

1. The meeting was resumed at 9:10 a.m. on 26.6.2023.

2. The following Members and the Secretary were present in 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

Dr C.H. Hau

Ms Sandy H.Y. Wong

Mr Stanley T.S. Choi

Mr Daniel K.S. Lau

Ms Lilian S.K. Law

Mr K.W. Leung

Mr Ricky W.Y. Yu

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

Principle Environmental Protection Officer (Territory North)  
Environmental Protection Department  
Ms Clara K.W. U (before 1 p.m.)

Assistant Director (Environmental Assessment)  
Environmental Protection Department  
Mr Terence S.W. Tsang (after 1 p.m.)

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)

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[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.

5. The following government representatives, 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 Dennis C.H. Chan - Consultant

***Ecosystems Ltd.***

Mr Vincent C.S. Lai - Consultant

**Representers, Commenters and their Representatives**

R311 – Lam Man Bun Alan

Mr Lam Man Bun Alan - Representer

R314 – Lam Sze Ken Kenneth

R327/C43 – Lam Chung Lun Billy

Mr Lam Sze Ken Kenneth - Representer and Representer's and Commenter's Representative

R319 – Kwok King Man Clement

R3444 – Hildebrandt James Henry

Ms Lynne Sarah UL - Representers' Representative

R328 – Wu Mila

Ms Wu Mila - Representer

R353 – Alexander Main Duggie

Mr Alexander Main Duggie - Representer

R354 – Kwok Wing Leung Andy

R645 – Gardner Ian Paul

Mr Lau Ping Cheung Kaizer - Representers' Representative

R383/C42 – Barretto Ruy Octavio

R1960 – Lee Ching Kwok Rin

Mr Barretto Ruy Octavio - Representer/Commenter and Representers' Representative

R396 – Wong Michael

R6729 – Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden

Mr Nig Hin Ming - Representers' Representative

R410 – Wong Ka Fook Clifford

Mr Wong Ka Fook Clifford - Representer

R430 – Young Man Kim

R609 – Ma Hon Ning Albert

R1294 – Leung Wing Ning

Mr Young Man Kim - Representer and Representers' Representative

R438 – Jenkins Alex

Mr Nicolas Loop - Representers' Representative

R452 – Demopoulos Frederick Michael

Ms Wong Gar Yee Elaine - Representers' Representative

R467 – Howarth Christopher Douglas

R546 – Brock Jonathan Mark Carey

R622 – Petersen Ian Bjarne Ingerslev

R6747 – McAuslan Gary

*Hong Kong Football Club* - Representers' Representative

*Golf Society*

Mr David Lyndsay

R476 – The Institute of International Sustainable Development

R5975 – Koster Derald

Mr Kendrick Roger - Representers' Representative

R495 – Hu Liang Ming

R584 – Bradshaw Daniel Rochfort

Mr Bradshaw Daniel - Representer and Representer's Representative

Rochfort

R499 – The Hong Kong Countryside Foundation

Mr Roger Nissim - Representer's Representative

R535 – Ma Wai Tak Victor

Mr Ma Wai Tak Victor - Representer

R3238 – Siu Suzanne

Mr Siu Yin Wai - Representer's Representative

R562 – 蔡百泰

蔡百泰 - Representer

R564 – Ng Chen Ngee Cheryl

Ms Ng Chen Ngee Cheryl - Representer

R576 – Kwan Chun Yue Patrick

Mr John Anthony Allcock - Representer

R583 – 香港中華游樂會

R3270 – 鄭妙如

香港中華游樂會 - Representers' Representative

梁文滔

R586 – Hau Hon Fai

Mr Hau Hon Fai - Representer

R587 – Fung Ching See Vivien

Ms Fung Ching See Vivien - Representer

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

R311 – Lam Man Bun Alan

7. Mr Lam Man Bun Alan made the following main points:

- (a) he was a practicing solicitor and a member of Hong Kong Golf Club (HKGC);
- (b) under the Principal Officials Accountability System introduced in 2002, the principal officials, including the Secretary for Development, were accountable to the community of Hong Kong. They were obliged to listen to the mainstream opinions of the citizens, i.e. 95% out of more than 6,700 representations objected to the draft OZP;
- (c) Fanling Golf Course (FGC) was a special public asset and a natural heritage of national significance, as well as the oldest golf club in Asia with graded

historic buildings under the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance. FGC gained increasing international attention by hosting various world-class golf tournaments such as Hong Kong Open Championship (HKO) for years. Its contribution in hosting international events echoed the Chief Executive's call for telling good stories of Hong Kong. The value of FGC was comparable to the Victoria Harbour in Hong Kong, the Central Park in New York and the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. As such, preservation of FGC was in the interests of all Hong Kong people;

- (d) in comparison, the proposed 12,000 public housing units in a much reduced area of 9 hectares (ha) could have a little effect on alleviating the overall housing problem in Hong Kong and could only benefit a small fraction of the community, i.e. those on the waiting list for public housing;
- (e) there was serious traffic congestion in the area during the days of golf tournament. The proposed public housing development would worsen the traffic condition and undermine the wellbeing of the people travelling to the North District and the North District Hospital (NDH); and
- (f) the same considerations of proportionality and overriding public need tests laid down by the Court of Appeal for the case in relation to reclamation of the Victoria Harbour should be applicable to FGC. The Government should conduct the tests thoroughly and refrain from endorsing any recommendation unless there was a compelling, overriding and present public need for the proposed public housing development which could clearly outweigh the public interest in preserving FGC. The proposed public housing development should only be proceeded when there was no other viable alternative. However, there were alternative locations suggested in many other representations. Even if the proposed public housing development had to be taken forward, it should be conducted at the minimum scale since the damage to FGC would be irreversible.

R314 – Lam Sze Ken Kenneth

R327/C43 – Lam Chung Lun Billy

8. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Lam Sze Ken Kenneth played a video clip of Ms Frances Yip Lai-yee and made the following main points:

- (a) he was the former president of Hong Kong Golf Association (HKGA), a member of the delegation to the Tokyo Olympics, and the former president and a member of HKGC. He had also been involved in organising large-scale golf tournaments for HKGC since 2014;
- (b) he opposed taking back part of FGC for public housing development;
- (c) only one-fourth of the land in Hong Kong was developed. The Government should explore other underutilised sites for public housing development;
- (d) the Old Course was vital to golf sport development in Hong Kong. It was the only venue suitable for large golf tournaments in spring and summer, e.g. Hong Kong Ladies Open Championship (HKLO) staged in May/June since 2015, as its turf and design were more resilient to the rainy and wet weather. Besides, the Old Course could provide flexibility for other international golf tournaments hosted in the Eden Course/New Course during unexpected and extreme weather conditions. Enclosed by clusters of mature trees, the Old Course itself was also internationally recognised as a challenging golf course and had nurtured the successes of many local elite athletes. The challenging 18-hole and other supporting facilities in the Old Course were the essential elements for the success in hosting both professional and amateur golf tournaments. Taking back part of the Old Course would inevitably reduce the number of holes thereat, resulting in the fact that the Old Course could no longer fulfil the standard for hosting international golf tournaments;
- (e) there was already a shortage of golf courses in Hong Kong as compared with other cities/countries like Singapore, South Korea, Ireland and the United States. As most of the training of golf athletes was conducted in FGC, which had already been fully utilised, any reduction in golf facilities would be a serious setback for the training of golf athletes. It would be difficult to



relocate the Old Course elsewhere in Hong Kong as the construction of new golf courses would trigger a complicated Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process;

- (f) since the benefits of sports were internationally recognised, e.g. improving health conditions of citizens and reducing the burden of medical system, the existing sports venues should not be sacrificed;
- (g) under HKGC's current management, more than 300 staff would be deployed to FGC for maintenance after typhoon. If the Old Course was taken by the government without proper maintenance, the condition of the golf course would deteriorate and might become an international laughing stock, just like the case of muddy turf of the Hong Kong Stadium years ago. The proposed high-rise public housing development would also block the sunlight for the remaining parts of FGC which would affect the condition of the turfgrass;
- (h) HKGC had been making continuous contribution in promoting golf sport and nurturing world-class golf athletes in Hong Kong, and had long been bearing its social responsibility by providing job opportunities to the local community, hosting charity events, protecting the natural environment and opening the golf course to the public and schools for recreational purposes. At present, more than 45% of the golf rounds at FGC was played by non-members; and
- (i) the Old Course as one of the oldest golf courses in Asia with more than 100 years of history was worth to be preserved. It was important to ensure our next generations could share the same opportunity as ours.

