

1. The meeting was resumed at 9:25 a.m. on 14.6.2022.

2. The following Members and the Secretary were present at the resumed meeting:

Permanent Secretary for Development
(Planning and Lands)
Ms Doris P.L. Ho

Chairperson

Mr Lincoln L.H. Huang

Vice-chairperson

Mr Wilson Y.W. Fung

Mr Stephen L.H. Liu

Dr C.H. Hau

Ms Sandy H.Y. Wong

Mr Stanley T.S. Choi

Mr Daniel K.S. Lau

Mr K.W. Leung

Professor Roger C.K. Chan

Dr Venus Y.H. Lun

Mrs Vivian K.F. Cheung

Mr Vincent K.Y. Ho

Mr Ben S.S. Lui

Ms Bernadette W.S. Tsui

Chief Traffic Engineer (New Territories East)
Transport Department
Mr. K.L. Wong

Assistant Director (Environmental Assessment)
Environmental Protection Department
Mr Terence S.W. Tsang

Director of Planning
Mr Ivan M.K. Chung

Agenda Item 1 (continued)

[Open Meeting (Presentation and Question Sessions only)]

Consideration of Representations and Comments in respect of the Draft Fanling/Sheung Shui Extension Area Outline Zoning Plan No. S/FSSE/1
(TPB Paper No. 10902)

[The item was conducted in Cantonese and English.]

3. The Chairperson said that the meeting was to continue the hearing of representations and comments in respect of the draft Fanling/Sheung Shui Extension Area Outline Zoning Plan No. S/FSSE/1 (the draft OZP).

4. The meeting noted that the presentation to brief Members on the representations and comments, including the background of the draft OZP, the grounds/views/proposals of the representers and commenters, planning assessments and Planning Department (PlanD)'s views on the representations and comments, was made by the government representative in the morning session on 12.6.2023. The PowerPoint and the presentation given by PlanD's representative had been uploaded to the Town Planning Board (TPB/the Board)'s website for viewing by the representers and commenters. Members' declaration of interests had been made in the same session of the meeting and was recorded in the minutes of the respective meeting accordingly.

Presentation and Question Sessions

5. The following government representatives and representers, commenters and their representatives were invited to the meeting at this point:

Government Representatives

Planning Department (PlanD)

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| Mr Anthony K.O. Luk | - District Planning Officer/Fanling, Sheung Shui and Yuen Long East (DPO/FSYLE) |
| Mr Patrick M.Y. Fung | - Senior Town Planner/Fanling, Sheung Shui and Yuen Long East (STP/FSYLE) |

Ms Lily H. Lau - Town Planner/Fanling, Sheung Shui and Yuen Long East (TP/FSYLE)

Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD)

Mr Gavin C.P. Wong - Chief Engineer/North (CE/N)
Mr Daniel T.L. Lau - Senior Engineer/North (SE/N)

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)

Mr Boris S.P. Kwan - Senior Nature Conservation Officer (North) (SNCO(N))
Ms Chole C.U. Ng - Nature Conservation Officer (North) (NCO(N))

WSP (Asia) Ltd.

Mr Emeric W.K. Wan]
Mr Ernest M.C. Tip] Consultants
Mr Dennis C.H. Chan]

Ecosystems Ltd.

Mr Vincent C.S. Lai] Consultants
Mr Klinsmann K.L. Cheung]

Representer/Commenter and Representatives' and Commenters' Representatives

R242/C36 – Hong Kong Golf Club (HKGC)

[Representers and commenters who had authorised HKGC were recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 12.6.2023]

– *HKGC*

Andy Kwok Wing Leung (R354)	Captain
Bryant Lu Hing Yiu (R3486)	Vice Captain
Jeffrey Cheung Shee Chee (R406)	Legal & General Convenor
Ian Paul Gardner (R645)	General Manager
Derald Richard Koster (R5975)	Courses Manager

Alexander Michael Collier Jenkins Director of Communication
(R526)

Candy Lam Wai Yan Director of Community Relation

- *KTA Planning Limited*
Kenneth To Lap Kee
Veronica Luk Yin Sheung

- *Revival Heritage Consultants*
May Ho Sum Yee

- *Urbis Limited*
Alexander Main Duggie **(R353)**

- *aec Limited*
Paul James Leader
David John Stanton
Tommy Hui Chung Hong

- *C & R Wildlife*
Roger Clive Kendrick

- *Executive Counsel Limited*
Timothy John Peirson-Smith **(R3259)**
Hui Cheuk Nam

- *Project Management Solutions (HK)*
Gillian Hancer Gastka

- Fanny Wong Lai Kwan **(R6595)**

6. The Chairperson invited the representers, commenters and/or their representatives to elaborate on their representations/comments.

7. Mr Andy Kwok Wing Leung made the following main points:

- (a) HKGC was well aware that under the term of the respective lease, the 32 hectares (ha) of land of the Fanling Golf Course (FGC) to the east of Fan Kam Road covering Holes 1 to 8 of the Old Course (the Area) would be returned to the Government on 1.9.2023. However, HKGC re-affirmed its opposition to the proposed public housing development at Sub-Area 1;
- (b) the objection to housing development in Sub-Area 1 was not for the benefit of HKGC but was for the benefit of Hong Kong as a whole. The preservation and continued use of the Area, including Sub-Area 1, as golf course for hosting international sports events would help Hong Kong strengthen its role as the events capital of Asia, speed up the recovery of the economy and maintain the competitiveness of the city. In this regard, HKGC appreciated the Chief Executive's indication that the Government was willing to provide land in the Area temporarily for HKGC to host major events even after the Area was reverted to the Government;
- (c) if the housing proposal was implemented, both FGC and Hong Kong would be adversely affected. In fact, there were many alternative housing sites in Hong Kong. The public housing development at Sub-Area 1 should not be pursued;
- (d) the housing provision at Sub-Area 1 would cause unacceptable impacts to FGC, making it difficult to maintain the world-class quality of the venue for hosting international tournaments (such as the LIV Golf League Tournament (LIV Golf)) and mega events. The ensuing presentation would further address the concerns on why housing development in only one part of FGC would in fact affect the entire FGC; and
- (e) in the day's presentation, HKGC's expert consultants would present the findings of various assessments to facilitate Members' consideration of the relevant technical issues of the housing proposal and why the development was not technically feasible.

Heritage Conservation

8. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation and video recordings from Professor Joseph Ting Sun-pao (**R6773**) and Professor P.P. Ho, Ms May Ho Sum Yee made the following main points:

- (a) FGC was an important designed cultural landscape with high heritage value. The Old Course was completed in 1911, which was Hong Kong's first and best example of an 18-hole course dating from the Golden Age of golf design era (late 1800s to 1930s). It had retained and incorporated the natural topography, existing mature trees, and ancestral graves (dated to the Qing and Ming dynasties), shrines, and urns into the design. The cultural landscape value of the Old Course was comparable to world renowned courses like St. Andrews Links in Scotland (1552), Oakmont Country Club in the United States (1903) and Hirono Golf Club in Japan (1932). The design spirit of the Old Course was also adopted in the design of the later New Course and Eden Course. FGC had not been graded as a heritage only due to Hong Kong's legislation that restricted heritage grading to buildings, i.e. not covering cultural heritage;
- (b) FGC embodied a richly-wooded parkland landscape with historic and cultural characters. The retention of ancestral graves with belts of lowland secondary woodland created a unique visual character and evoked images of the clan village/feng shui landscape context of the broader cultural landscape. The historic buildings therein, i.e. the Clubhouse, Half-way House and Fanling Lodge, also formed an integral part of the special visual and cultural context;
- (c) the sensitive design had created a unique landscape supporting a wide variety of flora and fauna, and promoting biodiversity integrated with historic buildings of outstanding architectural value. Over the years, through proper management, FGC had evolved to become a wildlife sanctuary. It demonstrated the importance of synthesising built and natural heritage resources to understand the 'combined works of nature and man' as a designed cultural landscape, setting a rare example of a cultural landscape that had experienced a sustained increase in

biodiversity as a result of human intervention;

- (d) FGC was an authentic and intact cultural heritage in Hong Kong that had been in active use for over a century and was being maintained sustainably. The proactive and sustainable environmental management had played an integral role in protecting the authenticity, integrity and heritage value of FGC, including the Area, which should be properly preserved. In particular, the Old Course had not been affected by any recent developments at the site or neighbouring areas and thus fulfilling the conditions of 'integrity' for World Heritage as defined by the World Heritage Centre of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). FGC was a world-class model, which Hong Kong should be proud of, and should be protected in totality and perpetuity by statutory means including designation of appropriate land use zoning for conservation and recreation. HKGC should be allowed to continue to manage FGC in a high quality standard to sustain its integrity, authenticity and bio-diversity;

- (e) making reference to UNESCO's criteria for assessing world heritage sites, FGC was considered to be 'outstanding' in terms of the historical value, course design value, nature conservation value, sustainability value and architectural value, and also 'high' in scenic value, local value and social-cultural value. The ratings for both 'authenticity' and 'integrity' were outstanding. If the proposed public housing was developed at Sub-Area 1, the integrity of the heritage value of FGC would be damaged. Besides, the 'outstanding' value in the aforementioned aspects would be reduced to 'medium to high' or 'medium', and the 'high' value in the aforementioned aspects would be reduced to 'medium', 'low to medium' or 'low' which were damaging to FGC as an invaluable cultural heritage of Hong Kong. The Government should not allow the bad preservation example in Haw Par Mansion and Tiger Balm Garden to be repeated in FGC; and

- (f) in conclusion, FGC possessed an extremely high heritage significance as a designed cultural landscape and its high integrity and authenticity values should be preserved. Its successful conservation management had protected the critically endangered CSC and turned the golf course into a sanctuary for wildlife. FGC had also demonstrated its commitments to socio-economic and communal

developments. As a result, it had achieved sustainable development with balanced economic, social and environmental goals. FGC should be permanently preserved in totality and zoned as a heritage and recreation site.

