the TD send representative to attend the next meeting for further discussion on this matter.

Item III: Ms YUEN Man-yee and Mr LEUNG Ming-kin proposed a discussion on “Improving the ancillary facilities for transport, innovation and technology, rural development and eco-education in Yuen Long District for the development of the Northern Metropolis” (TPDC Paper No. 8/2024)

10. The Chairman referred Members to Paper No. 8 and the written replies from the Development Bureau (“DEVB”) and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department.

11. Members’ views and enquiries about the item were summarised as follows:

- (1) A number of concerns were raised regarding the development of several areas within the Northern Metropolis. These included innovative technology, ecosystem conservation, education, tourism, countryside areas, and leisure agriculture and fisheries industries. A query was raised regarding the potential for collaboration between the Northern Metropolis and innovation and technology parks in the Mainland;
- (2) A concern was raised regarding the ancillary transport facilities in the Northern Metropolis. It was observed that the housing developments in Yuen Long in recent years had resulted in a notable population growth, which in turn had led to increased traffic congestion in the district. Members opined that the Government’s existing traffic improvement measures were inadequate and would fail to improve the transport network in Yuen Long. It was suggested that the Government should prioritise transport planning for the district before taking forward any new development projects;

- (3) It was proposed that the Northern Metropolis should adopt a strategy similar to that of European countries by developing country parks and increasing the area of green belt and open space with the aim of improving the environmental quality and image of Yuen Long District;
 - (4) In addition to the compensation packages offered to eligible operators in the agriculture and fisheries sectors affected by the Government's development clearances, concerns were raised about how farmers and livestock farms affected would be assisted to relocate and resume their operations as part of the efforts to promote the sustainable development of these industries. It was also suggested that multi-storey livestock farms should be built;
 - (5) It was proposed that the relevant government departments should provide the TPDC with regular updates on the progress of major development projects in Yuen Long District, including those pertaining to transport, housing and waterworks. This would guarantee that Members were kept informed of the most recent developments in works projects and facilitate the dissemination of relevant information to residents;
 - (6) It was suggested that the Government should offer compensation at the Tier One level in relation to the resumption of land in the San Tin Technopole and the New Digi Bay in Lau Fau Shan;
 - (7) It was noted that recent commentary concerning the environmental impact assessment report on the Northern Metropolis had been unfavourable. This gave rise to questions regarding the potential impact of such commentary on the NOL works schedule and the expectation that the NOL works could commence as expeditiously as possible; and
 - (8) A query was raised as to whether the proposal, as detailed in a consultancy report, to construct an elevated road in close proximity to Kam Sheung Road Station in Kam Tin to link up the roads in the vicinity of Tai Lam Tunnel, had been shelved.
12. A consolidated reply provided by Mr Alexander MAK of the PlanD was as follows:
- (1) In order to facilitate collaboration with the Mainland, a proposal had been submitted for the construction of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Rail Link within the Northern Metropolis, linking Hung Shui Kiu Station with the Qianhai area of Shenzhen. In the context of the education sector, land plots within the Northern Metropolis had been set aside for the development of tertiary education. A number of post-secondary educational institutions had expressed interest in establishing campuses there, as reported in the media;
 - (2) In response to concerns raised by Yuen Long residents about transport issues in the district, the Hong Kong Major Transport Infrastructure Development Blueprint, which was promulgated last year by the Government, set out the planned construction of transport infrastructure in the Northwest New Territories ("NWNT"). These included the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Rail Link, the NOL, the Northern Metropolis Highway, Route 11 and the widening of Yuen Long Highway, among other projects. Furthermore, in response to the demand for ancillary transport facilities arising as a consequence of the NWNT development,

the Transport and Logistics Bureau advanced the target completion year for Route 11 from 2036 to 2033;