R319 – Kwok King Man Clement

R3444 – Hildebrandt James Henry

9. Ms Lynne Sarah UL made the following main points:

- (a) she opposed taking back part of FGC for public housing development;

- (b) as the image of Hong Kong had been downgrading in recent years, effort had to be made to attract and retain talents and investors. Prestigious golf courses were part of the lifestyle of many talents whilst staging popular international golf tournaments like HKO could boost the image of Hong Kong and benefit the city's economy. However, if part of FGC was taken back by the Government, the quality and status of the sole venue for major international golf tournaments in Hong Kong would be undermined. Organisers of such international tournaments might decide to host the events elsewhere;
- (c) the historic FGC, which was the home of old and valuable trees (OVTs), graded historic buildings and ancestral graves, constituted an integral part of the heritage and cultural landscape of the New Territories;
- (d) FGC nurtured young golf athletes who represented Hong Kong and performed very well in international tournaments including the Olympics. HKGC also contributed to the local community by hosting charity events like the Cup of Kindness; and
- (e) the public comments received were overwhelmingly against the taking back of FGC. The North District Council and the Sheung Shui District Rural Committee also voted unanimously against the public housing development proposal.

R328 – Wu Mila

10. Ms Wu Mila made the following main points:

- (a) she opposed the demolition of part of the Old Course for housing development;
- (b) a diversity of flora and fauna of high ecological and conservation value was identified in FGC, including a family of owls spotted recently and the Chinese Swamp Cypress (CSC);

- (c) the proposed public housing development would worsen the traffic condition in the Area;
- (d) the continued effort in promoting sports made Hong Kong a centre of major international sports events and brought about achievements in the Tokyo Olympics. The world-class facilities like FGC would allow the local athletes developing abilities to perform well on the international stage;
- (e) FGC brought benefit to Hong Kong's economy by generating recurring income from hosting international golf tournaments. The taking back of FGC would destroy one of the very few 18-hole golf courses as well as the only golf course capable of hosting large international golf tournaments and charity golfing events during rainy seasons in Hong Kong. It would undermine the global competitiveness of Hong Kong;
- (f) daily maintenance by experts was required to keep the golf course in the current condition. Even if the Government was willing to allow the Area for hosting of tournaments after it was taken back, it would not be feasible to easily convert the Area from a recreational park/residential development to a golf course, and vice versa, within a short period of time; and
- (g) it was questionable if it was necessary to destroy the oldest golf course in China and Asia with more than 100 years of history, when there were many brownfield sites with less historic and ecological value available for public housing development. A world-class golf course of rich history could not be replicated elsewhere and the demolition of FGC would result in the loss of cultural and ecological heritage for our future generations.

R353 – Alexander Main Duggie

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

- (a) he was a registered landscape architect and participated in many projects in the northern New Territories in the past decades;
- (b) the preservation of the Old Course was in total harmony with the strategic directions as stipulated in the Northern Metropolis Development Strategy (NMDS) report in October 2021, including (1) the emphasis on harmonious advancement of economic development and ecological conservation and the balanced development of urban and rural areas on national level, (2) the principle to pursue green development and ecological conservation on Greater Bay Area (GBA) level, and (3) the three building blocks under Hong Kong 2030+ Study on Hong Kong level. It was also in line with Government's initiatives in promoting biodiversity and carbon neutrality. The destruction of the Old Course with high landscape, ecological and recreational values and the associated huge carbon emissions were in direct contradiction with the abovementioned strategic directions and some of the planning principles and key action directions put forward in the NMDS report, as well as Hong Kong's Climate Action Plan 2050. As such, the proposed public housing development in FGC could not be justified;
- (c) FGC was located at the centre of Hong Kong-Shenzhen Interaction Circle proposed in the NMDS report. FGC was connected with the ecological corridor identified in the NMDS report and provided effective ecological links between Long Valley to its north and Lam Tsuen Country Park to its south, forming a critical part of the larger ecological habitat network in the area. 1,177 species of fauna of which 238 of conservation significance were identified, and 83 tree species were surveyed in the FGC. Preservation of FGC could make contribution to the ecological habitat network and enhance the landscape and quality of life in the circle;
- (d) replacing the woodland, grassland, topsoil and ecological habitat in the Old Course with high density public housing development of impermeable finishes was against the policy direction of the creation of sponge city;

- (e) the catastrophic losses of worldwide biodiversity and habitats were the consequence of incremental damages in all countries around the world. Pursuing the proposed public housing development in the Old Course would represent another step towards the collapse of global biodiversity;
- (f) various community activities taken place at the Old Course were good examples of outdoor eco-recreation events with high landscape value;
- (g) the Government had admitted that there would be surplus in public housing supply to address the estimated demand; and
- (h) the entire FGC should be rezoned to “Other Specified Uses” annotated “Conservation cum Recreation” (“OU(CR)”) to allow HKGC to continue its successful stewardship of FGC.

R354 – Kwok Wing Leung Andy

R645 – Gardner Ian Paul

12. Mr Lau Ping Cheung Kaizer made the following main points:

- (a) he was a member of HKGC;
- (b) while there was accusation that members of HKGC were those with power and vested interest, HKGC in fact made contributions to society by devoting to environmental conservation and helping local athletes to perform at international level. Besides, there was no private shareholder in HKGC who could take profit from the club. The captain and the members of the executive committee of HKGC were all volunteers;
- (c) in 2012, the proposal of taking back FGC for housing development as a replacement option for the development of North East New Territories New Development Areas (NDAs) was considered not practicable by the Government. In 2019, FGC became one of the short to medium term land supply options after the Government had fully accepted the recommendations

of the Task Force on Land Supply (TFLS). Since then, without any scientific support, the estimated flat production and the development scale at FGC had been changed by the Government from time to time, and now the Government recommended to rezone the concerned area to “Undetermined”. The frequent changes and inconsistencies in Government’s position would undermine the credibility of the Government and confuse the public;

- (d) the public consultation commissioned by TFLS was inadequate, since (1) the formulation of the 18 land supply options was not supported by any statistics and scientific researches; and (2) there were other alternative land supply options not covered in the consultation (e.g. the development of “Comprehensive Development Area”, brownfield sites, short term tenancy sites and former borrow areas within Country Parks). It was also doubtful if partial development of FGC site could be regarded as a short to medium term land supply option, since further review on the development scheme of proposed public housing development might take a long time based on the past experiences;
- (e) with more than 75% of the land in Hong Kong being undeveloped, there were many alternative sites for public housing development, including “Green Belt” sites and the sites at the periphery of the Country Parks;
- (f) it was questionable if the proposed public housing development at FGC was necessary, since the Government had already secured more than 300 ha of land for 360,000 flats in the future 10 years, which was 20% beyond the 300,000 flat target. In addition, eight NDAs in the New Territories were being implemented and the maximum plot ratio for public housing development in these NDAs and the Northern Metropolis (NM) was uplifted to 6 or 6.5;
- (g) as compared with the average of about 90 flats per ha in the North East New Territories NDAs, the intensity of about 1,200 flats per ha for the proposed public housing development at FGC was alarming. As the future residents of the proposed public housing development would be mainly young people

and there were not many supporting facilities in the vicinity, the demand for transportation and supporting facilities of the future community would be higher than estimated. The high-density public housing development would also adversely affect the sunlight and air ventilation of the remaining area of FGC;

- (h) the accuracy of the findings of the assessment conducted by the Government's environmental consultant was questionable. The consultant identified much less fauna in terms of species and quantity as compared with the study undertaken by HKGC; and
- (i) hosting international events in Hong Kong gained increasing importance in strengthening the Mainland's international ties. With the change in political environment and anticipated surplus in overall flat supply, the proposed public housing development at FGC should be dropped. If the Government insisted to take forward the proposal, its credibility would be further undermined.

[Mrs Vivian K.F. Cheung joined this session of the meeting during Mr Lau's presentation.]