Landscape and Trees

9. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Alexander Main Duggie made the following main points:

- (a) the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) should never have been approved as it was not properly prepared. The Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE) was misled and the Board was being misled with incorrect information in the TPB Paper No. 10902, and factual information submitted by HKGC to the Government was being ignored. The approval conditions of the EIA were ineffective in preserving the woodland in Sub-Area 1 and minimising the impacts on tree preservation, landscape and visual aspects given the vague wordings and they were unenforceable because there was no environmental permit and there was no recourse for the public in the event of breached promises;

Tree Survey

- (b) the tree survey of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) conducted by the Government identified only 1,104 trees in Sub-Area 1, of which 70 were Trees of Particular Interest (TPIs), including 24 large TPIs. The numbers were far less than those recorded in HKGC's tree survey audit which identified 1,514 trees, of which 88 were TPIs, including 33 large TPIs scattering throughout Sub-Area 1. In the tree survey (Tree Survey) of the EIA, substantial under-measurement of the diameter, height and canopy spread of the trees was observed. Such under-measurement had led to errors in identifying large TPIs and the dimensions of their Tree Protection Zones (TPZs);
- (c) the criteria for identifying large TPIs and Old and Valuable Trees (OVTs) were the same except that only trees on government land would be registered as OVTs. 27 of the 33 large TPIs in Sub-Area 1 were likely or highly likely to be registered

as OVTs after the Government took back the Area on 1.9.2023;

- (d) taking into account the TPZs for the 33 large TPIs (that should be prohibited from removal if they were accepted by Government for registration as OVTs according to Development Bureau (DEVB) Technical Circular) which were scattered throughout Sub-Area 1 and combining the preservation of the 0.39 ha of woodland stipulated in the respective EIA approval conditions, the remaining developable area in Sub-Area 1 would be reduced to 6.05 ha and in an irregular shape which would preclude high density development thereat;
- (e) the assessment of tree amenity value in the LVIA was indefensible, as it identified only one tree of 'High' amenity value (i.e. important tree to be retained) in Sub-Area 1. The amenity value assessment was self-serving as it removed the project proponent's need to design the scheme to retain more trees. The findings were inconsistent with the identification of 70 TPIs in the Tree Survey, of which 24 were large TPIs. In the tree survey audit undertaken by HKGC, 143 trees in Sub-Area 1 were found to be of 'High' amenity value;
- (f) without an accurate and adequate baseline survey, the LVIA failed to accurately assess the landscape impacts of the housing proposal, leading to wrong conclusions in the LVIA. HKGC estimated that the number of trees and large TPIs (potential OVTs) to be felled would be at least 1,500 and 27 respectively, rather than 996 and 11 as indicated in the LVIA;

Assessment of the LVIA

- (g) the mapping of landscape resources in the LVIA was not properly prepared. It was inconsistent with the Tree Survey where large areas mapped as grassland in LVIA were actually woodland in the Tree Survey, and some areas mapped as woodland were actually grassland. The mapping was also not in line with the ecology resources of the ecological impact assessment (EcoIA) in the EIA. The inaccurate mapping would have knock-on effects on the subsequent measurement of affected areas of woodland and grassland and the evaluation of impacts. The findings of the LVIA could not be trusted;

- (h) the LVIA assessed the Old Course only in terms of its individual landscape resource components of woodland and grassland and as a landscape character area. The Old Course should be assessed as a whole which would be like the ‘Mona Lisa’ of Hong Kong’s cultural heritage landscape. The loss of the eight holes in the Area would mean that the historic Old Course could no longer function as an 18-hole golf course. The LVIA failed to make a holistic assessment of the impacts upon the historic Old Course as a coherent standalone landscape recreational resource and cultural heritage landscape;
- (i) the consequence of some 80 errors, omissions and deficiencies of the LVIA was the failure to identify permanent and irreversible substantial adverse impact on landscape resources and landscape character that could not be practically mitigated. As a whole, the landscape impacts should be classified as ‘unacceptable’;
- (j) in response to the point raised by R1 in the morning session on 12.6.2023 that about 70% of Sub-Area 1 was occupied by man-made features with low ecological value, it should be stressed that Sub-Area 1 had high landscape value, which as a whole was an arboretum of very beautiful old and valuable trees with the presence of 33 large TPis (potential OVTs) of which the abundance and importance were comparable to Kowloon Park where there were 42 OVTs. The staff quarters/facilities, parking and tennis court areas that only occupied about 12.26% of Sub-Area 1 did not justify destroying the unique landscape character and valuable ecological habitats in the remaining part of Sub-Area 1. If the 33 large TPis were to be preserved, the public housing development in Sub-Area 1 would not be feasible;

Tree Preservation Proposal

- (k) the LVIA proposed to retain 11 large TPis and also a cluster of trees on a small knoll in Sub-Area 1 but it failed to demonstrate the practicality of the proposal. In particular, no supporting evidence e.g. cross-section was provided to demonstrate the technical feasibility of preserving the trees at differing site levels;

- (l) it was doubtful whether the proposed retention of the 11 large TPIs would succeed given that (i) the tree dimensions were under-measured, (ii) there was no consideration of existing and proposed ground levels, and (iii) there was no consideration of the necessary TPZ. There would be serious clashes between the large TPIs and the proposed building works and structures. During the construction of the public housing development, the 11 large TPIs would be threatened by the works for site formation and building foundations, excavations required to build drainage and sewerage facilities and other underground utilities, and lowered water table due to the site formation. In fact, the site formation and building construction works would likely require felling of all trees within the development area;

- (m) after completion of the public housing development, any preserved trees in Sub-Area 1 would still be adversely affected by the shading, change in air flow, increased temperature caused by the high-rise tower blocks, and removal of the shelter/protection previously afforded by adjacent trees that were felled. In particular, for the shading impact, major portion of Sub-Area 1 would be covered by the shadows of the proposed building blocks, especially in the winter time. It was estimated that the preserved tree cluster in Sub-Area 1 would only receive direct sunlight for less than three hours in a day for more than six months in a year, that would be detrimental to healthy tree growth;

- (n) the claim in the EIA additional information that there were abundant cases of OVTs being maintained within existing housing developments of the Housing Department (HD) was false. In fact, HD had very few experiences in maintaining OVTs in their sites. It was doubtful whether HD would be able to preserve the potential OVTs in the future public housing development;

Tree Transplanting Proposal

- (o) the LVIA proposed to transplant two large TPIs to locations over 700m away with ups and downs along the transplanting paths, and the feasibility of such was highly doubtful. The LVIA also ignored the fact that many other trees had to be

felled to make a pathway wide enough for the necessary heavy machinery used during transplanting;

Compensatory Planting Proposal

- (p) the LVIA proposed compensatory woodland planting covering 5.1 ha of land in Sub-Areas 2 and 3. The proposal would increase the destruction of the mosaic of grassland and woodland currently present in those two Sub-Areas which would exacerbate the adverse impacts on the landscape character and ecological habitats of the Area;
- (q) the proposed woodland compensation area was wrongly plotted and actually overlapped with some existing woodland areas. To avoid the existing woodland areas, the compensatory planting might need to extend to Sub-Area 4, thus altering the ground hydrology and threatening the critically endangered Chinese Swamp Cypress (CSC);

Shading Impact on Remaining Portion of FGC

- (r) the turfgrass of FGC required a large amount of direct sunlight for optimum growth and development. The LVIA failed to identify and assess the significant adverse shading impacts of the proposed high-rise blocks on the golf course on the west side of Fan Kam Road, including the parts used for the Hong Kong Open Championship (HKO);
- (s) according to HKGC's assessment, when the HKO was held around mid-winter, there would only be direct sunlight for three hours at Hole 18 of the Old Course, and five to six hours at Holes 1, 7 and 18 of the Eden Course, Hole 1 of the New Course and the practice putting green in a day. A large area of the golf course to the west of Fan Kam Road would be covered by the shadows of the housing blocks all morning at the Winter Solstice. With such limited amount of sunlight, it would be very difficult to maintain the turfgrass to a high quality needed for international golf tournaments. The proposed public housing development would pose a major risk to the future of Hong Kong's ability to host world class

golf tournament as no other golf course in Hong Kong could host important international golf event;

Conclusion

- (t) the LVIA for the housing proposal was not prepared properly, for its failure to carry out a competent baseline survey, follow proper methodology as laid down in the EIA study brief, Technical Memorandum on Environmental Impact Assessment Process (TM) and guidance notes, and to correctly identify all landscape impacts; and
- (u) the housing proposal would destroy the entirety of the Old Course which was a unique and irreplaceable cultural heritage landscape. The Area should all be zoned “Other Specified Uses” annotated “Conservation cum Recreation” (“OU(CR)”) and HKGC should be allowed to continue their successful stewardship and manage and maintain the Area at high standards.

[The meeting was adjourned for a 15-minute break.]

10. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Paul James Leader made the following main points:

Location and Nature of CSC

- (a) CSC, a critically endangered species, was found in Sub-Area 4;
- (b) CSC was a tree species growing exclusively in flat lowland areas, e.g. in a swampy habitat. Due to human disturbance, the population of CSC in the world had declined to a critically endangered level. The total number of trees in the world was more than 250 but very few (if any) were producing viable seeds;

HKGC Study

- (c) according to Zhang and Fischer (2021), there were 38 mature CSC in the swampy

woodland in Sub-Area 4, with ages ranging from 50 to 214 years old and height up to more than 26m. Up to 50 seedlings had been recorded. The good mix of ages and heights of the CSC and their co-existence with other native plant species indicated that they might be a genuinely wild population. The human planted ones there should be a cohort of the same age;

- (d) the recorded CSC accounted for more than 15% of the global population of the species and was possibly the only population that produced viable seeds. With such importance, they deserved the highest possible protection;
- (e) the species was highly susceptible to hydrological change. According to a groundwater flow model simulating the water level changes in the Area, it was predicted that the building construction would slightly increase the water levels in the upstream of Sub-Area 1 and the compensatory tree planting could lead to about 0.7m decrease of the water level in Sub-Areas 2 to 4, which might influence the hydrological environment for the living of CSC (Professor Jiu Jimmy Jiao (Hong Kong University) Hydrology Study 2023);

EIA Study

- (f) the EIA undertaken for the housing proposal failed to use the best and latest information and had overlooked key reference materials. As a result, the EIA had understated the ecological value of CSC and classified the plant as mere exotic;
- (g) unlike what HKGC had found, the EIA only recorded about 30 individuals of CSC and no seedlings. The distribution of the plants recorded in the EIA was also substantially different from HKGC's record. The EIA had failed to record the nearby stream that formed part of the hydrological environment of the CSC;
- (h) failing to recognise the sensitivity of CSC to hydrological change, the EIA presented no methodology for the assessment of hydrological impacts on the CSC. It did not deal with the hydrological connectivity between Sub-Area 4 and Sub-Areas 2 and 3 (assuming those Sub-Areas were different hydrological units) and

did not recognise that the separation (less than 150m) between the compensatory tree planting and the swampy woodland was close enough to risk significant impacts on the CSC;

- (i) the EIA should also deal with the cumulative impacts of all development proposals near the CSC, including the proposed public housing development and road improvement works at Fan Kam Road which directly abutted and was very close to the swampy woodland;

Zoning and Management of the Area

- (j) in view of the global importance of the CSC, no action running even the slightest risk of changes to the hydrology of the swampy woodland should be permitted. So far, the EIA could not completely rule out impacts on the CSC. Taking into account the relevant scientific literature, the precautionary principle should apply, i.e. nothing should be done unless it was certain that there was no risk of irreversible impact on the swampy woodland; and
- (k) the proposed “Undetermined” (“U”) zone was not supported as it did not safeguard the management of the site for conservation and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) had no track record in managing sites with hydrological/ecological sensitivity.

Ecology

11. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr David John Stanton made the following main points:

EIA Study

- (a) bats were protected under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance (Cap. 170). While it was an important wildlife species in the Area, the EIA failed to properly assess the impact of the housing proposal on the bats in FGC;

- (b) the EIA had not prepared proper ecological baseline information. The best and latest information available was not used and the literature review did not take into account the bat diversity and abundance in FGC;
- (c) the findings of the literature review were not used in the survey design nor assessments. The quality of the survey methodology and the equipment used in the survey was not adequate to properly collect information on the three bat species identified in the study brief. As no survey was undertaken outside the Area, it was not possible to assess indirect impacts on the wider area;
- (d) the 10-month survey of the EIA recorded only one single species in 'scarce' number and no roosting site in Sub-Area 1. The species found was not the three species mentioned in the study brief but the EIA took no follow-up investigation into the three species mentioned in the study brief (i.e. short-nosed fruit bat, lesser bamboo bat and lesser yellow bat);
- (e) the EIA study undertaken based on the said survey failed to assess the importance of the Area for roosting, foraging and serving as an ecological corridor. The EIA did not consider:
 - (i) roosting – destruction of roosts could lead to death of individual bats;
 - (ii) foraging – loss of the foraging habitat due to the housing development, secondary impacts through change of habitat or planting of the compensatory woodland, and impacts on the bats' preys (e.g. moths); and
 - (iii) ecological corridors (within FGC and beyond) – the housing development would result in loss of the ecological corridors and fragmentation of habitats;

HKGC Study

- (f) HKGC had separately undertaken a bat survey and analysis. A preliminary review suggested that a moderate to high number of insectivorous bat extensively used the fairways and greens of the Old Course. In the 7-month study (using

handheld and static detectors) between September 2022 and March 2023, 12 species in both Sub-Areas 1 and 3, 14 species in Sub-Area 2 and 11 species in the Club House area to the west of Fan Kam Road were recorded. The three bat species mentioned in the study brief were recorded in all of the abovementioned areas. 12 roost locations for four species and multiple potential roosting opportunities, including suitable roost locations and evidence of active and old roostings in Sub-Area 1, were also found. The differences of the survey findings from those of the EIA reflected the shortcomings in the EIA survey methodology;

- (g) when comparing with other bat sites, the Area was an important site in Hong Kong. The 17 bat species identified in the Area accounted for 68% of bat species recorded in Hong Kong. FGC was important to bats for the mosaic of habitats at FGC, presence of ecological corridors, structural diversity of vegetation, roosting opportunities, abundance of invertebrates (including moths), low level of light pollution, and low level of night time disturbance;

Zoning and Management of the Area

- (h) it is important to adopt a precautionary approach when considering the rezoning proposal and management of the Area. In this regard, the rezoning would not safeguard the Area and LCSD had no track record of managing sites of conservation value. Unsympathetic vegetation management and application of insecticides could adversely affect bat roosts directly, and fruiting plants and preys as food sources. The increase in lighting across the Area would also be a concern; and
- (i) HKGC should be allowed to continue to manage the Area as it had been an excellent custodian of the habitat mosaic, which had a conservation management plan in place, created opportunities for ecological enhancement, and controlled human disturbances, lighting level and application of pesticide and insecticide.

[The meeting was adjourned for lunch break at 12:45 p.m. Mr Stanley T.S. Choi left this session of the meeting at this point.]

12. The meeting was resumed at 2:10 p.m.

13. The following Members and the Secretary were present in the afternoon session:

Permanent Secretary for Development
(Planning and Lands)
Ms Doris P.L. Ho

Chairperson

Mr Lincoln L.H. Huang

Vice-chairperson

Mr Wilson Y.W. Fung

Dr C.H. Hau

Ms Sandy H.Y. Wong

Mr Daniel K.S. Lau

Mr K.W. Leung

Professor Roger C.K. Chan

Dr Venus Y.H. Lun

Mrs Vivian K.F. Cheung

Mr Vincent K.Y. Ho

Mr Ben S.S. Lui

Ms Bernadette W.S. Tsui

Chief Engineer/New Territories East
Transport Department
Mr K.L. Wong

Assistant Director (Environmental Assessment)
Environmental Protection Department
Mr Terence S.W. Tsang

Director of Planning
Mr Ivan M.K. Chung

14. The following government representatives, representers, commenters and their representatives were invited to the meeting at this point:

Government Representatives

PlanD

Mr Anthony K.O. Luk	-	DPO/FSYLE
Mr Patrick M.Y. Fung	-	STP/FSYLE
Ms Lily H. Lau	-	TP/FSYLE

CEDD

Mr Gavin C.P. Wong	-	CE/N
Mr Daniel T.L. Lau	-	SE/N

AFCD

Mr Boris S.P. Kwan	-	SNCO(N)
Ms Chole C.U. Ng	-	NCO(N)

WSP (Asia) Ltd.

Mr Emeric W.K. Wan]	
Mr Ernest M.C. Tip]	Consultants
Mr Dennis C.H. Chan]	
Ms Anny H.L. Li]	

Ecosystems Ltd.

Mr Vincent C.S. Lai]	Consultants
Mr Klinsmann K.L. Cheung]	

Representers, Commenters and their Representatives

R242/C36 – Hong Kong Golf Club (HKGC)

[Representers and commenters who had authorised HKGC were recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 12.6.2023.]

– *HKGC*

Andy Kwok Wing Leung (R354)	Captain
Bryant Lu Hing Yiu (R3486)	Vice Captain
Jeffrey Cheung Shee Chee (R406)	Legal & General Convenor
Ian Paul Gardner (R645)	General Manager
Daniel James O’Neill	Director of Golf
Derald Richard Koster (R5975)	Courses Manager
Alexander Michael Collier Jenkins (R526)	Director of Communication
Candy Lam Wai Yan	Director of Community Relation

– *KTA Planning Limited*

Kenneth To Lap Kee
Veronica Luk Yin Sheung

– *Revival Heritage Consultants*

May Ho Sum Yee

– *Urbis Limited*

Alexander Main Duggie (**R353**)

– *aec Limited*

Paul James Leader
David John Stanton
Tommy Hui Chung Hong

– *C & R Wildlife*

Roger Clive Kendrick

– *Executive Counsel (Hong Kong) Limited*

Timothy John Peirson-Smith (**R3259**)
Hui Cheuk Nam

- *Project Management Solutions (HK)*
Gillian Hancer Gastka

- Gloria Wong Yee Man (**R1360**)
- Frederick Ma Si Hang
- Chan Tze Ling
- John David Berry
- Michael Hamilton Hobson
- Peter Cookson-Smith
- Hau Alice
- Taichi Kho
- Fanny Wong Lai Kwan (**R6595**)

15. The Chairperson invited the representers, commenters and/or their representatives to elaborate on their representations/comments.

16. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Roger Clive Kendrick made the following main points:

- (a) he was an entomological consultant and had rich experiences in moth recording in the United Kingdom and Hong Kong. He disagreed with the findings of the EIA and considered that the Area should be entirely zoned “OU(CR)”;

- (b) an EcoIA should have: (i) sufficient and accurate ecological data and baseline information to allow a complete and objective identification, prediction and evaluation of the potential ecological impacts; (ii) establishment of the ecological profile such as the species diversity and abundance of major taxa groups (including the type and number of species found), community structure, seasonal patterns, ecological value and interdependence of the habitats and species; and (iii) investigation and description of the existing wildlife uses of various habitats, including moths;

- (c) it was the first time an EIA had paid special attention to moths. As such,

a thorough and complete understanding of the methodology was needed by undertaking reviews on relevant literatures for moths. Without a clear and well-defined methodology, the data collected would not be accurate;

- (d) by referring to various literature reviews and books on the practical methodology for moth survey and analysis, minimum standards (in various aspects including literature review, moth baseline methodology and moth habitat use methodologies, seasonality, flight periodicity etc.) were formulated to meet the requirements set out in the TM and EIA Study Brief. The moth survey data were found with incomplete baseline survey in mostly sub-optimal weather conditions and the methodology adopted did not meet the minimum standards and requirements, and thus the findings were inaccurate, missing a large number of moth species and not representative. Consequently, the mitigation measures proposed therein for moth preservation were based on supposition and false assumptions;
- (e) HKGC had conducted three moth surveys (covering the wet, transitional and dry seasons) in eight study sites within the FGC between 2018 and 2023, four of which were in the Area (i.e. one in each of the Sub-Areas). A total of 729 moth species were found out of the 2,675 species (about 27%) documented in Hong Kong. For species of conservation concern (SCC), 107 species were found out of approximately 250 documented species in Hong Kong. Of the 107 SCC, 16 species were only found in Hong Kong. Over the last decade, there were about 50 new species of moths found each year and some of them were recorded in the three surveys. Moreover, it was observed in the surveys that moth species were not distributed evenly throughout FGC. There were different species assemblages found at the four Sub-Areas in the Area;
- (f) taking Sub-Area 1 as an example, (i) amongst the 264 moth species found, 82 species were not recorded elsewhere in the EIA study site; (ii) 44 SCC were found out of the 107 such species recorded in FGC; and (iii) seven species of global conservation concern were recorded;

- (g) notwithstanding the above, the data found in the moth surveys conducted by the HKGC was still incomplete. For example, the survey did not record seasonal species and species which were active at day time or those that did not respond to light traps. It was estimated that less than half of the species in FGC were recorded in the surveys. Despite that, HKGC's surveys were still more thoroughly conducted as compared with the moth survey in the EcoIA conducted by the Government, in which the number of species recorded was significantly lower;
- (h) amongst the sites with high moth diversity in the local context (including FGC, Kadoorie Centre of the University of Hong Kong in Shek Kong, Kadoorie Farm and Botanical Garden and Tai Po Kau Headland Conservation Area and etc.), the FGC ranked the top in terms of the percentage of SCC found (i.e. 7.82%). Proper conservation management had been carried out in the four sites with the highest moth diversity. Therefore, the current management by HKGC should be maintained and a comprehensive conservation management plan was needed to further preserve the moth species and avoid degradation of habitats and ecology in the Area; and
- (i) light pollution should also be taken into account when preparing the relevant assessments as it would bring adverse impacts on moths. However, it was not taken into account in the EcoIA.

[Mr Lincoln L.H. Huang rejoined the meeting during Mr Kendrick's presentation.]

17. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Tommy Hui Chung Hong made the following main points:

- (a) summaries of the preceding presentations on CSC, bats and moths in FGC were provided;
- (b) surveys on species diversity (mammal, bird, reptile, amphibian, butterfly, moth, dragonfly, fish and aquatic invertebrates) at the FGC, the Area and Sub-

Area 1 were conducted by HKGC over the past few years. It was found that Sub-Area 1 was of high species diversity with 82 SCC of various taxa identified even though it only occupied 6.4% of the total area of FGC. For instance, more than half of the mammals, as well as large number of birds and moths in FGC were found in Sub-Area 1;

- (c) while some representers had indicated that Sub-Area 1 had been partly developed, it should be noted that the developed land only accounted for 16.5 % of the total area, with the remaining area being turfgrass, woodland and mixed woodland. Some might also claim that the turfgrasses were man-made land, however, a substantial number of species had been found therein;
- (d) the accepted criteria listed in Table 2 of Annex 8 of the TM (naturalness, size, diversity, rarity, re-creatability, fragmentation, ecological linkage, potential value, nursery/breeding ground, age and abundance/richness of wildlife) should be followed during the EIA process for evaluation of the ecological importance of a habitat and species. Generally speaking, ecological impact on an important habitat or species would be more significant;
- (e) the ecological value of various habitats and the overall ecological value of Sub-Area 1 were under-rated in the EIA and the following observations were made:
 - (i) an eco-friendly management approach was adopted for the turfgrass land and a wide range of species was found therein. Given the uniqueness and rareness of the turfgrass, its large size, the wildlife diversity and abundance and the absence of supporting information on the claim that the species recorded were associated with other habitats, the ecological value for turfgrass land should be “Medium” instead of “Low”;
 - (ii) as for the woodland and mixed woodland, given the age (aerial photos showed that the woodland was present in 1980), the time required for woodland to establish and mature and likelihood to re-create a habitat of equal ecological importance, linkage to the surrounding natural

habitats (e.g. Sub-Areas 1 and 2 were interlinked) and presence of various SCC, in particular the very rare *Ardisia villosa* (雪下紅) and other native flora species, it should be rated as “Medium” instead of “Low to Medium”; and

- (iii) considering the critically endangered status of the CSC, the site history and the potential value, the swampy woodland should be rated either “High” or “Very High” instead of “Medium to High”;
- (f) in view of the above, the overall ecological value of Sub-Area 1 should be rated as “Medium” instead of “Low to Medium”. The “Medium” rating for Sub-Area 1 was well supported by the best and latest available information. It was stated in the EIA that Sub-Areas with medium to high ecological values should not be disturbed by the proposed residential development, which meant that habitats and species in Sub-Area 1 should also be preserved;
- (g) the Area would be reverted to the Government on 1.9.2023 for management by the LCSD (including the northernmost portion earmarked for the public housing development until such was handed over to the CEDD for commencement of work). There was no detailed information on the management and maintenance for the Area to be provided by LCSD. Moreover, LCSD had insufficient experience in managing ecologically sensitive areas and had precedents of poor management of natural bird species. LCSD was hence not a suitable agent to take over the management of the Area; and
- (h) the Area was not a suitable site for public housing development from the ecological perspective and the proposed zonings of “U” and “OU(CR)” were inadequate to protect the ecology in the Area.

[Mr Wilson Fung joined the meeting during Mr Hui’s presentation.]

18. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Derald Richard Koster made the following main points:

- (a) he was the course manager of the HKGC with about 43 years of experience in golf course management and had a degree in horticulture;
- (b) sufficient sunlight and air movement were the two key requirements for growing good quality turfgrass;
- (c) based on his experience, Hong Kong was by far the most difficult city to grow and maintain turfgrass due to the limited amount of sunlight. The turfgrasses in HKGC were warm-season grasses which generally required a minimum of eight to ten hours of sunlight per day. It could be seen from the recent site photos taken in the FGC that there was noticeable impact on the overall landscape quality e.g. tree growth in the areas which were adjacent to existing buildings. The proposed public housing development in Sub-Area 1 would cause shadowing effect which would reduce the growth of turfgrass particularly during the winter months. It was anticipated that the golf holes and practice putting green to the west of the proposed public housing development in Sub-Area 1, which were used on a daily basis by members and public golfers as well as international events, would be adversely affected;
- (d) air movement bringing in fresh new oxygen was very important for growing healthy turfgrass. The proposed high-rise public housing development would permanently change the air movement in the area which would bring adverse impact on the health of turfgrass;
- (e) healthy turfgrasses and trees could improve air quality, purify water, prevent soil erosion by wind and water, create a cooling effect during warm weather, reduce allergens, add visual appeal, reduce the noise level and glare reflection and serve as leisure and recreational space;
- (f) it was necessary to have sufficient supportive infrastructures, experienced and well-trained staff, proper equipment and consistent maintenance programs to maintain the 8 holes in the Area to the same present standard, which would require HK\$ 30 to HK\$ 40 million set-up cost for infrastructure, HK\$ 10 to HK\$

15 million for maintenance equipment and maintenance cost of about HK\$ 10 million annually;

- (g) the HKGC organised a lot of community outreach and sports programmes and opened the night walking trail in the Area on a daily basis for the enjoyment of the villagers and the public; and
- (h) in view of the benefits of the golf courses to both the environment and public, he urged the Government to identify another site for public housing development and maintain the status quo in the Area.

[Professor Roger C.K. Chan rejoined the meeting during Mr Koster's presentation.]

19. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Timothy John Peirson-Smith made the following main points:

- (a) he had worked in impact assessment for years and had been in Hong Kong since 1990, and was proudly the co-chair of International Association of Impact Assessment. He had been working for the HKGC since 2018 for stakeholders outreach and public consultation;
- (b) although it was proposed in the report of Task Force on Land Supply (TFLS) in 2018 that the sites under private recreational lease (PRL) could be one of the short-to-medium term land supply options, TFLS did not propose FGC for housing developments per se. The report also indicated that the views on FGC were polarised. In addition, the questionnaire conducted in relation to which of the land supply options could meet the shortfall of land showed that brownfield sites and private agricultural land were the two most popular options while the sites under PRL only ranked the third. Therefore, it was an erroneous claim by TFLS that majority of the public supported to use portions of the FGC for housing development;
- (c) the purpose of the Technical Study on Partial Development of FGC – Feasibility Study (the Technical Study) conducted by CEDD was in conflict with the

recommendation of TFLS in that the Technical Study was to ascertain the highest flat yield attainable rather than to study the suitability of the FGC for housing development as recommended by TFLS;

- (d) in response to the findings in the Technical Study and EIA, the HKGC had subsequently made submissions to the TFLS, the ACE and relevant government departments to provide supporting evidences to refute the Government's proposal;
- (e) the EIA was made available for public inspection in 2022. A total of 1,449 objecting comments were received by the ACE, which was equivalent to 99.9% of the total comments received. Even though CEDD was advised to engage the public and the interest groups during the course of the EIA study, HKGC had never been consulted. Moreover, both North District Council (NDC) and Sheung Shui District Rural Committee (SSDRC) objected to the partial development of FGC due to the loss of cultural heritage of FGC and potential disruptions to the hospital services of North District Hospital, flooding and traffic congestion of the local road networks. During the statutory plan-making process, 99.3% of the representations and comments received objected to the proposed public housing development in the "Residential (Group A)" ("R(A)") zone;
- (f) inconsistency was found in the EIA regarding the proposed use of a strip of land along Fan Kam Road to west of the "R(A)" zone. It was stated in section 2 of the EIA that the strip of land would be used for amenity area while it was indicated as being reserved for future road widening in the landscape section of the EIA. The Board should take into account that future road widening along Fan Kam Road would adversely affect the CSC in Sub-Area 4. Another inaccuracy was also spotted in the evaluation of the four Sub-Areas. The EIA indicated that the age of the woodland of Sub-Area 1 was "N/A" but the woodland could be identified on the historic aerial photos taken in different times;

- (g) in 2022, ACE considered that the information in the EIA was insufficient and requested CEDD to submit additional information including additional bird and moth surveys, bat methodologies, adoption of 1:1.5 tree compensation and management plan, shading impacts, preservation of 0.39 ha of the 70-year-old woodland, hydrological impacts on ecology, and Qing Dynasty ancient grave conservation. Despite the deficiencies found in the additional information submitted by CEDD, the Director of Environmental Protection (DEP) approved the EIA subject to a list of ‘extraordinary’ approval conditions in 2023. It was evident from the approval conditions and recommendations that there were uncertainties in the implementation of the proposed development in the “R(A)” zone. Also, consideration of alternative sites was required in the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO);
- (h) the feasibility of the “R(A)” zone was not demonstrated in the approved EIA and the Board should also rezone Sub-Area 1 to “OU(CR)” to preserve the ecology, cultural and social values of FGC; and
- (i) if the Area was to be returned to Government on 1.9.2023, the ecologically and culturally valuable historic site would degrade rapidly and its cultural and conservation values would diminish unless it was maintained in the current meticulous custodianship by HKGC.

[Mrs Vivian K.F. Cheung rejoined the meeting at this point.]

20. Mr Frederick Ma Si Hang made the following main points:

- (a) he was a member of the HKGC and other golf clubs in Hong Kong and Mainland China. While supporting Government’s commitment to increase the public housing supply, he considered that the Area should not be redeveloped for residential use;
- (b) the Old Course of FGC was the oldest golf course in Hong Kong with a history over 100 years. The reduction of the FGC area would discourage sport development and undermine HKGC’s ability to host large scale international

golf tournaments in Hong Kong (such as the LIV Golf), which would in turn affect Hong Kong's reputation on the international stage and its position as an international financial centre;

- (c) the tournaments in FGC, e.g. HKO attracted many overseas spectators annually which was important for Hong Kong's tourism industries;
- (d) FGC was also a vital business and networking venue that facilitated many important business decisions, gatherings and discussions. The FGC was important for Hong Kong to retain international companies;
- (e) Fan Kam Road was currently very congested. The additional traffic volumes generated by the proposed public housing development could not be addressed properly to which NDC objected and there was no possibility for railway connection to the nearby rail station to support the development;
- (f) the examples of redevelopment of a golf course and horse racing course for residential use in Singapore were not relevant. The ratio of number of golf course to population in Singapore was much higher than that of Hong Kong. Hong Kong had to pay a much higher opportunity cost for losing part of the FGC; and
- (g) any housing proposal should be put forward after thorough and rational consideration and the matter should not be politicized. The Northern Metropolis and Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands were solutions for the housing problem.

21. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Michael Hamilton Hobson made the following main points:

- (a) he had been living in Hong Kong for almost 40 years and considered Hong Kong the home for him and his family. He had extensive experiences in marketing for the hospitality industry that would help revive Hong Kong's

tourism. While understanding the community's demand for public housing, he considered that there were better housing site alternatives than FGC;

- (b) he was invited to join the Mega Arts and Cultural Event Fund Committee in 2009 to assess the applications and allocate the HK\$ 250 million fund for organising and promoting major tourism events. The Mega Arts and Cultural Event Fund Committee was unable to allocate all the funds to event proposals mainly due to insufficient event venues. As Asia's World City, Hong Kong needed world-class venue to support its position. FGC was not only the oldest golf course in Asia, it was also the only venue for hosting large scale international golf events such as HKO, Hong Kong Ladies Open Championship (HKLO) and the World City Championship. Hence, reduction of the FGC area and supporting infrastructures for holding golf events would eliminate Hong Kong from the international golfing stage;
- (c) Hong Kong had positioned itself to become the World City. The positioning was designed to highlight the existing strengths in areas such as character, tourism, history and heritage. The HKO was broadcasted live to 105 countries with viewers from over 800 million households, helping to stimulate interests and enhance Hong Kong as a tourism destination and bring economic benefits. The loss of the oldest golf course in Asia would have direct impact on Hong Kong's international reputation from a brand positioning perspective;
- (d) FGC had played a crucial role in supporting the community's mental health and sports development, and many of those events were held in the Old Course. FGC had helped with youth sports development, as was evident from the home-grown golfer Mr Taichi Kho. In fact, about 50% of the golf rounds in FGC were played by non-members; and
- (e) the decision of whether to preserve Hong Kong's reputation and attractiveness would be vested in the Board.

22. Mr Peter Cookson-Smith made the following main points:

- (a) he was an architect, planner and urban designer and had been living in Hong Kong since 1976;
- (b) although the Government remained committed to the proposal for public housing in the Sub-Area 1, he was pleased to see that the Government had shelved the proposed “R(A)” zone and proposed a “U” zoning. It would be even better if the Sub-Area 1 could continue to be used for conservation and passive recreational purposes;
- (c) there was shortage in tourist destinations in Hong Kong. Removal of a world-renowned facility would worsen the situation;
- (d) the Government could prioritise and explore other short-to-medium term land supply options, such as development of brownfield sites, areas designated for development of village houses, land hoarded by the private developers, or the recent Heung Yee Kuk (HYK)’s public housing proposal in Ping Kong Tsuen, which was a village located next to FGC. Moreover, some long-term development options such as Kwai Tsing Container Terminals, military sites and Tsing Shan in Tuen Mun could also be explored; and
- (e) from a strategic planning perspective, the estimation of overall land availability and housing need should be based on a carefully conducted demographic analysis. The decrease in labour force and fertility rate over the past few years had dampened the housing demand. The short-to-medium term land supply had already been met by the committed housing programmes in new development areas (NDAs) and existing new towns such as Tung Chung New Town Extension, as well as redevelopments of public housing estates by the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HKHA). Therefore, there were sufficient developable land to cater for the projected population growth.

23. Mr Taichi Kho made the following main points:

- (a) he was a member of the Hong Kong National Team of HKGA, winner of the World City Championship 2023 and the first player from Hong Kong to win on the Asian Tour. He was a truly home-grown professional golfer and had been receiving supports from the HKGC and HKGA since he was a young kid;
- (b) FGC was a memorable place to him and many international golfers appreciated the beauty and heritage in FGC and enjoyed playing in the Old Course;
- (c) with the continuation of the international tournaments like HKLO, HKO and World City Championship, Hong Kong would have the potential to become a golfing powerhouse. FGC was non-replaceable for holding those international golf events;
- (d) FGC was an essential venue for training of local golfers which needed to be retained. Golfers' needs should also be respected and FGC should be allowed to continue as a platform for local professional golfers, like Miss Tiffany Chan, to showcase their talents to the world. To professional golfers, FGC was not a place for leisure and recreation but a place for them to nurture and enhance their golf skills;
- (e) FGC could be a tourist destination which would help support tourism and economic revival after the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- (f) the proposed public housing development should be withdrawn and the Old Course should be retained.

24. As the presentations of the representers, commenters and their representatives had been completed, the meeting proceeded to the Q&A session. The Chairperson explained that Members would raise questions and the Chairperson would invite the representers, commenters, their representatives and/or the government representatives to answer. The Q&A session should not be taken as an occasion for the attendees to direct questions to the Board or for cross-examination between parties.

The Area

25. A Member raised the following questions:

- (a) the rationale of boundary delineation of the four Sub-Areas; and
- (b) the rationale of selecting only Sub-Area 1 for development, given that Sub-Area 2 was similar to those “Green Belt” sites rezoned for development in the past years in terms of flora and fauna species.

26. With the aid of some PowerPoint slides, Mr Anthony K.O. Luk, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD, and Mr Gavin C.P. Wong, CE/N, CEDD, made the following main points:

- (a) the four Sub-Areas were delineated mainly based on the topography and on-ground features. Sub-Areas 1 and 2 were divided by a woodland; Sub-Areas 2 and 3 were separated by an existing road to On Po Village; and Sub-Area 4 was delineated to contain the entire CSC cluster;
- (b) a host of factors (including ecological considerations) was considered in assessing the suitability of the Area for development:
 - (i) in planning terms, Sub-Area 1 was close to the existing Fanling/Sheung Shui New Town where comprehensive transport infrastructure and community facilities were readily available and hence suitable to be developed as a New Town extension. Moreover, the site configurations of Sub-Areas 2 to 4 were rather narrow and less suitable for development;
 - (ii) in ecological terms, Sub-Areas 2 to 4 were of relatively higher ecological values (‘moderate’ or ‘moderate-to-high’) and more ecologically interconnected. Sub-Area 1 was comparatively lower in ecological value (‘low-to-moderate’);
 - (iii) in traffic terms, Sub-Area 1 could be served by a number of roads (e.g.

