

By post and by fax at 2978 7569

19 July 2013

Clerk to Panel on Development
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central Hong Kong

[Attn: Miss Christina SHIU]

Dear Miss SHIU

**Legislative Council Panel on Development –
Special Meetings on 25 and 26 July 2013
Views on North East New Territories New Development Areas Project**

Thank you for inviting the Institution to put forth our views on the captioned subject.

In response to your invitation, we are pleased to provide herewith our views and suggestions on the subject for your consideration.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely


Ir Raymond CHAN Kin Sek
President
The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers

Enc

RC/WC

Enclosure

**Legislative Council
Panel on Development**

**Views from the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers on
North East New Territories New Development Areas Project**

Overview

The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (HKIE) wishes to reiterate our support to the endeavour of the Administration in matching and identifying suitable areas for new towns development for meeting mid-term and long-term housing needs. We agree the concept and key aims of the North East New Territories New Development Areas (NENT NDAs) development proposal.

2. The HKIE welcomes to see that the revised development proposal and plans for the NENT NDAs has positively responded to the views of the public and suitably incorporated the community concerns into the design. We hope this starts a healthy step for the Administration to continue engaging the stakeholders in optimising the development plan for smooth implementation in future.

Cohesive Long Term Planning for New Developments

3. The HKIE agrees that the Administration decides to put Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling (PC/TKL) development under further review in the wider strategic context of the New Territories North development. Further, the HKIE notes that the Administration has also been studying the development of other areas in New Territories, in particular the Lok Ma Chau Loop which is geographically proximal to Kwu Tung North (KTN) and Fanling North (FLN) NDAs. To achieve best synergetic effects in development, the HKIE suggests the Administration to comprehensively review the various upcoming infrastructural development and essential projects initiatives, so that the overall planning of the new developments in New Territories would be sustainable and well-coordinated, while ensuring that these essential projects could be put forth and implemented in a balanced and steady pace in the long run.

Better Town Planning to Enhance Employment Opportunities and Connectivity

4. We note that KTN/FLN NDAs aim for a population of 460,000 upon full development. Apart from planning and constructing sufficient social and community facilities to facilitate a desirable living condition there, we urge the Administration to place no less focus on the future residents' needs for employment, which would be essential for every new town development.

5. We are concerned that due to the deferment of the PC/TKL planning including the special industry areas, and coupled with the proposed increase in the development density of KTN and FLN, the demand for employment by the residents there would be much higher. Hence, the Administration is recommended to seriously study and address this issue in two aspects, i.e. within-district employment and cross-districts connectivity, as elaborated below.

6. We believe that the Administration should strive for achieving self-sufficiency and job-people match within the NDAs as much as practicable. Therefore, it is suggested to review and rationalise the industrial and commercial developments within and surrounding the NDAs, so as to maximise job creation to provide more employment opportunities for the residents, saving them travelling time/ cost as well as soothing the burden to the transportation network.

7. Nevertheless, we still see the necessity of optimising the external connectivity of the NDAs to meet the transportation demands especially for work and business purposes. While it is noted that an essential transportation infrastructure for these NDAs would be the proposed Kwu Tung Station, the future full development in the areas would further necessitate the Administration to put forth detailed study of the construction of Northern Link railway between West Rail Line and East Rail Line and other highway networks, hence enriching the connection of the various NDAs in New Territories, as well as strengthening the physical linkage towards the urban areas as well as to the Mainland.

Building the Green NDAs

8. The HKIE agrees that NENT NDAs development should be implemented without imposing unbearable cost to our environment. We welcome the Environmental Impact Assessment report for the NENT NDAs conducted by Environmental Protection Department for public inspection, which is an effective tool to identify the major environmental implications and improve decision making before the Administration proceeds with the detailed design of the NDAs project development.

9. We consider it essential to identify environmentally-friendly initiatives/infrastructures at the commencement of the NDAs project, rather than mitigating environmental impacts at a later stage. With the road map on addressing air quality and waste handling high in the agenda, the Administration should seriously take these issues into consideration in the design of NENT NDAs. Under this backdrop, we suggest the Administration to foster the NENT NDAs as a model low carbon district.

10. In particular, we suggest that soil and construction waste arising from the NDAs construction should be well dealt with and self sustained in the area as far as practicable, while off site dumping practice should be minimised. The Administration should take the lead in adopting recycled materials (i.e. glass beverage bottles) as construction materials (i.e. eco-paving blocks) in the NDAs.

11. The Administration should establish a blue print for sustainable use of resources and can apply it early in the NDAs, such as implementing more measures of reducing quantity and types of wastes at source, by aligning the corresponding infrastructure provision in the NDAs. Also, environmental protection infrastructures/initiatives such as provision of more electric vehicle charging facilities, district cooling system, development of cycle tracks and roof top greening at the buildings should be regarded as important elements for the detailed design of the NDAs. Moreover, measures such as rain water collection from the roof top of buildings and storm drains as well as treated waste water collection for flushing and other non-drinking purposes could also be set as detailed design criteria if applicable and practicable for the NDAs.

12. The HKIE suggests that a detailed biodiversity study action plan for protecting valuable natural resources should be duly considered for the NDAs. It shall include but not limited to how to minimise disturbance, compensate for losses of biodiversity, retain and enhance habitats, and promote communication and education to the general public.

Further Engaging Community in the NDAs Development

13. To secure the full support from the stakeholders, we suggest the Administration to set up stakeholder liaison groups and expert review groups to establish communications among the project proponents and relevant stakeholders such as affected residents, local communities, green groups, social services organisations, academia and professional bodies. These will serve as an advisory platform for stakeholders to give advices on the design, construction and future administration of NENT NDAs. The Administration should prepare to conduct further impact analysis, not only on the concrete side such as environment and infrastructures, but also on the soft side such as effect on local communities and cultures, so that various aspects of stakeholders' voices could be well assimilated in the future detailed design of the NDAs.