R383/C42 – Barretto Ruy Octavio

R1960 – Lee Ching Kwok Rin

13. With the aid of the visualizer, Mr Barretto Ruy Octavio made the following main points:
- (a) a series of mistakes stemmed from the populist sentiment and taken forward by TFLS when the Government was endeavouring to increase public housing supply;
  - (b) given that FGC possessed a high ecological value and provided venue for multiple uses for public benefits, the proposal contravened the principles laid down in the TFLS report, including (1) the avoidance of high-density developments at sites of high ecological value; and (2) the 'single site, multiple use' approach. The TFLS report also warned that tackling housing

issue in piecemeal and isolated manner, like the current proposal, would result in unbalanced planning and other development issues;

- (c) FGC was not suitable for housing development. Taking back part of the Old Course, the oldest golf course in China, for housing development went against the evidences that the area, covered by a wonderful forest with CSC (a Class I protected species in China) and many other rare plant species, was ecologically rich. These CSC trees were the integral part of an ancient landscape, stretching across South China to Vietnam, which had later been largely cleared for rice cultivation and almost in extinction in the wild. CSC was extremely sensitive to drought and any changes in their nearby hydrological conditions. The CSC in FGC deserved the highest level of protection and no risk should be taken against their wellbeing and habitat;
- (d) FGC was part of our cultural and natural heritage and a landscape of national significance. If the status quo (i.e. FGC under the management of HKGC) could be maintained, it would be a win-win situation that there would be a park-like environment for public enjoyment for free and it would be under expert custody that the Government would bear no management responsibility or risk. The proposed partial development would upset the status quo of FGC and undermine the interests of the public and HKGC;
- (e) the EIA report prepared by the Government was defective. It was evident that the Old Course should be of moderate to very high ecological value, which, however, was underestimated in the EIA report. The Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE) considered the information provided by the EIA report insufficient. Some ACE members had reservations on various aspects and the layout of the proposed public housing development;
- (f) as the proposed public housing development was proven infeasible and unacceptable under the EIA, the main component of the draft OZP should be taken off. The draft OZP as currently presented was 'a plan without a plan' and incomplete. The Board had a duty to avoid such unreasonable planning tactics by rejecting the draft OZP. The approval of the draft OZP might



cause risk, prejudice and harmful consequences to the public interests and the environment;

- (g) there was no imminent need for the Government to take back the Old Course. If the Old Course was taken immediately by the Government without a reliable management plan, expertise and manpower, there would be risks of environmental degradations caused by fire, drought, flooding and typhoon. Years of effort in building up Hong Kong's international image with FGC would be ruined; and
- (h) the only rational zoning for the 32 ha of land of the Old Course (the Area) was "Conservation Area" with restrictions on allowing the continuation of the existing golf course use, protecting its ecological functions and limiting the access to the sensitive areas. The proposed "OU" zone could not provide sufficient protection to the environment since some works/uses like road-widening works, which might adversely affect the CSC, did not require EIA or planning permission from the Board.

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

R495 – Hu Liang Ming

R584 – Bradshaw Daniel Rochfort

14. Mr Bradshaw Daniel Rochfort made the following main points:

- (a) he was the former captain and a member of HKGC, as well as the Chairman of WWF Hong Kong;
- (b) HKGC was established in 1889 and FGC was one of the oldest golf courses in Asia. HKGC had made continuous effort in supporting the golf sport development in Hong Kong and hosting golf tournaments such as HKO without incurring any cost to the Government. The elite golf athletes who attained remarkable achievements in recent golf tournaments grew up with FGC and were benefited from HKGC;

- (c) the public could enjoy the golfing and other facilities at FGC on weekdays by payment. At present, over 40% of all golf rounds at FGC were played by non-members. The public would lose the opportunity to play golf if part of the Old Course was taken back by the Government;
- (d) FGC was an environmentally friendly golfing sanctuary which attained the environmental accreditation by the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Programme for Golf (the Audubon). Only about two percent of all golf courses worldwide could meet the high standards in respect of environmental and management practices to attain such accreditation. The Environmental Oversight Committee was established under HKGC to examine the environmental condition, to promote biodiversity, conservation and responsible use of herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers, as well as to preserve the cultural heritage in FGC;
- (e) FGC was a green lung with cooling effect for the surrounding areas. With abundant flora and fauna species, it was also probably the most important remnant lowland area of biodiversity in Hong Kong. There was a considerable number of *Aquilaria Sinensis* trees and a group of CSC identified at FGC. CSC was almost extinct in the wild and regarded as national treasure in China. The preservation of these trees in the Old Course was important as they formed part of the national and natural heritage. As CSC grew in swamps with its roots in water, the protection of ground water level and the current flow, and retention of water would be essential for their survival. The high-rise housing development would affect the hydrology of the Area and the CSC in FGC;
- (f) the EIA report was of poor quality, with no proper account given to the birds, amphibians, reptiles, crustacean fish and mammals in the Area. The club's experts had observed leopard cats, unique fresh water crabs and countless protected animals at FGC and ten times of the number of bats as recorded in the EIA report. Besides, the EIA report recommended to relocate or simply destroy the graves of Ming and Qing Dynasties to make way for the proposed

public housing development without giving any consideration to ‘fung shui’ which was most treasured by the local villagers;

- (g) there were alternative locations for public housing development including the 2,000 ha of brownfield sites and the farmland in the northern New Territories offered by the HYK. The development of the NM could also largely satisfy the future needs for public housing. It was difficult to understand how these alternatives could be less acceptable than the taking back of FGC;
- (h) HKGC was in communication with the organisers of LIV Golf League Tournament (LIV Golf) for hosting the international golf tournament at FGC next year. The tournament could only take place if the entire Old Course and its car parking area remained under the custody of HKGC; and
- (i) withdrawing the proposed public housing development at FGC would not delay the programme of the overall public housing supply, but taking back part of FGC would destroy a valuable cultural and national heritage of Hong Kong. The Area should be zoned “Other Specified Uses” annotated “Conservation cum Recreation” for conservation and protection purposes.

#### R410 – Wong Ka Fook Clifford

15. Mr Wong Ka Fook Clifford made the following main points:

- (a) he was a member of HKGC;
- (b) HKGC was a community of authentic golf enthusiasts. The members devoted tremendous effort and time voluntarily with a benevolent intention to promote golf in Hong Kong and to bring young athletes to the international stage. Mr. Wong’s enthusiasm in golf sport could be proved by his 19-year wait to become a member of HKGC and his perseverance in practicing golf in Zhongshan during the wait. His 19-year wait also implied the acute shortage of golf facilities in Hong Kong;

- (c) HKGC contributed to society by hosting international golf tournaments and nurturing young athletes. Hosting of an international golf tournament might cost HKGC up to HK\$ 20 million, depending on the amount of sponsorship, and the relevant cost was covered by the membership fees. Uprooting the effort by HKGC in serving society since 1889 would be a great step back against the Board's mission to promote the health, safety, convenience and general welfare of the community; and
- (d) it would be a mis-allocation of resources if the Government was going to spend additional billions of money to promote sports and build venues on one hand, and destroy the valuable and historic assets of FGC on another. Such inefficient use of land resources and means of development should not be supported by the Board.

R430 – Young Man Kim

R609 – Ma Hon Ning Albert

R1294 – Leung Wing Ning

16. Mr Young Man Kim made the following main points:

- (a) he had been a member of HKGC since 2015. He had been a council member of Hong Kong Housing Society since 1998 and was a past Chairman of Friends of the Earth (2008-2012);
- (b) he objected to taking back the Area. Given the abundant land supply from various sources, the Board should consider if it would still be necessary to destroy FGC for housing development;
- (c) the biodiversity of FGC had been enhanced over the years. Only 2% of the global golf courses, FGC was one of which, had been awarded the highly acclaimed environmental accreditation by the Audubon. Only HKGC could accomplish such excellent achievement through their management with all-round expertise;