Po Kin Road, Ping Kong Road and some other roads nearby), whereas Sub-Areas 2 to 4 would rely more on the sole access road, Fan Kam Road, which was already of limited capacity; and

- (c) on balance of the above considerations, only Sub-Area 1 was considered suitable for development. In the past, there were cases where sites with ‘moderate’ ecological value had been identified for development, with incorporation of appropriate mitigation measures. An example was the Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen NDA where a small part of which involved habitat loss of some plantation and woodlands of low to moderate ecological value.

The EIA Report

27. Some Members raised the following questions:

- (a) whether the EIA report had taken into account the ecological concerns raised by HKGC; and
- (b) how compliance with the EIA approval conditions could be ensured and whether there was provision for variation of the EIA approval conditions.

28. With the aid of some PowerPoint slides, Mr Anthony K.O. Luk, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD, and Mr Gavin C.P. Wong, CE/N, CEDD, replied that the EcoIA formed part of the EIA. Before conducting the EcoIA, the scope, methodologies and technical requirements for the EcoIA had been approved by DEP. The EIA report was submitted for ACE’s consideration in June 2022 and, at ACE’s request in August 2022, additional information on eight aspects of (i) additional bird survey, (ii) additional moth survey, (iii) additional information of bat survey, (iv) tree compensation plan and management plan, (v) detailed layout plan (with the 0.39 ha woodland preserved), (vi) hydrological impact analysis, (vii) shading impact on the trees, and (viii) existing graves in Sub-Area 1 was submitted to ACE for discussion in May 2023. The EIA report was approved by DEP with conditions on 11.5.2023.

29. In response to the Chairperson’s question on the EIAO procedures involved in processing the EIA report, Mr Terence S.W. Tsang, Assistant Director (Environmental

Assessment), Environmental Protection Department (AD(EA), EPD), made the following main points:

- (a) within the first two months upon receipt of the EIA report under the EIAO, the DEP had consulted relevant Government departments and considered that the EIA report met the requirements of the TM and the Study Brief for exhibition for public comment. After the one-month public inspection period, DEP submitted the EIA report together with the received public comments (including HKGC's report) for consideration by the ACE in August 2022. The ACE recommended and DEP requested CEDD to furnish additional information on eight items (some of which included HKGC's concerns raised in today's presentation). Subsequently, CEDD had consulted the ACE on the additional information ("Additional Information") before submitting it to DEP under the EIAO in May 2023. On 11.5.2023, DEP approved the EIA report with conditions that, amongst others, CEDD should review the development parameters (e.g. plot ratio, building height etc.) and revise the layout plan of the proposed public housing development with a view to preserving about 0.39 ha of woodland at the centre of Sub-Area 1 as far as practicable and submit revised layout plan for DEP's approval;
- (b) during the EIAO process, public comments were invited on the project profile and the completed EIA report. At these two stages, public comments including those from HKGC had been received and thoroughly considered. For instance, the EIA Study Brief had taken on board the comments from HKGC and included the requirement for assessment on moth. Also, the EIA report had suitably adopted some survey findings provided by HKGC (e.g. occurrence of owls nearby etc.); and
- (c) under the EIAO, it would be an offence if a person who commenced works without a valid EP or without following the requirements set out in the EP. For the proposed public housing development, albeit without EP issued under the EIAO, the project proponent, being a Government department, would not commence works until DEP considered that the conditions attached to the EIA approval had been fully complied with. According to the established

administrative arrangement, the EPD and relevant Government departments would monitor compliance of the EIA approval conditions, and any non-compliance needed to be rectified. Besides, the EIA approval conditions were available in the public domain for public inspection. There was no provision under the EIAO to vary the EIA report approval conditions.

Ecological Mitigation Measures

30. A Member asked whether the non-compliance with the TM and Study Brief requirements as claimed by HKGC, which would result in environmental/ecological impacts, could be mitigated.

31. In response, Mr Terence S.W. Tsang, AD(EA), EPD, made the following main points:

- (a) if there were unresolvable problems or any significant residual environmental impacts associated with the proposed public housing development, the DEP could not approve the EIA report under the EIAO. In the ACE meetings which he had personally attended, ACE members were of the view that the EIA report had met the requirements of the TM and Study Brief, having considered all relevant matters including AFCD's advice that the said woodland in Sub-Area 1 was not so ecologically important that it could not be removed; and
- (b) the EIA approval conditions imposed by DEP sought to address ACE members' concerns in a bid to further improve the proposed housing layout to preserve the 0.39 ha woodland as far as practicable. DEP did not see any particular problem for the project proponent to comply with the approval conditions.

32. Mr Anthony K.O. Luk, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD, supplemented that the value of a habitat was evaluated against a set of 11 criteria under the TM, most of which were not quantifiable (e.g. naturalness) for straightforward comparison and would involve professional judgement in qualitative terms. The EIA report had demonstrated no insurmountable problems for the proposed public housing development and no adverse environmental impacts (e.g. noise, sewage etc.) with practicable mitigation measures. CEDD and HKHA had

sufficient experience in developing public housing projects.

33. Mr Alexander Main Duggie (**R353**) made the following main points:

- (a) he replied in the negative; and
- (b) many large TPis in the Area were potentially registerable OVTs. Once they were successfully registered, removal of those trees was prohibited unless with strong justifications according to the relevant DEVB Technical Circular. Any member of the public could nominate potential OVTs for registration for consideration by the Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section (GLTMS) under DEVB. That registration was a long process. After the Government took back the Area, HKGC would nominate all those TPis for registration as potential OVTs, which, if the registration was accepted, would imply that they could not be removed. Since those potential OVTs were scattered throughout Sub-Area 1, in-situ preservation of those trees would render it impossible to build a housing development with 12,000 flats. One of the options to mitigate was to pursue low-rise house development on land free of trees.

34. Mr David John Stanton (**R242/C36's representative**) made the following main points:

- (a) he replied in the negative; and
- (b) since the information on the current ecological baseline was incomplete, the ecological impact had not been properly evaluated. If it was assessed with proper methodology and best available literature taking into account HKGC's findings, the ecological value of Sub-Area 1 should be upgraded from 'low-to-moderate' to 'moderate' that would render Sub-Area 1 unsuitable for development.

35. Mr Timothy John Peirson-Smith (**R3259**) made the following main points:

- (a) he replied in the negative;
- (b) if there had not been any insurmountable problems for the proposed public housing development, ACE would not have requested DEP to impose such a long list of EIA approval conditions and recommendations, which effectively amounted to redesigning the entire housing development afresh. That implied that the proposed “R(A)” zone was not feasible; and
- (c) on the 0.39 ha woodland in Sub-Area 1, the approval condition was to preserve it as far as practicable. Given that CEDD had previously responded to ACE that preservation of the said woodland in the current housing layout was not recommended as it would affect the proposed public housing development, whether CEDD would make a genuine effort to preserve the said woodland when revising the housing layout was questionable.

Tree Survey and Tree Preservation

36. Some Members raised the following questions:

- (a) more information on the Tree Survey, including the required level of details for EIA purpose;
- (b) more details about the tree compensation proposal;
- (c) more details about the tree retention proposal;
- (d) whether Sub-Area 2 could be partly developed to absorb part of the proposed public housing development in a bid to preserve the existing woodland in Sub-Area 1, noting that Sub-Area 2 which was of higher ecological value was already proposed to undergo some construction works (i.e. Fan Kam Road widening) under the proposed scheme;
- (e) the discrepancy in the number of trees surveyed in Sub-Area 1 by CEDD and HKGC;

- (f) the location of large TPIs (potential OVTs as claimed by HKGC) in Sub-Area 1;
- (g) the shading impact of the proposed residential towers on tree clusters in Sub-Area 1; and
- (h) whether the Government could provide information about development projects involving tree compensation approved by the Board in the past 20 years and the success rate and CEDD's maintenance period of the compensatory planting.

37. With the aid of some PowerPoint slides, Mr Anthony K.O. Luk, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD, Mr Gavin C.P. Wong, CE/N, CEDD, and Mr Klinsmann K.L. Cheung, the Consultant, made the following main points:

- (a) there were various technical circulars issued by DEVB to govern tree management at various stages of the development process. According to the Study Brief (No. ESB-318/2019) issued by DEP, a broadbrush tree survey should be carried out for assessing the landscape and visual impact. The Tree Survey conducted by CEDD was more elaborate with additional tree information collected, exceeding the requirements of the Study Brief. At the later detailed design stage, CEDD would undertake a detailed tree survey for formulating proposal on tree transplant and tree removal;
- (b) in principle, compensatory planting should be provided on-site as a matter of priority unless circumstances justified off-site options. In the EIA report findings, it was stated that there would be removal of about 996 trees in Sub-Area 1 and compensatory planting was proposed in an area of about 5 ha in Sub-Areas 2 and 3 or other suitable locations. If the LCSD, after taking up the management of the Area, considered that the existing turfgrass in Sub-Area 2 and Sub-Area 3 should be retained for public use, off-site options for tree compensation would be considered. CEDD had committed to providing an establishment period of three years for the compensatory trees after their plantation to ensure that the compensatory trees would be satisfactorily

established;

