

# Opening remarks by SDEV on planning and lands policy areas at LegCo Finance Committee special meeting

Following are the opening remarks (English translation) by the Secretary for Development, Ms Bernadette Linn, on planning and lands policy areas at the special meeting of the Legislative Council (LegCo) Finance Committee today (April 13):

Chairman,

In 2023-24, the priority tasks on the Planning and Lands portfolio under the purview of the Development Bureau will follow the principle of enhancing quantity, speed, efficiency and quality.

Enhancing speed and efficiency in increasing land supply

According to the supply forecast of developable land promulgated in October last year, the supply of spade-ready sites will reach 3 280 hectares in the next 10 years. Nearly half of the supply comes from two strategic development projects. This includes 1 300 ha contributed by the "spade-ready sites" at the Northern Metropolis and 300 ha contributed by the reclaimed land at the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands to be ready during this 10-year forecast period.

In addition to providing more than 500 000 new housing units, the Northern Metropolis is also the new engine for the development of Innovation and technology (I&T) and other industries. The Government is pressing ahead with the relevant studies, planning and development, and a number of New Development Area projects are under construction stage. We will soon commence consultation on the planning progress of the San Tin Technopole, the flagship I&T project in the region. Moreover, we will continue to provide support to the Steering Committee on the Northern Metropolis and the Advisory Committee on the Northern Metropolis chaired by the Chief Executive and the Financial Secretary respectively. We are making preparations for the establishment of the Northern Metropolis Co-ordination Office to strengthen the governance system for the Northern Metropolis.

To tie in with the development of the Northern Metropolis, we will roll out progressively for tender three industrial sites near Yuen Long Industrial Estate and two industrial sites in Hung Shui Kiu from this year to develop multi-storey buildings for modern industries. It is expected that around 720 000 square metres of floor space will be provided. The developers will be required to set aside 30 per cent of the floor space of these buildings to be taken up by the Government, so as to accommodate the brownfield operators displaced by clearance exercises. We hope to take forward these pilot projects and will conduct a market sounding exercise later this month before

we begin inviting tender for individual sites.

Regarding the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands project, I appeal to the understanding of the Members as I will go through this project when talking about the Works portfolio in the next meeting session.

As regards the development of Tseung Kwan O (TKO) Area 137 and TKO Area 132, we are considering the views collected when consulting the district earlier on and, in particular, the concerns from the community about the proposed six public facilities in TKO Area 132. We noted such concerns and will commence the environmental impact and other technical assessments, during which we will examine whether the reclamation area off the area could be minimised through slope-cutting and some of these facilities could be relocated into carven.

Separately, with the support from the Panel on Development earlier on, we aim to seek funding approval from the LegCo within this year to kick-start the planning and engineering study for Lung Kwu Tan reclamation and Tuen Mun West area. It is hoped that the reclamation works could commence in 2027 or even earlier.

Apart from forging ahead with the provision of "spade-ready sites" for the construction of public housing, we will secure land for the production of no less than 72 000 private housing units in the coming five years, which is of a scale nearly double that of the previous five-year period. The land will be made available to the market through the Land Sale Programme and railway property developments. This projection has yet to take into account the supply from the Urban Renewal Authority and private developments. We are confident that private housing land supply will remain steady and stable.

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Streamlining procedures

On streamlining procedures, we are working closely with the LegCo Bills Committee on the scrutiny of the bill (Development (Town Planning, Lands and Works) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2022), with a view to seeking for its passage within this year as early as possible. Moreover, we are currently reviewing several development-related administrative procedures. After tapping the industry's views earlier on, we will promulgate the streamlining measures for aspects including the procedures concerning the felling and compensatory planting of trees as well as processing of general building plan submissions progressively starting from mid-2023 as committed, so as to remove barriers for the industry. The establishment of Dedicated Processing Units by the Buildings Department in March this year to expedite the approval process of general building plans submissions for high-yield private residential projects with 500 units or above is one of such measures.

Furthermore, we will formulate implementation plan for extending the standard rates approach for charging land premium to agricultural land in the New Territories and regularising the standard rates arrangement for redevelopment of old industrial buildings. We will introduce a bill into the LegCo in the latter half of this year to streamline the arrangement for

extension of land leases.

### Building a liveable city

As for the harbourfront development, we will continue to develop a continuous and connected harbourfront and high-quality public open spaces along both sides of Victoria Harbour. In the next few years, harbourfront promenades will mainly be developed in Kowloon, in particular in Kai Tak and Cha Kwo Ling areas. Works for the Round-the-Island Trail around Hong Kong Island will commence progressively from this year onward, with the target of connecting 90 per cent of the Trail within five years. In addition, we are going to gather public views on how to amend the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance in order to enhance harbour facilities, etc, and plan to introduce the amendment bill into the LegCo in the first half of next year.

Lastly, we had earlier put forward some proposals for updating and streamlining the compulsory sale regime, as well as enhancing the protection for minority owners. The public consultation exercise is in progress. We plan to submit an amendment bill in the latter half of this year. To align the land registration system in Hong Kong with those adopted in other advanced cities, we will also introduce into the LegCo early next year an amendment bill for the implementation of title registration system on new land first.

The above is a brief report. I appeal to the continuous support from the Members of the Council, as the DEVB will introduce several bills into the LegCo in the future and take forward a number of land creation projects.