- (d) the main source of water and electricity supplies for FGC lied in the area west of Fan Kam Road (outside the Area). If the Government took back the Area, HKGC would not be allowed to provide water and electricity to the Area. Without water, the ecological condition of the Area would deteriorate and many species thereat would vanish, and it would be even worse if the proposed public housing development proceeded;
- (e) whether Hong Kong could be granted approval to host international golf tournaments was subject to the decision of the relevant tournament organisers, not a wishful thinking from the Hong Kong side. A successful bid for hosting an international golf tournament did not come easy as the capacity and time slots of a venue suitable and available for such event were limited, not to mention the stiff competition with other strong rival venues;
- (f) in February 2023, FGC was chosen as one of the five venues to host Aramco Team Series Championship, for the Chief Executive had put much efforts in lobbying the relevant parties and the HKGC's ability to hold world-class events was recognised. However, the Champion Director of Aramco Team Series Championship, Ms Victoria Jones, expressed in the meeting on 12.6.2023 that the FGC might no longer be suitable for holding such large-scale world-class event if the 8 holes in the Area would be lost. As reported in a newspaper article on 19.6.2023, she said that the tournament organiser needed to erect temporary structures in FGC in end August 2023, and the lack of future management and maintenance of the Area after handover in September 2023 would affect the eligibility of Hong Kong in hosting the tournament. If Hong Kong lost its hard-earned eligibility out of its own reasons, it would seriously ruin the Hong Kong's international image. Besides, it was not sure if it would affect the eligibility of Hong Kong hosting future major golf events, e.g. The National Games of the People's Republic of China in 2025, the LIV Golf, etc.;
- (g) in Scotland, the Old Course of St. Andrews was of high cultural heritage value and often a place of pilgrimage for golf lovers, and the respective government would not replace it by housing development. In FGC, the Old Course,

established in 1911, was the oldest championship golf course in Asia. Golf lovers in Asia could go on a pilgrimage by visiting the FGC Old Course. If the Area was to be carved out from the Old Course, the whole Old Course could not be deployed for tournament;

- (h) the Government should adopt a consistent approach in preservation of built heritage. While the Government had made strenuous efforts to preserve the three built heritages of Central Market (built in 1939), Police Married Quarters (built in 1951) and Blue House (built in 1922), it intended to destroy the Old Course (built in 1911) which was older than these three heritages;
- (i) according to a newspaper article on 19.6.2023, from 28.8.2023 to 30.11.2023, the New Course and Eden Course would be partially open to the public and the Old Course would be the only golf course available for public use. If FGC was still to be used for hosting major events, both the New Course and Eden Course would not be available for use by HKGC members and the public for about a quarter of a year. Although the operation of FGC was funded by HKGC members, the FGC was not for exclusive use by its members, but also for use by the public and for hosting international events. HKGC and its members were willing to take on this social responsibility for the greater good of Hong Kong; and
- (j) the issue laid before the Board was whether it was worth destroying the Old Course, the origin of golf in Asia and the only venue in Hong Kong suitable for hosting international tournament, just for the sake of developing housing on a small portion (about 9 ha) of it.

[Mr Stanley T.S. Choi left this session of the meeting at this point.]

R438 – Jenkins Alex

17. Mr Nicolas Loop made the following main points:

- (a) he was a golfer and a member of Shek O Golf Club. He was not a member of HKGC;
- (b) in short term, there would be ample supply of land from brownfield sites, private agricultural land and some near-shore reclamations;
- (c) London was also facing a shortage of housing land and under huge pressure to provide affordable housing. However, the government there would not pursue housing development on the outdoor course in Wimbledon or the parklands in the heartland of London as those were heritage sites which would be protected forever. Hong Kong should learn from London's practice;
- (d) as Hong Kong was one of the smart, sustainable and liveable cities, it needed to provide a rich and diverse experience for visitors and residents. Protecting cultural and sport facilities was a key to maintaining Hong Kong's remaining competitive edges. Good examples included the newly renovated Hong Kong Museum of Art and the upcoming Kai Tak Sport Park;
- (e) HKGC had been a wonderful custodian of FGC. The Old Course was the oldest championship course in Asia. HKGC had fully engaged with the community, especially with an active junior section, and hosted HKLO annually. It would be erroneous to remove the 8 holes from the Old Course for housing development while there were ample alternative sites elsewhere in the territory, e.g. brownfield sites, abandoned Government buildings and dilapidated industrial buildings, and the development intensity of these sites could be relaxed;
- (f) the proposed public housing development would cause shading impact on the remaining parts of FGC, reducing the possibility of major golf tournaments to be held there; and
- (g) HKGC could provide a much-needed, positive story for Hong Kong, connecting a long history with future success.

R452 – Demopoulos Frederick Michael

18. Ms Wong Gar Yee Elaine showed a video of her husband, Mr Frederick Michael Demopoulos, who could not attend the meeting in person. The main points made by Mr Demopoulos were:

- (a) he was engaged in travel and tourism industry;
- (b) according to some market research reports, golf tourism on global level was expected to grow by 6% per annum in the next few years, and the Asia region would take a much larger share of golf tourism than other regions. He opined that golf tourism in Hong Kong had a potential to grow to two to three times faster than the overall economy;
- (c) golf tourism was increasingly becoming part of the national tourism strategy in some countries, e.g. Abu Dhabi, Vietnam, Singapore, etc. Singapore, driven by Sport Singapore, Singapore Sports Hub and Singapore Tourism Authority, was executing a well-organised sport star tourism strategy, most notably through hosting golf events like Singapore Classic, LIV Golf Singapore on Sentosa Island, etc. Shanghai would host Buick LPGA tournament WSG-HSBC golf championship. Those world-class tournaments had brought along considerable amount of revenue generated from tourists' spending, supporting the livelihood of many people in their cities;
- (d) there was synergy and spill-over effect by hosting important golf tournaments. A top-tier golf event would attract other sponsors and organisers. Most of the revenue generated from golf tourism went to small businesses and sole proprietors (e.g. taxi drivers, restaurants, local tour guides, local hotels, etc.);
- (e) HKO attracted tourists. Events like ATS and Ladies European Tour that brought together top women golfers in the world would inspire more tourists and young ladies in Hong Kong. This was how cities competed in the global marketplace for travel tourism. Aramco Team Series Championship would play an important role in attracting Saudi Arabia's investment in Hong Kong's



economy, helping to accelerate growth and employment. Besides, the fact that Hong Kong would host the Aramco Team Series Championship was announced by the Chief Executive during his recent visit to Saudi Arabia; and

- (f) Hong Kong should strengthen its position as a tourist destination, such as hosting world-class golf tournaments on well-maintained golf course for elite golfers to compete on. FGC was the only venue in Hong Kong that could offer a globally recognised top-tier golf course. Taking back the Area by the Government would negatively impact on Hong Kong's ability to organise top golf tournaments. Also, if the Area was not maintained in its current condition, Hong Kong would no longer be capable of hosting those world-class events.

R467 – Howarth Christopher Douglas

R546 – Brock Jonathan Mark Carey

R622 – Petersen Ian Bjarne Ingerslev

R6747 – McAuslan Gary

19. Mr David Lyndsay made the following main points:

- (a) he also represented Hong Kong Football Club – Golf Society which had about 600 golfers. He and the representers had played golf in FGC before;
- (b) he objected to any reduction of existing golf course facilities in Hong Kong (including the Old Course) and any inclusion of the FGC in any plan (specifically that on the draft OZP) for housing development;
- (c) about 45% of the utilisation of FGC was by non-members (including individuals and non-venue-based golf societies). There was overwhelming demand for golf course facilities in Hong Kong, and FGC was already operating in its full capacity that many bookings were turned down every day. All the above justified the provision of more golf courses in Hong Kong;
- (d) the existing three 18-hole golf courses and all related facilities in FGC were world-class, well-recognised, well-maintained and well-utilised. They were

valuable assets to our society. This world-famous golf venue was developed by HKGC some 120 years ago, with the Old Course, New Course and Eden Course completed in 1911, 1931 and 1969 respectively. FGC had received many world's elite golfers in one of the longest running international golf tournaments in Asia, HKO, which was first held 60 years ago in 1959. It was of great sport, heritage and ecological values which should be left fully intact so that it could continue to serve the society of Hong Kong;

- (e) consideration should be given to other housing land supply options (e.g. vacant land, brownfield sites, etc.), instead of destroying the existing well-maintained golf facilities in FGC, which had already been providing sporting and recreational facilities to serve the community for years. FGC, if destroyed, could not be replaced;
- (f) taking forward the proposed public housing development would go against the spirit of the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO) which sought to protect the well-being of people, flora, fauna, ecological system and cultural heritage. It would also go against the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG) – Chapter 4 that recreation stemmed from a basic human need for activities which were essential to the mental and physical well-being of the individual and the community as a whole, for which land must be allocated;
- (g) the flat yield of the proposed public housing development was not significant. The housing site Sub-Area 1 was not well served by transport, sewage, drainage and utilities, nor was it close to any workplace. On the contrary, FGC had provided valuable employment opportunities to the local community; and
- (h) as expressed by a writer of an article recently published in the South China Morning Post, should HKGC's attractiveness to international sporting events be diminished, Hong Kong would be the ultimate loser as China lost the oldest golf course in the entire country. Such loss was not the objective for the NM.