- (c) according to the relevant DEVB Technical Circular, the ‘dripline method’ for tree protection should be adopted under normal circumstances. The ‘dripline method’ was also considered the most suitable for determining the TPZ for the 11 TPIs in Sub-Area 1 to be retained. To provide additional protection to the retained trees, enhanced TPZs (i.e. additional 3m-wide buffer from the driplines) would be adopted. Moreover, the ‘tree island’ method and ‘tree well’ method could be used to preserve trees located at levels higher or lower than the adjacent site formation level of the proposed public housing development. All the above tree preservation methods had been commonly adopted in other public housing projects. There was no requirement in the Study Brief that technical cross-section drawings had to be provided to illustrate the tree retention method. Under the EIA approval conditions, CEDD was required to review, inter alia, the housing layout with a view to preserving the 0.39 ha of woodland in Sub-Area 1 as far as practicable. CEDD would later undertake a further study and consideration would be given to providing more technical details of tree retention, if necessary;
- (d) Sub-Areas 2 to 4 were relatively narrow and irregular in shape and considered rather constrained for any housing development. There was currently no plan, including for the proposed public housing development, to widen Fan Kam Road. The 10m-wide setback along Fan Kam Road in Sub-Area 1 was only a reserve for any future road widening proposal if found necessary later. There was no such setback reserve along Fan Kam Road in Sub-Areas 2 to 4;
- (e) for the purpose of the LVIA, TPIs were the major concern, especially those mature ones with diameter at breast height (DBHs) larger than 1m (“mature-TPIs”). In Sub-Area 1, there were slight discrepancies in the tree surveys by CEDD and HKGC in terms of the number of TPIs. The number of mature-TPIs was 24 (among the total 1,255 trees) in the EIA report but 29 (among the total of about 1,500 trees) in HKGC’s tree survey. More specifically, 12 TPIs found in HKGC’s tree survey were not covered by the EIA, whereas 7 TPIs found in the EIA were not covered by HKGC’s tree survey. Considering that

the difference of 5 trees among the total of about 1,500 trees accounted for an insignificant 0.3%, the tree surveys conducted by CEDD and HKGC could be considered consistent with each other. Such discrepancy would be further investigated at the detailed design stage;

- (f) regarding the location of large TPIs (potential OVTs as claimed by HKGC) in Sub-Area 1, the Government team would submit the relevant information for Members' consideration in the subsequent hearing session;
- (g) the mixed woodland in Sub-Area 1 mainly consisted of tree species of *Lophostemon confertus* (紅膠木), *Cratoxylum cochinchinense* (黃牛木), *Macaranga tanarius var. tomentosa* (血桐) and *Melaleuca cajuputi subsp. Cumingiana* (白千層). The sun-path analysis indicated that in spring, summer and autumn, the tree cluster would enjoy direct sunlight periods during the day; and in winter, direct sunlight would be obstructed by the building blocks. As advised by Dr Kuo Yau-lun of the National Pingtung University of Science and Technology, both *Macaranga tanarius var. tomentosa* (血桐) and *Melaleuca cajuputi subsp. Cumingiana* (白千層) were shade-intolerant and would survive better in sunny conditions. This notwithstanding, mature trees of those two species being shaded for two months in winter, while receiving direct sunlight in the rest of the year, would not have significant impact on their well-being. *Cratoxylum cochinchinense* (黃牛木) and *Lophostemon confertus* (紅膠木) were more shade-tolerant and subject to less shading impact. As such, the proposed public housing development would have no adverse shading impacts on the concerned trees in the mixed woodland; and
- (h) the amount of direct sunlight required for the well-being of the mixed woodland in Sub-Area 1 was three hours according to the EIA report. On the other hand, the amount of direct sunlight for the well-being of turfgrass was nine hours according to HKGC and there was no basis to ascertain the validity of the claim.

38. On the discrepancy in the number of trees in Sub-Area 1 surveyed by CEDD and HKGC, Mr Alexander Main Duggie (R353) with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, clarified

that in Sub-Area 1, a small patch of woodland in the southeast had not been included in the proposed public housing site. In the Tree Survey, it was recorded that there were about 1,104 trees within the housing site and about 151 trees in the said woodland, totaling about 1,255 trees. In HKGC's tree survey, about 1,514 trees were found within the housing site and together with the 151 trees in the said woodland would add up to a total of about 1,665 trees.

39. On the success rate of compensatory planting for the past development projects, the Chairperson responded that the Government team would report the information (if available) in subsequent hearing session. A Member opined that based on his expertise in tree compensation, it would take more than ten years for the compensatory planting to form a healthy canopy size, whereas the three-year maintenance period proposed by CEDD was far from adequate.

40. On the Fan Kam Road widening, the Chairperson supplemented that any widening works would be constrained by mature trees on both sides of the road and would involve relocation of the Dongjiang water mains.

Chinese Swamp Cypress (CSC)

41. A Member expressed that:

- (a) according to his literature review, there were about 219 CSC trees recorded in Vietnam in 2013 and about 260 CSC trees recorded in Fujian Province in 2019, with a combined total more than the 250 trees as cited by Mr Paul James Leader (**R242/C36's representative**) in his presentation; and
- (b) the ecological value of a wild CSC population was much higher than a planted one. According to AFCD's information dated 1971, CSC seedlings had been planted in Fanling Golf Course and ten of them had grown up to about 18 ft with 15 inches in girth, suggesting that there was a fair chance that those found in Sub-Area 4 might be a planted population although there was neither information to prove that those CSC in Sub-Area 4 were planted.

42. Two Members raised the following questions:

- (a) whether the existing 250 CSC trees in wild population recorded in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) were not producing viable seeds; and whether there were other CSC trees in Hong Kong apart from those in the Area; and
- (b) the hydrological impacts of the proposed public housing development on the CSC in Sub-Area 4.

43. With the aid of some PowerPoint slides, Mr Anthony K.O. Luk, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD, and Mr Boris S.P. Kwan, SNCO(N), AFCD, made the following main points:

- (a) CSC was classified as a critically endangered species according to the IUCN. The conservation value of CSC would be higher if it was naturally grown in the wild than if it was planted. In Hong Kong, CSC had been classified as 'exotic' species by AFCD, and there was insufficient information to prove that they were native. There was no information to suggest whether those CSC found in Sub-Area 4 were planted or not, but they had rightly been assessed as species of conservation concern in the EIA. Elsewhere in Hong Kong, there were two clusters of CSC in Tai Lam Country Park in the 1950s/60s which had grown up to the present total of about 50 trees comprising seedlings and mature trees with DBHs of about 30cm. Also, there were five CSC in the campus of Chinese University of Hong Kong, with DBHs of about 30 to 72 cm; and
- (b) according to the EIA and the Additional Information, the CSC in Sub-Area 4, which was far away from Sub-Area 1, would not be subject to hydrological impact arising from the proposed public housing development. The surface run-off in Sub-Area 1 would be discharged to Shek Sheung River to the north via the proposed drainage network along Ping Kong Road and Po Kin Road. Based on the hydrological impact analysis conducted by CEDD, the CSC in Sub-Area 4 collected water from nearby hills to the northwest and southeast, and both the surface water and groundwater flowed from Sub-Area 4 towards Sub-Area 1 (i.e. from south to north), suggesting that the sources of groundwater

for the CSC in Sub-Area 4 would not come from Sub-Area 1 nor would be absorbed by compensatory tree planting in Sub-Areas 2 and 3.

44. On the abundance of CSC, Mr Paul James Leader (**R242/C36's representative**) made the following main points:

- (a) for wild populations, there were about 250 trees left in the world and they were not producing viable seeds, according to the IUCN. The said IUCN's data, which was collected in 2010 and published in 2020, might not have included the information of 2013 and 2019 quoted by the concerned Member. For planted populations, they could be commonly found in the Mainland. In FGC, there were several CSC individuals outside the Area. Also, a group of seven CSC of same age and same height could be found on land in Beas River Country Club, where the concerned land was once part of FGC but was later transferred to the Beas River Country Club in 1980s; and
- (b) if the CSC in Sub-Area 4 had been planted in 1970s as cited by the concerned Member, those trees would be about 50 or 60 years old by now. However, as shown in his presentation, the CSC in Sub-Area 4 were older and exhibited a good profile of age structure ranging from 50 years to more than 200 years old, suggesting that they were a potentially wild and reproducing population. There was insufficient information to prove otherwise and the precautionary principle should be applied.

Turfgrass

45. Two Members asked the following questions:

- (a) information about whether the fauna were nurtured on the turfgrass and were merely passing by;
- (b) shading impact of the proposed high-rise housing towers on the turfgrass; and
- (c) the nature of the fertilisers and pesticides which FGC applied to the turfgrass.

46. On the ecological value of the turfgrass in Sub-Area 1, Mr Gavin C.P. Wong, CE/N, CEDD, and Mr Klinsmann K.L. Cheung, the Consultant, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, explained that the ecological value of the turfgrass in Sub-Area 1 which was rated 'moderate' in HKGC's report was rated 'low' in the EIA for the following reasons and such assessment was consistent with the findings of other EIAs:

- (a) the turfgrass was a man-made habitat comprising low diversity of grass species;
- (b) frequent cutting of the turfgrass had rendered it a habitat of relatively simple structure, compared with natural habitats with complex structures (e.g. grassland, woodland, forest etc.); and
- (c) the ecological function of the turfgrass was low as it did not provide products (e.g. nectar source, fruits etc.) to other species.

47. On the relationship between fauna and turfgrass, Mr Tommy Hui Chung Hong (**R242/C36's representative**) with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, explained that there was no information in HKGC's report about how the fauna and invertebrates utilised the turfgrass (e.g. as a nurturing ground, as a passageway etc.), neither had such information been provided in the EIA report. Nonetheless, frequent appearance of Eastern Cattle Egret (牛背鷺) and Chinese Pond Heron (池鷺) on the turfgrass in the Area (including Sub-Area 1) was observed. Invertebrates would be included in HKGC's study in the future. In the EIA report, it was stated that there were 16 fauna species of conservation importance on the turfgrass of the Area and most of them were associated to other habitats. Mr Roger Clive Kendrick (**R242/C36's representative**) added that there were mainly two groups of species assemblages - one dwelling in woodlands and the other in open turfgrass habitats. In HKGC's findings, those two species assemblages (including grass feeder as larvae) were recorded throughout Sub-Area 1 and in fair abundance.

