

## LCQ2: Development plans for three squatter areas

Following is a question by the Hon Wilson Or and a reply by the Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, in the Legislative Council today (June 3):

Question:

The Chief Executive put forward in the 2019 Policy Address the resumption of the private land in three squatter areas in Kowloon East (i.e. Cha Kwo Ling Village, Ngau Chi Wan Village and Chuk Yuen United Village) to make way for the development of seven hectares of urban sites into a new community mainly comprising high-density public housing. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the latest progress of the aforesaid development projects; the number of housing flats that may be provided, the population that may be accommodated and the average living space per person upon completion of the projects;

(2) given that the population in Kowloon East is aging and welfare facilities in that area have all along been in short supply, of the floor area to be reserved by the Government in such development projects for constructing welfare facilities; and

(3) given that Cha Kwo Ling Village is the only remaining ancient village in Hong Kong, which has a history of 400 years with rich cultural relics and heritage (including not only the Tin Hau Temple of Cha Kwo Ling, which has been classified as a Grade 3 historic building, but also activities in celebration of Lu Pan Patron's Day and Tin Hau Festival which are held annually), whether the Government has drawn up any conservation framework and blueprint for the three villages?

Reply:

President,

To increase land continuously for housing development and speed up Government-led planning, the Government announced in the 2019 Policy Address the commissioning of studies on three urban squatter areas (viz. Cha Kwo Ling Village, Ngau Chi Wan Village and Chuk Yuen United Village) for integrated planning comprising mainly public housing. The studies aim to make better use and expedite development of sites that are suitable for high-density housing development, so as to meet the keen housing demand of the public.

My reply to the three parts of the question raised by Hon Or is as follows:

(1) In respect of the planning of the three squatter areas, the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) has commissioned two Engineering Feasibility Studies (EFSs), with the one covering Cha Kwo Ling Village commenced in mid-2019 and the one for Ngau Chi Wan Village and Chuk Yuen United Village started in early 2020. These studies will cover formulation of the development options, detailed land use proposals (including the distribution of housing, Government, Institution or Community (GIC) facilities, open space and supporting infrastructure) and implementation arrangements, as well as technical assessments. On the premise that these three projects will be taken forward at a relatively high development intensity, we estimate preliminarily that more than seven hectares of land in these three squatter areas can altogether provide about 6 300 public housing units. As regards the development parameters including the actual number of flats to be provided, plot ratio and population figures, these will be confirmed upon completion of EFSs. In the course of the development, we will listen to views of the local community and stakeholders on the development proposals and implementation timetable. Our target is to complete these studies within 2021, followed by local consultation and relevant rezoning procedures of the Outline Zoning Plans. Detailed design for infrastructural facilities will also be carried out concurrently to pave way for funding applications for the related works, and subsequently conduct land resumption, clearance and works in accordance with the established mechanism. If things go well, we will make our best endeavours to officially commence works in around 2025, with a view to increasing public housing supply in the medium term. As and when the epidemic subsides, we will arrange to brief the affected households, business undertakings and possibly affected parties on the studies, implementation processes and the Government's compensation and rehousing arrangements, etc.

(2) As stated above, other than public housing, the development proposals for the three squatter areas will also provide suitable GIC facilities to address the needs arising from the additional population brought by the future development and district demand. Based on the scale of the proposed development and the supply-and-demand of local community facilities, and with reference to the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines and comments from relevant departments, we will pursue comprehensive planning addressing the needs of the community. Land and floor space will be accordingly reserved for the provision of facilities for children, elderly, education, healthcare, recreation and transport, etc. We will try to optimise the land resources reserved for implementation of these GIC facilities under the "single site, multiple use" concept wherever practicable. Details like the actual types, floor space required and exact mode of development of GIC facilities will be confirmed by the EFSs and subject to consultation with relevant departments. We will further gauge views from stakeholders during local consultation prior to initiating the rezoning process.

(3) These three squatter areas have a long history. The study area of Cha Kwo Ling Village covers the Law Mansion, a historic building accorded with Grade 3 status by the Antiquities Advisory Board (AAB). As for Ngau Chi Wan squatter area, it has Man Fat Nunnery, also a Grade 3 historic building. To strike a balance between development needs and heritage conservation, we will

assess, during the course of the EFSs, whether the proposed works would affect buildings with historical significance and sites of archaeological interest in the squatter areas. Subject to any impact identified, necessary heritage impact assessment and consultation with the AAB will be conducted, so as to devise suitable heritage conservation measures and arrangements. Generally speaking, when formulating development options, our overarching principle is to preserve in-situ the graded historic buildings accorded by the AAB as far as practicable, and to incorporate these buildings in the future development through comprehensive planning. As such, subject to the findings of the studies, our current intention is to preserve the Law Mansion and Man Fat Nunnery in-situ while developing the squatter areas. We will present detailed conservation proposals at the local consultation prior to commencement of rezoning procedure. As for the Tin Hau Temple in Cha Kwo Ling Village, it falls outside the study area of the EFS on Cha Kwo Ling Village. Hence, we believe that the temple and its current associated activities with conservation and cultural values would not be affected by the proposed development.