

Agreement No. CE 61/2007
North East New Territories New Development Areas
Planning and Engineering Study - Investigation
Stage Three Public Engagement

Gist of Meeting with the Residents of Kwu Tung Village (North) , Village Representative of Kwu Tung Village (North) and Vice-chairman of North District Council
Summary of Major Comments

Date : 21 August 2012 (Tue)
Time : 2:30pm
Venue : 3/F, North District Government Offices, 3 Pik Fung Road, Fanling, North District

Rehousing/resettlement for the affected villagers

- Pointed out that Kwu Tung Village is a recognized village under the Heung Yee Kuk and it has a history of more than 100 years; the villagers understood the necessary for development but hoped that the Government could respect the villagers and interests of the local businesses;
- The villagers were particularly concerned over that Kwu Tung Village does not exist on the Recommended Outline Development Plan; compensation from the Government itself is not able to override the villagers' determination to preserve Kwu Tung Village; It was hoped that the Government could provide a suitable site for reprovisioning the Kwu Tung Village or the Government would propose other measures in the New Development Areas (NDAs) proposals to improve the lives of the villagers; stated that they would oppose to any development in Kwu Tung Village before proper arrangements have been sought; they requested that any proposals have to prove to them that their lives in the future will be improved;
- Some of the villagers strongly opposed to the NDAs proposals and demanded for "no removal and no demolition"; in view of most villagers are accustomed to the rural lifestyle and hence public housing would not be suitable for them, especially for the elderly, it was hoped that the Government could respect and consider the rural lifestyle of the villagers;
- Stated that most of the villagers have been living in the village since their ancestors relocated to Kwu Tung more than a hundred years ago; some pointed out that Kwu Tung was very remote and inhospitable before the villagers and their ancestors' made improvements to the environment; the Government should not only consider the future population of the NDAs but should give more considerations to the existing residents in Kwu Tung;
- It was pointed out that there are many traditional industries such as soy sauce factory, warehouses and sawmills in Kwu Tung Village; these industries have provided more than a thousand jobs and employed many local residents, especially provided many jobs demanding low education attainment; the Government should offer reprovisioning arrangements to the affected factories; it was suggested give these affected businesses priority to move into the special industrial area in Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling NDA; moreover, the villagers would only support the NDAs development only if the Government could provide suitable reprovisioning arrangements for the affected businesses to continue operation;
- It was recommended to have a larger local rehousing public housing site in order to reprovision the Kwu Tung Village;

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- The village representatives would like to be informed the rehousing/resettlement arrangements of similar development projects, so that they can inform the affected villagers regarding rehousing/resettlement;
- Some villagers hoped that they will be able to be rehoused to public housing without means test on their income; and
- The villagers hoped to share the benefits of development with the entire Hong Kong; it was pointed out that the Government had spent an extra \$2billion to construct the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line through Long Valley as a tunnel in order to preserve the habitat of the birds; it would be reasonable to offer proper resettlement/rehousing arrangements for thousands of villagers in Kwu Tung Village.

Public Engagement

- The villagers had expressed their demand in the previous public engagement stages, but the Government had not provided any specific responses; it was hoped that the Government will response to the requests of the villagers as soon as possible; and
- The Government should listen to the opinions from various sectors of the society prior to implementation of the NDAs proposals; the Government should also communicate with the local residents with more sincerity as well as formulating policies on compensation/rehousing arrangements in the perspective of the affected residents.

[Note: The above gist of views collated by the Consultants is for reference only and has not been confirmed by the participants.]