

Land and Development Advisory Committee holds meeting

At its meeting today (November 19), the Land and Development Advisory Committee (LDAC) was briefed by the Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office (PICO) on the development of a Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) School in Clear Water Bay proposed by the Shaw Foundation Hong Kong Limited (Shaw Foundation), and by the Development Bureau (DEVB) on the Land Sharing Pilot Scheme (LSPS) and an application under the extended scheme of facilitating private sector's provision of pedestrian links outside the Kowloon East Pilot Scheme (the Extended Scheme).

Members noted that the proposed school in Clear Water Bay would be a non-profit-making private secondary school with STEAM as its main direction of curriculum planning. The site where the proposed school is to be located is partly private land owned by the Shaw Foundation and partly government land. Members noted that the proponent would fund the capital and operation cost of the school, and the school would open some of its facilities such as sports fields, auditorium and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) exhibition spaces to the local community outside school hours. Members agreed that the school would be conducive to the promotion of STEM education and nurturing of innovation and technology talent, bringing positive impacts to Hong Kong. Members expressed support for the proposal, and made comments and suggestions on the technical (including traffic arrangement and school facilities) and operational (including student admission criteria, sharing of facilities with the community and management matters) aspects of the school. The proponent would take these comments into account, and would submit a rezoning application to the Town Planning Board later on.

Members were briefed on the details of the LSPS. They supported the objective of the Scheme to tap the market force in planning and construction, releasing the development potential of private lots with consolidated ownership and which are not falling within areas covered by Government's development studies supporting the use of land intended for public purposes, with a view to boosting short-to-medium-term housing supply. In particular, Members noted the proposed requirements for each LSPS application to attain a minimum additional gross floor area of 50 000 square metres and at least an additional 1 000 flats, to be made possible by increasing the development intensity of the subject lots through Government's facilitation of infrastructural upgrading. Members also noted the requirement for no less than 70 per cent of the increased gross floor area made possible under the LSPS to be set aside for public housing or Starter Homes as decided by the Government, to be delivered in the form of formed land to be carved out from the application site. They welcomed measures proposed by the Government to compress the development process and speed up the delivery of potential flat yield, including the 18-month time limit for completion of lease modification (including premium assessment) after completion of the statutory planning

process, the target of making formed land available for construction of private and public housing within four to six years after receipt of an application, and the setting up of a dedicated multi-disciplinary team of government officers to provide one-stop facilitation services. Members were briefed on the mechanism to ensure transparency and involve third-party opinion in the processing of each application, particularly the involvement of an independent Panel of Advisors to be set up especially for advising on applications prior to seeking in-principle agreement by the Chief Executive in Council. Members supported the general directions of the LSPS as proposed, and offered views on various aspects of the implementation arrangements, such as the importance of highlighting the public interest served by LSPS when explaining the framework to the general community, and the need for ensuring that the scale of infrastructure to be facilitated by the Government would be proportionate to the private and public housing development covered by the application. They suggested that the Government take into account comments received during the engagement with stakeholders before finalising the LSPS for launch in early 2020.

The application under the Extended Scheme involves the provision of a subway extension and an accessible lift connecting a new development in Wan Chai to existing developments in Admiralty through the Queensway Subway, providing an all-weather, round-the-clock and barrier-free access for members of the public (location plan at Annex). Considering that the proposed pedestrian link could benefit the community by improving walkability of the locality, Members supported the recommendation to waive the premium payable for lease modifications arising from the proposed link.