R476 – The Institute of International Sustainable Development

R5975 – Koster Derald Richard

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

- (a) he was an independent wildlife consultant, not representing HKGC in the meeting today. He had some 33 years of experience in moth recording, 29 years of which were in Hong Kong;
- (b) there were major errors in the EIA report, though it had been accepted by the Director of Environmental Protection (DEP). In principle, the larger the sample size, the more likelihood to discover more species. Both the surveys conducted by HKGC and CEDD were under-recorded where only 793 and 59 species were recorded in HKGC's survey and the EIA report respectively;
- (c) there were moth species found in the Area which could be potentially classified in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List (i.e. species of global conservation concern (SGCC)). Based on HKGC's data, the mix of species found in each Sub-Area was different and some species were only specific to one Sub-Area. In Sub-Area 1, of the 264 moth species (including 21 SGCC) found thereat, about 82 species (including 11 SGCC) could be found in Sub-Area 1 only, not in Sub-Areas 2 to 4. Each Sub-Area had its own unique combination of species and the habitat it offered could not be replaced;
- (d) moths were more important than they were credited. Moths helped pollinate plants, especially at night-times, and many species fed on moths. In particular, *Cordyceps* (冬蟲夏草) surviving on moths was one of the traditional Chinese medicines;
- (e) the Government should seize the opportunities that the NM could offer to achieve the sustainability targets. FGC was situated at the heart of three ecological corridors which linked with Mai Po Marshes to the northwest, Luk

Keng to the northeast and Tai Mei Tuk to the southeast. Provision of green corridors for animal movement was important. Destruction of the habitats in FGC, even in part, would undermine the equilibrium of the overall ecological network;

- (f) proper management of the golf course was necessary to maintain the biodiversity. Consideration could be given to the option of public-private partnership between the Government and HKGC in devising a management plan for the golf course; and
- (g) Hong Kong needed all of the FGC intact, by designating all Sub-Areas as “OU(CR)” zone, to help maintain the world city status.

R396 – Wong Michael

R6729 – Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden (KFBG)

21. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Nip Hin Ming made the following main points:

- (a) he objected to the proposed public housing development in the Area. Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden (R6729) had consistently held the view that brownfield sites should be chosen over “Green Belt” sites for developments;
- (b) trees in different locations performed the same function in terms of landscape amenity, micro-climate control, ecology etc. and should be treated equally regardless of their locations. As remarked by Professor Jim Chi Yung, the woodland in the Area was a mature forest offering a strong cooling effect;
- (c) the Area was abundant in trees, similar to those “GB” sites recently rezoned for housing development in Ma On Shan and Tsing Yi. The Board should note that the number of trees to be felled for recent housing developments were about 2,780 in Ma On Shan, 1,260 in Tsing Yi and 996 in the Area;
- (d) CSC were found in Sub-Area 4. It was classified as ‘globally critically

endangered' according to international standards and 'Class I State Key Protected Wild Flora Species' by the Mainland. More importantly, it was widely distributed in Pearl River Delta in ancient time and considered as a native species in Hong Kong. According to a literature in 1912, CSC were found in Ha Tsuen and an area between Tai Po and Fanling (probably in Tai Hang Village). According to an article written by an AFCD's officer in 1972, two large CSC were observed in Tai Hang Village and claimed to have been planted in Ming Dynasty. In 1975, those two trees were designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in recognition of their botanical significance and rarity. However, the said trees in Ha Tsuen and Tai Hang Village mentioned above died subsequently;

- (e) a study in Vietnam revealed that diameters at breast height (DBHs) of about 70cm and 78cm would represent an age of about 186 years old and 208 years old respectively; and another study in Guangdong revealed that DBHs of about 29cm and 89cm would suggest an age of about 84 years old and 253 years old respectively. In Sub-Area 4, about 38 CSC were recorded. Based on a tree ring analysis conducted by Professor Li Jinbao of The University of Hong Kong in 2018, a DBHs of around 33cm would represent an age of about 66 years old. The CSC cluster had displayed a profile of different age groups, with the eldest one attaining an age of about 150 years old (with a DBHs of about 75cm) and the youngest ones being seedlings which were rarely seen in the wild. Also, another rare species *Ardisia villosa* (雪下紅) was present amidst the CSC cluster. All the above strongly suggested that the CSC cluster was a reproducing and viable population, which had existed since Qing Dynasty predating the Old Course, and the woodland which the CSC cluster fell within were the remnants of a low-lying larger swampy forest;
- (f) while the direction of water flow of the swampy woodland suggested that the woodland was under management to a certain extent, there were major concerns that the proposed public housing development on the swampy woodland would bring about adverse hydrological impacts and whether there would be proper management of the woodland habitat in future. Given that the two CSCs found in Tai Hang Village were protected by an SSSI designation under the AFCD's

management, the Board should consider whether the concerned swampy woodland in Sub-Area 4 could be adequately protected by an “OU(CR)” zoning under the management of Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), noting that the swampy woodland was of large scale which accommodated many wild species of conservation concern; and

- (g) in gist, KFBG had the following major comments:
  - (i) objection to destroying the well-wooded areas for housing development;
  - (ii) the CSC cluster in Sub-Area 4 was probably a remnant population or a rewilded natural population;
  - (iii) the swampy woodland should be appropriately managed for supporting wildlife habitats, and recreational activities thereat should be prohibited; and
  - (iv) the swampy woodland should be protected by an appropriate zoning (e.g. “SSSI” and “Conservation Area” for the swampy woodland and its vicinities respectively, or “OU(Nature Park)” as for Long Valley) and a proper habitat management plan by a party with relevant expertise.

R499 – The Hong Kong Countryside Foundation (HKCF)

22. Mr Roger Nissim made the following main points:

- (a) he was a board member of HKCF (R499) speaking on its behalf. He was also an estate surveyor;
- (b) the TPB Paper mentioned TFLS’s recommendation in 2018 but without covering the changing planning circumstances thereafter. In the TFLS report, three short-to-medium term solutions to the land supply issue were identified in the order of preference: (1) brownfield sites; (2) tapping into private agricultural land reserve in the New Territories; and (3) alternative uses of sites under private recreational leases (e.g. FGC). It was noteworthy that brownfield sites were top on the list and sites under private recreational leases were at the last place;
- (c) the Board should note the following updated situation:

- (i) since 2018, the Government had increased the extent and pace of land resumption. As stated in a reply to Legislative Council (LegCo) by the Secretary for Development (SDEV) on 24.3.2021, about 90 ha of land had been resumed (including 80 ha for NDA and public housing development) in 2019/20 and 2020/21, and about 700 ha of land (including about 600 ha NDA) would be resumed from 2021/22 onwards;
- (ii) the Chief Executive's 2022 Policy Address had set out the intention to develop the NM as the new engine for growth in the territory. The San Tin Technopole would have an area of about 627ha, of which about 300ha would be reserved for innovation and technology industries, with the remainder to be developed as a new town centre to provide up to about 54,000 flats;
- (iii) in a written reply to LegCo by SDEV on 7.12.2022, about 1,000 ha of brownfield sites would be developed for high-density housing and other uses. On 14.4.2023, the Board approved the proposed revisions to the Town Planning Board Guidelines No. 13F on applications for open storage and port back-up uses. The relevant TPB paper stated that the resumption of brownfield sites was expected to increase from about 30 ha for the past few years to about 200 ha for years up to 2026;
- (d) with various land supply initiatives in good progress particularly the NDA where public housing development should be located, the 9 ha site of Sub-Area 1 had become insignificant;
- (e) on 11.5.2023, DEP, taking into account ACE's advice, issued the EIA approval with conditions that CEDD was required to review the scale of the proposed public housing development in Sub-Area 1 in view of the potential ecological and visual impacts, implicating that Sub-Area 1 was not suitable for high-rise public housing development; and
- (f) the NM initiative represented a paradigm shift in how planning should be done in Hong Kong. However, the TPB Paper made no reference to the six planning

principles, the first three of which were relevant to FGC: (i) urban-rural integration; (ii) proactive conservation; and (iii) high-quality outdoor eco-recreation outlets. It was considered that FGC fell squarely within the above descriptions and with its location being in the centre of the future NM, it should be considered as the future central park. The central park proposal could be materialised through a new private recreational lease which could put under control the usage and management of the golf course, without the need for zoning control. The current zoning proposal should be withdrawn.

