

LCQ8: Construction of a shopping mall in Lok Ma Chau

Following is a question by the Dr Hon Kwok Ka-ki and a written reply by the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Gregory So, in the Legislative Council today (April 22):

Question:

It has been reported that a developer plans to lease a car parking site at the junction of San Sham Road and San Tin Tsuen Road in Lok Ma Chau to a foundation for the construction of a boundary shopping mall (shopping mall) in the hope that it will open in time before the "National Day Golden Week" this year. The authorities have indicated that they have co-ordinated relevant government departments to provide advice on the information required to be submitted, the statutory procedures concerned, etc. to the project proponent, and will closely keep in view the progress of the project. It has been reported that a number of logistics companies are currently renting areas on the car park for use as logistics support bases, and the proprietor of one of the companies has disclosed that the car park operator is considering relocating them to a nearby site where a fish pond is situated for their continued operation. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it has fully consulted the local residents on the shopping mall project; if it has, of the means of the consultation and the number of consultation sessions conducted, as well as the feedback of the residents; if not, how the authorities ensure that the shopping mall project is in line with the wishes of the residents;
- (2) whether it knows if the aforesaid foundation and developer have signed any agreement on the shopping mall project; if they have, of the details, including the effective date;
- (3) whether the development of the shopping mall on the aforesaid site complies with the planned land use; if it does not, whether it knows the details and timetable of the application for changing the planned land use of the site to be made by the foundation;
- (4) whether it knows the estimated cost of, the tendering arrangement for and the expected completion date of the project to construct the shopping mall, as well as the opening date of the shopping mall;

(5) whether it knows the operation mode of the shopping mall and if the foundation will select the operator or tenants of the shopping mall by open tender; if the foundation will, of the relevant tendering procedures and criteria as well as the duration of the operation; if not, the justifications for that;

(6) of the details of the ancillary transport facilities for the shopping mall; whether the authorities have conducted a detailed assessment on the impacts of the transport demand arising from the shopping mall on the nearby transport network and public transport services; if they have, of the details; whether the authorities will increase the relevant transport infrastructural facilities and public transport services; if they will, of the details; if not, how the authorities ensure that the existing transport infrastructural facilities in the area are sufficient to meet the transport demand arising from the shopping mall;

(7) whether the operation of logistics business on the aforesaid site where the fish pond is situated complies with its planned land use; if it does not, whether the authorities know the relocation arrangement for the existing tenants to be made by the car park operator and whether it will provide relocation subsidies to them in the event that the Town Planning Board does not approve the relevant application for changing the planned land use; and

(8) whether it has assessed the respective impacts that the shopping mall project and the conversion of the nearby fish pond to a logistics site will have on the surrounding environment and ecology; if it has not, whether the authorities will require the shopping mall project proponent to conduct an environmental impact assessment study in this respect; if they will, of the details?

Reply:

President,

The proposed temporary boundary shopping facility at Lok Ma Chau is a private development project. It is the responsibility of the project proponent to arrange for the relevant land use, construction works, identification of tenants, transport services and other operation matters for the project. The project proponent also needs to make reasonable and appropriate arrangements for the incumbent tenants of the project site.

Application for the above project must follow the established procedures as required

under the planning, lands and other relevant legislation and prescribed by the Government. From the planning perspective, Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance (Cap 131) stipulates that a project proponent must undertake technical assessments on the potential impact of his development project in different respects, such as transport, drainage, sewerage and environment, and apply for planning permission from the Town Planning Board (TPB). In this connection, the Government has established an inter-departmental working group. The Tourism Commission of the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau has been co-ordinating relevant bureaux/departments in providing advice to the proponent on the information required for its applications and the relevant statutory procedures in respect of land administration, planning and works.

At its meeting on February 17, 2015, the Yuen Long District Council passed a motion urging the Government to expedite the development of the boundary shopping facility to help divert visitors to the boundary areas. Upon receipt of a planning application for the proposed temporary boundary shopping facility at Lok Ma Chau, the TPB will make public the relevant application documents. Within the first three weeks of the publication, any person may make comments to the TPB in respect of the application. The TPB will consider the application in a holistic manner.

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