- (3) The Government had reserved land around San Tin Station for the construction of leisure and cultural services facilities, including museums, libraries, outdoor performance venues and swimming pools. It was anticipated that the relevant departments would consult with the District Council on the details of these facilities in a timely manner;
- (4) In proposing a new housing development project, government departments or private developers would be required to submit a traffic impact assessment report to the TD. Throughout the process, the PlanD would maintain close communication with the TD so as to assess the potential impacts of the proposed development project on the flow of traffic in the surrounding area;
- (5) In response to Members' concerns about the relocation and business resumption arrangements for affected farmers and livestock farms, as well as the works schedule for the NOL project, the PlanD would forward Members' enquiries to the relevant bureaux and departments for follow-up after the meeting; and

(Post-meeting note: The follow-up replies from the DEVB and the Highways Department ("HyD") was forwarded by the Secretariat to the TPDC on 9 May and 17 May 2024, respectively.)

- (6) The PlanD would consult with the District Council on a project when proposing OZP amendments to the TPB or during the processing of planning permission applications proposed under section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance. During the statutory consultation period, Members might offer comments to the TPB regarding any proposed OZP amendments or planning applications.

13. Mr Joe TO of the Civil Engineering and Development Department ("CEDD") said that the CEDD would follow up with the relevant Members after the meeting to address their concerns regarding the proposed slip road from Pat Heung Road to Tsing Long Highway.

14. The Chairman concluded that that the development plan for the Northern Metropolis could complement the overall national development, and confirmed that government departments had conducted various consultations in this regard. He also noted that Members expressed support for the development plan while raising concerns about potential traffic issues caused by the new developments, and requested that their input be given due consideration by the relevant departments.

Item IV : Any other business

15. Other issues raised by Members were as follows:

- (1) In light of the recent spate of water mains bursts in Yuen Long District, a query was raised regarding the measures that the WSD would implement in order to minimise the affected areas and the duration of water supply suspension. Furthermore, an enquiry was made into the progress of implementation of the Risk-based Improvement Programme of Water Mains and the extension of the seawater supply

network for flushing in Yuen Long District; and

- (2) An enquiry was made as to whether the elevated pedestrian corridor project in Yuen Long Town connecting with Long Ping Station would be reactivated.
16. A consolidated reply provided by Mr Henry TSUI of the WSD was as follows:
- (1) The WSD implemented a “risk-based” asset management strategy for water mains by taking into account factors, such as the age of use, materials, past records of bursts or leaks, surrounding environment and consequence resulting from bursts or leaks, for assessing the risk of main bursts and leaks. To mitigate the risks associated with main bursts and leaks, a priority would be given to replacing or rehabilitating the most vulnerable mains during the improvement works. Approximately 10 kilometres of water mains in need of replacement or rehabilitation had been included in the risk-based water main improvement works currently being carried out in Yuen Long in accordance with the relevant term works contracts, which had either started in the last six months or were scheduled to start in the next six months. The improvement works for water mains were currently being carried out at the following locations: Kik Yeung Road, Shap Pat Heung Road, Tung Tau Industrial Area, Kam Sheung Road, Yau Uk Tsuen of Wang Toi Shan, Deep Bay Road, Lau Fau Shan Road, and Mong Tseng Wai; and
 - (2) The WSD would continue to collaborate with various government departments to convert the remaining freshwater flush systems in the district to saltwater flush systems (as demonstrated at the Hong King Street Public Toilet). The Government was also planning to promote the use of reclaimed water for flushing purposes in the NDAs, given the population growth resulting from the completion of a number of new development projects in the district, which would lead to increased demand for flushing water. After the meeting, the WSD would provide Members with further updates on the progress of the conversion process to saltwater flushing in Yuen Long District.

(Post-meeting note: A written reply from the WSD was forwarded to the TPDC by the Secretariat on 17 May 2024.)

17. Mr Joe TO of the CEDD responded that any queries raised by Members regarding the elevated pedestrian corridor in Yuen Long Town connecting with Long Ping Station would be conveyed to the HyD for further action, since the project was under the management of the HyD.

Item V: Date of next meeting

18. The Chairman said that the next TPDC meeting would be held in the Conference Room of the YLDC at 2:30 p.m. on 13 June 2024.

19. There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Yuen Long District Council Secretariat
June 2024