

ANGER OVER SNUB BY  
TOWN PLANNING BOARD

# Yaumati people may petition Parliament

A GROUP of Yaumati residents, whose flats are to be resumed next year, has threatened to petition Parliament if its demands are not met.

The threat was made after the Town Planning Board reportedly rejected a re-development plan submitted by the residents themselves.

The residents of six streets in Yaumati claimed that they had not been informed of the board's decision.

The chairman of the Yaumati Six Street Owners' Association, Poon Chan-kwong said he heard of the rejection through press reports.

About 40 members of the association met Urban Councillor Elsie Elliott yesterday to discuss what action to take.

Mr Poon said the association would like an urban councillor leading a mission to London to present the case.

He said Mrs Elliott had agreed to go to London with the association's representatives.

However, Mrs Elliott was unavailable for comment.

Mr Poon added other councillors had already agreed to go, but he refused to give their names.

At the same time, the association would petition the Governor-in-Council, he said.

Mr Poon stressed that the association would not take any action until the Government's plan had been confirmed.

A government spokesman indirectly confirmed the reports

yesterday when he said that a number of Yaumati properties would be taken into direct government management in April next year.

He assured that "no forced eviction is contemplated" and that all genuine occupiers would be provided with public housing if their homes had to be demolished for re-development.

Former owners are already being paid ex-gratia allowances for the buildings taken into direct management.

Social Welfare Department field staff have also started interviewing those ex-owners who claim financial hardship as a result of the Government's direct management action.

The properties affected are on Chingping Street, Tungkon Street, Leetat Street, Cheungshui Street, Public Square Street and Canton Road.

The spokesman explained that these properties formed a site which was zoned for open space and a school which will in due course be developed to redress the present deficiency in the district.

He also denied that all property owners in the six streets had been assured that their non-renewable 75-year leases would be renewed.

"Prior to 1970 the Government made a general statement to the effect that if lease-expired properties were not required for public development, consideration could be given to their leases being regranted.

"However, the decision in respect of individual cases has obviously had to take into account their own merits. No assurances have been given," the spokesman said.