R535 – Ma Wai Tak Victor

23. Mr Ma Wai Tak Victor made the following main points:

- (a) he objected to taking back Sub-Area 1 for housing development;
- (b) although the Board would only take into account planning considerations during the decision-making process, the current housing proposal should also be examined from a political perspective;
- (c) the option of housing development at FGC was put forth by the pan-democratic legislators a few years ago but now, some of them were put behind bars and some had left Hong Kong. At that time, they misled the public with fake information (e.g. the site was spade-ready) and claimed to be fighting for the so-called justice in their mind by creating division between the rich and the poor. That was simply a political tactic. If the Government was to take back the Area for public housing, it would mean that the Government was supporting their intent;
- (d) if Sub-Area 1 was chosen for development because of its topography being relatively flat, underutilised in form of an open carpark and without rehousing issue, then by the same token, it was unsure if all sites in Hong Kong of similar nature (e.g. basketball courts, open spaces, open carparks, etc.) should be identified for development; and



- (e) FGC was the oldest golf course in Asia that if once closed down, it could not be reinstated. The Board should make a sensible decision.

R3238 – Siu Suzanne

24. Mr Siu Yin Wai made the following main points:

- (a) he was a member of HKGC and a civil engineer;
- (b) Hong Kong people was ill-informed that Sub-Area 1, once taken back by the Government, could be made available immediately for development and citizens could be allocated with flats without the need to wait for five or six years;
- (c) from his experience, the Area was not problem-free but subject to many issues, e.g. environmental and ecological aspects, traffic problem, etc. In terms of traffic, the interchanges in Fanling were already very congested and would be even so, considering the development projects in the pipeline including the NDH expansion and some on-going housing projects nearby. In terms of construction cost, the configuration of Sub-Area 1 was elongated that the supporting infrastructure/ utilities should run a longer length and hence incur a higher construction cost. In terms of work programme, it would take about ten years for flat production on the site, and the site was not as a quick fix as people had originally thought;
- (d) the crux of the housing problem in Hong Kong was the high construction cost. Infilling piecemeal developments amid the high-rise building mass would face difficulties posed by the construction works, the intricate underground utilities and the stringent construction safety requirements, all amounting to higher construction cost, slower work programme and congested neighbourhood; and
- (e) the country parks occupied about 44,312 ha of land in Hong Kong, which was about 5.6 times the area of Hong Kong Island (about 7,859 ha). If 1% of the peripheral area of country park was allocated for development, the flat yield

would be about 60,000 units, equivalent to the current 5-year production of Hong Kong Housing Authority (HKHA). If 2% of such land could be made available, the flat yield would be similar to HKHA's 10-year production.

R562 – 蔡百泰

25. 蔡百泰 made the following main points:

- (a) he had been a practitioner in tourism industry for some 50 years. He did not play golf although he was a member of several golf clubs (excluding FGC);
- (b) FGC was a famous venue for international golf events and was appealing to overseas golf enthusiasts. We could make best use of it to promote golf diplomacy with outside world and to facilitate business networking;
- (c) Hong Kong had ample land supply options, e.g. brownfield sites, country parks, etc.; and
- (d) the Board should make a decision for the best interest of the society.

R564 – Ng Chen Ngee Cheryl

26. With the aid of a video presentation, Ms Ng Chen Ngee Cheryl made the following main points:

- (a) she objected to the proposed public housing development at FGC;
- (b) she was a teacher and a mother of two young children. She was speaking on behalf of the next generation of Hong Kong;
- (c) although she supported the policy of providing more housing units for those in need, there would be no need to select FGC for such purpose given that many land supply initiatives had been implemented and were in good progress;

- (d) since there were insufficient golf courses in Hong Kong for training, young golf lovers had meagre opportunity to experience real golf on ground but to practise it by playing video game simulator;
- (e) up to date, about 50% of the golf courses in FGC were used by the public. If one of the courses was removed, the availability of golf courses for HKGC members would remain unchanged as they were paying for their membership but the available time slots left for public use would be substantially reduced;
- (f) the Old Course was the first 18-hole golf course in China. FGC was the only golf course which brought international golf tournaments and celebrities to Hong Kong and the opportunities that the young generation could meet their heroes, from whom they could be inspired. All those events were open to the public in Hong Kong and had attracted 400 million viewers worldwide a year. Without these international tournaments, the next generations would lose the great opportunity to learn from real life and different people;
- (g) major golf events had brought investment to Hong Kong. It took years and many relationships to make these events happen. Destroying the FGC would ruin Hong Kong's ability to have a global standing in golf. Those who would suffer from the consequence was the people in Hong Kong and the next generations;
- (h) HKGC was responsible for the management and maintenance of the FGC at their own cost. If the Government took up the burden of maintaining the golf course, the Government would have to incur higher cost for maintenance and hire expertise at the expense of taxpayers' money, without being able to achieve the same level of management and passion as HKGC did; and
- (i) on one hand, the Government spent a huge amount of money to fund Olympic athletes but on the other, destroyed another sport venue.

R576 – Kwan Chun Yue Patrick

27. Mr John Anthony Allcock made the following main points:

- (a) he was a PhD student of The University of Hong Kong studying impacts of urbanisation on bats. He had 10 years of experience as an ecological consultant in Hong Kong working on EIA and rezoning applications, and had conducted ecological surveys at FGC in 2015 to 2016;
- (b) the Old Course provided a good variety of habitats for bats, comprising mature trees as bat roosting sites, constant supply of water under the current management, the wet condition providing good environment for insects which formed a food supply for bats, absence of artificial lighting and no disturbance of human activities, etc.;
- (c) according to a survey he conducted, about six/seven bat species and some 50 individuals were found in northern New Territories in one single night. Some surveys conducted by other scholars revealed that there were about 17 species in FGC. As opposed to the above, the EIA recorded only one individual during the 12 months of the survey period, which seemed to be very unrealistic. Any assessment based on this incomplete findings would result in misleading conclusion; and
- (d) potential impacts on bats as a result of the proposed public housing development were twofold, including direct impact and indirect impact. In terms of direct impact, the mosaic of woodland and grassland habitats would be destroyed, and disturbance by human activities and artificial lighting would significantly increase, leading to a substantial decline in ecological value and usage by bats. In terms of indirect impacts, there would be impacts on the surrounding habitats and on Sub-Areas 2 and 3, which had not been fully discussed in the EIA report. For instance, it was unsure how the grassland in Sub-Areas 2 and 3 would be impacted by the compensatory planting proposal and the possible recreational uses thereat. The latter would possibly involve the increased use of pesticide killing insects, which would reduce food availability for bats and hence the bat

population.

R583 – 香港中華游樂會

R3270 – 鄭妙如

28. 梁文滔 made the following main points:

- (a) like HKGC, Chinese Recreation Club (香港中華游樂會) was a private recreation club promoting sport activities. He raised objection to the rezoning proposal on behalf of the Chinese Recreation Club;
- (b) under the Government's policy to support the development of sports, sports facilities should be retained as much as possible, especially the FGC which was equipped with golf courses of high quality and international standard;
- (c) despite deficiency in the provision of golf courses and facilities in Hong Kong, the home-grown golfers had achieved excellent results in the global tournaments. Thanks to the HKGC (as a private recreation club), they had made strenuous efforts in promoting sports and popularising golf, e.g. opening up the FGC for various sports organisations to host competitions and training;
- (d) the Old Course was the oldest golf course in use in China, and in Hong Kong as well;
- (e) FGC was an important venue for hosting international tournaments and recreational activities for Hong Kong. This year, FGC outbid many other venues in the world to have been chosen for hosting the Aramco Team Series Championship, for which many people and golf enthusiasts in Hong Kong felt very proud of. For this, the FGC had attained a high status in Asia and in the World. FGC should be maintained in its entirety otherwise the loss of any golf holes would affect the eligibility of FGC as an international competition venue; and

- (f) any closing down of FGC would involve felling of many trees (including OVTs) and cause irreversible ecological impact on the FGC.