48. On the shading impact on turfgrass, Mr Anthony K.O. Luk, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, explained that since shading impact was not a requirement of the Study Brief, there was no such assessment in the EIA report to cross-check

the validity of HKGC's findings. Nonetheless, HKGC's assessment was qualitative only, and there was no scientific basis provided in their representation submission to support HKGC's claim that nine hours of direct sunlight was necessary for healthy growth of turfgrass.

49. On the fertilisers and pesticides used, Mr Derald Richard Koster (**R5975**) with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, stated that a mix of organic and inorganic fertilisers and pesticides was being used to maintain the turfgrass. Chemical pesticides were used when the number of insects was relatively high, and application types and dosages were approved by the Government. Mr Roger Clive Kendrick (**R242/C36's representative**) said that abundance of insects, including moths, fed on turfgrass.

Bats

50. A Member asked about the number of bat species and bat roosts found in Sub-Area 1, and how those bat roosting sites could be protected if the proposed public housing development proceeded.

51. With the aid of some PowerPoint slides, Mr David John Stanton (**R242/C36's representative**) made the following main points:

- (a) according to HKGC's bat survey, 12 bat species and four bat roosts were found in Sub-Area 1 and the bats were dwelling on a mosaic of habitats therein. All those habitats were equally important to support such a diversity of bat species. About 14 bat species were also recorded in Sub-Areas 2 to 4; and
- (b) if the proposed public housing development proceeded, the four bat roosts would be affected, and it would be difficult to mitigate the impact due to the substantial habitat loss of forestry (about 9 ha) for housing in Sub-Area 1 and woodland compensation (about 5 ha) in Sub-Areas 2 and 3.

52. With the aid of some PowerPoint slides, Mr Gavin C.P. Wong, CE/N, CEDD, and Mr Klinsmann K.L. Cheung, the Consultant, made the following main points:

- (a) different bat species roosted in different habitats, mainly caves/tunnels,

abandoned buildings and vegetation (e.g. bamboo, fan palm etc.). For cave-dwelling species, they were of higher conservation value since cave habitats were difficult to come by or be replaced and caves could usually harbour an abundant number of bats. For species roosting in buildings, their need for roosts could be met by abandoned buildings which were abundant in number and by artificial bat boxes as alternatives. For species roosting in vegetation, they would change roosting sites frequently as vegetation was not durable; and

- (b) in general, if vegetation-dwelling species were found in a development project site, the concerned vegetation would not be removed until the bat species had moved out and mitigation measures had been put in place, e.g. installation of bat boxes nearby, planting the same vegetation nearby etc. In the EIA report, no roost of short-nosed fruit bat (短吻果蝠) (being a common bat species) was found in the Area.

Moths

53. The Chairperson and a Member asked the following questions:

- (a) in terms of moth survey, whether there was any discrepancy between the EIA 2022 and the Additional Information 2023; and
- (b) information about the study on moths in Hong Kong.

54. On the EIA moth survey, Mr Klinsmann K.L. Cheung, the Consultant, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, explained that the survey was conducted in the evenings for two hours after sunset. At ACE's request in August 2022, additional survey was conducted at midnights between 12 a.m. and 2 a.m. which revealed that more moths were found in the evenings than at midnight periods. The ACE had accepted the additional moth survey findings.

55. On the moth study in Hong Kong, Mr Roger Clive Kendrick (**R242/C36's representative**), with the aid of visualiser, made the following main points:

- (a) there was a long history of moth recording and subsequent studies in Hong Kong.

The first document describing some 150 moth species in Hong Kong dated back to 1850s/60s. The first checklist on agricultural moth species recorded in Tai Lung Experimental Station since 1950s was published in 1967 and later updated in 1992. The first preliminary checklist for moths in Hong Kong was published in 1993/94. The moth species recorded in Hong Kong had increased from about 1,500 in 1996 and about 1,850 in 2001 to about 2,675 up to date. Nonetheless, the information so collected was still not enough for a better understanding of the moths in Hong Kong, in particular the rare species; and

- (b) for the ten endemic species found in the Area, some were restricted to FGC and some were widely distributed in Hong Kong, depending on the species. For moths found in Sub-Area 1, all the tree areas and woodlands thereat were their essential habitats.

Cultural Landscape

56. Some Members asked the following questions:

- (a) how cultural heritage could be preserved while accommodating the other needs of society;
- (b) whether the FGC could be preserved in part; and
- (c) whether the graded historic buildings and clan graves would be affected by the proposed public housing development in Sub-Area 1 and what the mitigation measures were.

57. Ms May Ho Sum Yee (**R242/C36's representative**) made the following main points:

- (a) cultural heritage originated from human civilisation and should be sustainably retained to blend in with the changing needs of the modern society, instead of being treated as an obstacle to changes. Preservation of cultural heritage should be considered from the perspectives of integrity, authenticity and rarity

in the context which the concerned heritage resided, in order to holistically preserve the linkage amongst various components of the cultural landscape. The golf course at St. Andrews in Scotland showcased how a golf course had been enriched with historic values over generations and finally recognised as a world-class cultural landscape inscribed in the World Heritage List. Modelled on the St. Andrews golf course, the FGC (including Sub-Area 1) as a cultural landscape endowed with built heritages in a natural setting should be preserved in its entirety. The entire FGC had been included in the candidate list of the Antiquities Advisory Board awaiting grading assessment, suggesting that the historic value of the FGC had been recognised to a certain extent; and

- (b) historical change was one of the factors contributing to the historic value of a cultural heritage. The importance of such changes should be assessed against a set of criteria, e.g. the scale of change, the significance of the change, the impact on the historic value etc. Over the years, the FGC had augmented from the Old Course (1911) to include the New Course (1931) and Eden Course (1970), during which its cultural landscape resources had been subtly consolidated and its biodiversity had been enhanced through sustainable environmental management, despite its increasingly urbanised surroundings. That was a unique example in Hong Kong. The graded historic buildings were built together with the Old Course, and the setting and landscape of the Old Course also formed the historic context of the cultural landscape. However, its overall historic value would be destroyed if part of the Old Course (i.e. Sub-Area 1) was taken away for the proposed public housing development. Similar bad examples included (i) Hong Kong Cemetery in Happy Valley where the built and natural heritage resources had continued to decline due to lack of a conservation management plan; and (ii) the Tiger Balm Garden was used for housing development and the Haw Par Mansion being conserved was out of its historic context.

58. On the graded historic buildings and graves in the Area, Mr Anthony K.O. Luk, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, stated that there were three graded historic buildings in FGC to the west of Fan Kam Road (outside the Area), viz. Fanling Lodge (Grade 1), Fanling Club House (Grade 2) and Fanling Half-way House (Grade 3), and

they would not be affected by the proposed public housing development in Sub-Area 1. For graves, a clan grave of Qing Dynasty which was not a graded structure was located to the south of the 0.39ha woodland in Sub-Area 1. In the current layout, it would have interface with the housing blocks and needed to be removed. In view of the EIA approval conditions for preservation of the 0.39ha woodland as far as practicable, CEDD would review the housing layout later and would consider whether the clan grave could be preserved. If preservation of the said grave was later found impracticable, it would be dealt with according to the established procedures, in which relevant Government departments would liaise with the descendants of the clan grave on suitable relocation arrangement. The other clan graves including older ones built in Ming Dynasty were outside Sub-Area 1 and would not be affected by the proposed public housing development.

Future Management and Maintenance of the Area by LCSD

59. Some Members asked the following questions:

- (a) whether the LCSD had any feasible management and maintenance plan for the Old Course in the Area, given the specific expertise required for turfgrass maintenance; and
- (b) whether tree compensation in Sub-Areas 2 and 3 would be supported by an EcoIA to demonstrate its feasibility.

60. The Chairperson made the following main points:

- (a) LCSD would be asked to provide information on the management and maintenance of the Area for Members' consideration in subsequent hearing session. As she understood, LCSD, after taking up the Area, would arrange the Area to be opened up for public enjoyment. As presented by HKGC in the Board's meeting on 12.6.2023, non-golfing events had been held in the Area. LCSD would discuss with parties concerned to see how best to facilitate hosting of those events. It was understood that LCSD was actively making preparation and would liaise with HKGC shortly for site visits and discussions about major handover issues. LCSD had much experience in maintaining parkland and

would seek professional help if need be; and

- (b) Sub-Areas 2 to 4 (about 20 ha in total) were zoned “OU(CR)” on the draft Fanling/Sheung Shui Extension Area Outline Zoning Plan (the OZP). When drawing up the OZP, only conservation and recreational uses with no or low ecological impact would be always permitted as Column 1 uses, e.g. ‘field study/education/visitor centre’, ‘golf course’, ‘nature reserve’, ‘nature trail’, ‘park and garden’, ‘picnic area’, ‘public convenience’ and ‘wild animals protection area’. For uses under Column 2 (e.g. ‘eating place’, ‘government refuse collection point’, ‘government use’ and ‘place of entertainment’), they were subject to the planning permission mechanism, through which relevant Government departments would scrutinise the planning applications and require assessments (e.g. EcoIA if needed) to support the application for the Board’s consideration.

61. In response to Mr Andy Kwok Wing Leung (**R354**), the Chairperson stated that LCSD would contact HKGC on the handover matters in due course.

[Ms Bernadette W.S. Tsui left this session of the meeting during the Q&A session.]

62. As Members had no further question to raise, the Chairperson said that the hearing session on the day was completed. She thanked the representers, commenters and their representatives, and the government representatives for attending the meeting. The Board would deliberate on the representations and comments in closed meeting after all the hearing sessions were completed and would inform the representers and commenters of the Board’s decision in due course. The representers, commenters and their representatives and the government representatives left the meeting at this point.

63. This session of the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.