R586 – Hau Hon Fai

29. Mr Hau Hon Fai made the following main points:

- (a) he was an architect, having been involved in many public works projects. He lived in the North District;
- (b) whilst he was supportive of the Government's housing policy, he was against the choice of FGC for housing development;
- (c) the option of utilising FGC for housing development originated from the TFLS's recommendations in 2018. However, at the time of preparing the TFLS report, many political factors were at play and had been factored in the recommendations. As advised by Mr Frederick Ma Si Hang (one of HKGC's representatives) in the hearing meeting on 14.6.2023, we should stay rational so that we could strike a balance while addressing the problem so as not to give rise to any unfairness;
- (d) on the location choice for housing development, the Old Course was not the only option considering that many other alternatives were available, e.g. brownfield sites, country parks, etc. Excising the Old Course from FGC for the proposed public housing development would substantially affect the operation of the FGC;
- (e) on the reprovisioning of affected golf course facilities, both the existing open carpark and staff quarters in Sub-Area 1 would be affected by the proposed public housing development and needed to be reprovisioned elsewhere in the FGC which was of equally ecologically important and in turn would lead to another round of submission to the ACE. Such knock-on effect was not desirable;

- (f) on the traffic issue, given that both the existing Tai Tau Leng Roundabout and Kai Leng Roundabout were already over capacity in peak hours, the situation would be worsened with additional developments in the pipeline, e.g. proposed expansion of NDH, the proposed public housing development in Sub-Area 1, etc. The problems lied in (i) the deficiency of the design of the two roundabouts (i.e. the diameter of the roundabouts not long enough), and (ii) illegal on-street parking reducing the road space available for traffic circulation. It was believed that the above had not been featured in the relevant traffic impact assessment conducted by the Government; and
- (g) the Board should note that the proposed public housing development would affect the whole North District.

R587 – Fung Ching See Vivien

30. Ms Fung Ching See Vivien made the following main points:

- (a) she objected to taking part of the FGC for housing development;
- (b) the proposed public housing development would have impact on the cultural heritage and ecology and overtax the transport network in the North District. It would also affect the opportunities of Hong Kong to host international events, the development of golf in Hong Kong, the training ground for golf athletes and the livelihood of the FGC employees;
- (c) on better utilisation of scarce land resource, she opined that FGC had recreational value as an international event venue and as training ground for many local golf talents. There were many other alternative land supply options, e.g. abandoned farmland, the area in Ping Kong suggested by HYK, etc. If the benefit of developing a public housing estate for mere 12,000 units did not outweigh the cost of losing part of the FGC, it was not making good use of land;
- (d) on the objection to the proposed public housing development based on vested interest, such saying was not appropriate. On the contrary, every people in

Hong Kong could benefit from the spinoff effect brought about by the FGC. Golf sports events attracted international stars and tourists. Also, FGC was open to the public and made available for various organisations to host many training events. Of the some 7,000 representations received by the Board, only a few supported the housing proposal. The Government should listen to this mainstream public opinion;

- (e) golf ground of varying landscape features were essential in the training of golf talents, in particular sharpening up their golf skills and strategic mindset. The three 18-hole golf courses in FGC were fit for such purpose. When the 8 holes in the Old Course were taken back by the Government, the remaining holes would serve no purpose. This would affect the training of golf talents and stifle the development of golf in Hong Kong; and
- (f) the decision of taking back part of FGC for housing purpose was made a few years ago. If a decision which was made several years ago was no longer sound today due to changing circumstances, the Government should remain flexible and review the previous decision to suit the needs of the society. The FGC which was of international standard could complement the relevant facilities in the GBA. As a responsible Government, they should make rational decision taking into account the latest public views.

[The meeting was adjourned for lunch break at 3:00 p.m.]



31. The meeting was resumed at 3:30 p.m.

32. 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

Ms Lilian S.K. Law

Mr K.W. Leung

Mr Ricky W.Y. Yu

Mrs Vivian K.F. Cheung

Mr Vincent K.Y. Ho

Mr Ben S.S. Lui

Ms Bernadette 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

33. The following government representatives, representers 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  | ] | 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 and their Representatives**

R556 – Heung Yee Kuk New Territories (新界鄉議局)

R2413 – Ip Lai Yee (葉麗儀)

R2416 – Lam Moon Tong (林滿堂)

Yau Wing Kwong (邱榮光) ] Representers' representatives

Chan Ka Mun Carmen (陳嘉敏) ]

Lau Man Kwan Julia (劉文君) ]

Lau Kin Yip (劉建業) ]

R588 – Hobson Michael Hamilton (賀百新)

R1406 – Shroff Noshir Nariman

R1834 – Yau Yuk Ling Estalla (游玉玲)

R2296 – Jojo Camille

R6674 – Chan Joyce Clarebelle (陳清林)

R6775 – Mulchandani Narayan Phatu

R6730 – The Hong Kong Professional Golfers' Association

(香港職業高爾夫球協會)

Liu Ping Kwong Daniel (廖炳光) ] Representers' representatives

Chung Siu Lun Joeson (鍾兆倫) ]

Tang Man Kee (鄧敏祺) ]

Ng Yung Foon (吳容歡) ]

Kan Pak Kin (簡栢堅) ]

Ng Shing Fung Terrence (伍城鋒) ]

Lam Tsz Fung Steven (林子豐) ]

R598 – Allan Hay

R1936 – Robinson James Alexander

R2329 – Robinson Kelly Shim

R3311 – Von Cannon Bruce Douglas

Robinson James Alexander - Representer and representers'

representative

R615 – Huang Hak Kong Keith

Huang Hak Kong Keith - Representer

R647 – Lee Shuet Kee (李雪姬)

Lee Shuet Kee - Representer

R648 – Szeto Chi Shing Thomas (司徒治成)

Szeto Chi Shing Thomas - Representer

R686 – 粉嶺區鄉事委員會

Au-yeung Fung Chun Jody - Representer's representative  
(歐陽鳳珍)

R1281 – Chatjaval Cheng Sheilah (鄭兆齡)

R1776 – Cheng Trinette Tom (鄭譚蕙芯)

R3324 – Hyun Jun John (玄竣)

R3378 – Jim Chi Yung

Jim Chi Yung - Representer and representers'  
representative

R1282 – Lau Chun Kay

Lau Chun Kay - Representer

R1292 – Rowse Michael John Treloar

Rowse Michael John Treloar - Representer

R1330 – Yip Siu Ming Derrick

Yip Siu Ming Derrick - Representer

R1345 – Fang David

Fang David - Representer

R1388 – Kwok Wing Chung Ronald

Kwok Wing Chun Ronald - Representer

R1400 – Tse Sik Hung David

Cheung Tai Wai David - Representer's representative

R1823 – Pe Hong Teng (白鴻滕)

R1910 – Pe May (白梁秀美)

R1923 – Leung Sau Fan Sylvia (梁秀芬)

R1924 – Lo Siu Fung Lisa (盧小鳳)

R1925 – Leung Kam Wah (梁錦華)

R3964 – Leung Tsz Fung Ray (梁梓峰)

R3965 – Ng Man Fung (吳雯鳳)

Leung Tsz Fung Ray - Representer and representers' representative

R598 – Frics F Allan Hay

R1936 – Robinson James Alexander

R2329 – Robinson Kelly Shim

R3311 – Von Cannon Bruce Douglas

Robinson James Alexander - Representer and representers' representative

R1945 – Lee Hung Bun (李鴻斌)

R1946 – Lee Christopher (李敬謙)

R1991 – Lee Ying Choi (李英才)

R1992 – Lin Tzu Ping (林紫平)

R2299 – Lee Hung Hing (李鴻興)

R3498 – Lee Shin Yee (李倩儀)

Lee Hung Bun - Representer and representers' representative

R1981 – Nishi Yoshihiro

Nishi Yoshihiro - Representer

34. The Chairperson extended a welcome and invited the representers and their representatives to elaborate on their representations:

R556 – Heung Yee Kuk New Territories (新界鄉議局)

R2413 – Ip Lai Yee (葉麗儀)

R2416 – Lam Moon Tong (林滿堂)

35. Mr Yau Wing Kwong made the following main points:

- (a) he said that the representers' representatives were all current/former members of the ACE and former members of the Board;
- (b) Heung Yee Kuk (HYK) New Territories had all along assisted the Government to implement their policy, in particular, the co-ordination of land use planning and development related matters in the New Territories; and
- (c) the Board should make decisions to ensure sustainable development of Hong Kong and for the greatest benefit to Hong Kong in terms of health, safety and general welfare of the community.

36. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Ms Lau Man Kwan Julia, made the following main points:

- (a) she provided the Woodland Cemetery in Stockholm as an example, which had obtained an United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) heritage award for landscape and architecture, and

highlighted how the heritage landscape was utilised as a tourist attraction. The criteria for Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment under the EIAO included landscape features and cultural elements such as ‘fung shui’ woodlands and clan graves;

- (b) comparing the tree surveys conducted by CEDD and HKGC, HKGC identified about 400 more trees with a total of about 1,514 trees within Sub-Area 1. Out of the 1,514 trees, there were 33 large trees of particular interests (TPIs). By overlaying the notional layout of the proposed public housing development, 33 TPIs would need to be felled or transplanted and that would create severe adverse landscape impact. Based on her previous site visit with the ACE, she noted that there were discrepancies in the number and size of actual tree crowns and those shown in the tree survey;
- (c) a graded clan grave of the Qing Dynasty in Sub-Area 1 would be in direct conflict with a residential block in the notional layout of the proposed public housing development;
- (d) the FGC of over 100 years was a living cultural landscape heritage. Its design principle had adopted the traditional landscape design of Scottish courses, which was very rare in the latest days. The existing landscape in the Old Course was built respecting the natural terrain, ancestral graves and ‘fung shui’ woodland. Ecology and biodiversity were preserved. The design of the FGC had displayed a civilised and harmonious design respecting both nature and human;
- (e) the FGC was a gem in Hong Kong which could become a popular tourist attraction and would bring economic benefits to Hong Kong. With such a unique history, the Old Course of FGC should not be destroyed by taking part of it for housing development. For it to be UNESCO worthy, the Old Course should be preserved in whole to maintain its authenticity and integrity. HYK proposed to keep the FGC intact and to allow HKGC to continue to operate so as to ensure that the FGC was well maintained;

- (f) the proposed public housing development would be a high-density development with a domestic plot ratio (PR) of 6.5 and building heights (BHs) ranging from about 130mPD to 170mPD, that was 40m or about 13 storeys taller than the adjacent Ching Ho Estate. Potential light pollution to the ecology in Sub-Area 2 was highly likely as there was no buffer area from Sub-Area 1. The proposed high-density residential development with 48-storey buildings would not be compatible with the Old Course;
- (g) the expansion of NDH would involve additional 1,500 hospital beds by 2029. With the significant increase in population in the North District, especially elderly aged 65 and above, it was expected that the demand for accident and emergency (A&E) services and the associated traffic generated would rise. While the crucial Tai Tau Leng Roundabout was at/near capacity and traffic congestion was observed at the nearby local junctions, the proposed public housing development would worsen the local traffic condition. Queuing at key junctions would block the new entrance of NDH which might put the health and safety of residents of North District at risk. She disagreed with the findings of the Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment (TTIA) under the Technical Study on Partial Development of FGC – Feasibility Study (the Technical Study) as it was based on outdated planning assumptions with omitted developments and missing calculation in trip generation;
- (h) the destruction of living landscape and cultural heritage was irreversible and should be avoided. The 32 ha of land of the FGC to the east of Fan Kam Road covering Holes 1 to 8 of the Old Course (the Area) was not the last piece of land available for public housing development. There were other alternatives, such as NM, NDAs, agricultural land, brownfield sites and Lantau Tomorrow. The EIA process required that where there were alternatives, environmental impacts should be avoided;
- (i) a number of young elite golfers like Miss Tiffany Chan were trained in FGC. The FGC could offer education opportunities to groom talents and golfers to participate in future games; and



- (j) tourism was one of the important economic pillars in Hong Kong. There was no point to destroy the FGC which had been a natural tourist spot and immediately available to bring economic benefits to Hong Kong.

37. Ms Chan Ka Mun Carmen made the following main points:

- (a) the proposed termination of the private recreational lease for the Area was the decision of the previous term of Government and it was one of the recommendations made by the TFLS to increase land supply in the short to medium;
- (b) the proposed public housing development had to go through established mechanisms under the Town Planning Ordinance and EIAO. In the 2022 meeting, ACE advised the project proponent to provide a revised detailed layout of the proposed public housing development, to take effort to preserve the about 0.4 ha of woodland, and to provide detailed landscape and visual design treatment proposal to mitigate potential landscape and visual impacts under the EIA submission. However, none of the above information was supplemented by the project proponent in its additional information submitted to ACE in April 2023. As the review of the layout required under the conditions of the EIA approval would take more time for preparation, the land supply option of using the FGC would inevitably be delayed. In addition, the Area was not the last piece of land available in Hong Kong for providing public housing, and there were other alternatives; and
- (c) the intention to develop public housing in FGC was still retained under the “Undetermined” (“U”) zone recommended in TPB Paper No. 10902 (the Paper). The “U” zone was considered unsuitable given that the public housing proposal in Sub-Area 1 was still controversial and there were many unresolved technical issues. The HYK recommended to retain the Area with a short term tenancy for the HKGC to operate and maintain the venue for future golf tournaments.

[Mr Lincoln L. H. Huang left this session of the meeting at this point.]

38. The Chairperson responded that the “U” zone proposed in the Paper was different from a zoning for residential use, and it was recommended as a stopgap whilst CEDD conducted the review to address the conditions of the EIA approval. It had been reconfirmed that the Area would be returned to the Government on 1.9.2023.

R588 – Hobson Michael Hamilton (賀百新)

R1406 – Shroff Noshir Nariman

R1834 – Yau Yuk Ling Estalla (游玉玲)

R2296 – Jojo Camille

R6674 – Chan Joyce Clarebelle (陳清林)

R6775 – Mulchandani Narayan Phatu

R6730 – The Hong Kong Professional Golfers’ Association (HKPGA) (香港職業高爾夫球協會)

39. Mr Chung Siu Lun Joeson made the following main points:

- (a) he was a member of HKPGA and worked as a golf coach. The HKPGA was founded in 1970 and all members were professional golfers. Many professional tournaments for overseas and Asian golfers had been organised by HKPGA over the years. The HKPGA was the only organisation recognised by HKGA to train and assess professional golfers in Hong Kong, and HKPGA had played a leading role in the professional golf industry in Hong Kong. HKPGA had a close relationship with FGC as the founding member of HKPGA, Mr Tang Shu Chuen, started his golf career as a caddie in FGC and further became a professional golfer under FGC’s support;
- (b) he objected to taking back the Area and using 9 ha of the land for proposed public housing development, as it would affect promotion of golf as well as venues for coaches to provide training to golfers. He did not mean that sport development should override housing needs in the society, but it was doubted that the housing problem in Hong Kong could be solved by

providing about 12,000 units or even less in the Area;

- (c) over 10 golf venues/facilities had been closed due to land lease matters in recent years. Whilst golf sport had become more popular, available golf venues/facilities had decreased and that would diminish Hong Kong's capabilities to host international and local golf tournaments. At a time when golfing would soon become one of the elite sports of the Hong Kong Sport Institute, it was a regression to take away part of FGC at the same time; and
- (d) with fewer and fewer golf venues, the career development and livelihood of golf coaches would be directly affected. Professional golfers had to be trained for over 10 years to be a qualified coach and it would be difficult for golf coaches to change jobs. HKGC had kindly allocated tee times in the Old Course for training of golf athletes of Hong Kong team that had enabled them to strive for better results. Should the Area be taken back, it would be challenging to nurture new golf talents.

40. Mr Tang Man Kee said that he was an indigenous villager of a village nearby the FGC and had worked as a caddie in the FGC when he was small. He was thankful to have the opportunities to learn and practise golf in FGC and became a representative to join the golf tournaments. The FGC should be retained, so that more local young talents could receive golf training.

41. Ms Ng Yung Foon made the following main points:

- (a) she had been a golf coach for 15 years and was mainly responsible for promoting golf and providing basic golf training, in particular in primary and secondary schools, in the recent decade. Many schools in Hong Kong had participated in the golf learning scheme as part of the physical education lessons or extra-curricular activities. However, it was difficult to sustain golf training for school kids as there was a lack of complete and intact golf venues. Since 2013, HKGC had kindly offered tee times for students from about ten schools to participate in weekly golf training courses in FGC; and

- (b) in 2017 and 2019, HKGC provided golf training and workshop to physical education teachers so that these teachers could help pass on some basic golf knowledge to their students in schools. HKGC had contributed a lot in popularising golf and training local young talents. The Old Course with 8 holes taken away would no longer be a complete 18-hole course for training. Given the current inadequate support and resources, taking back part of the Old Course would further hinder the development of golf sport. The Government should consider carefully before destroying an intact and internationally renowned golf course.

42. Mr Ng Shing Fung Terrence made the following main points:

- (a) he was a member of the HKPGA and a full time professional golfer. He had been a golf athlete since the age of nine. Twenty years ago, there were not many available venues for golf training, and the Old Course of FGC was the main regular training ground that was offered for young athletes at that time for on-course practices; and
- (b) he disagreed with the claim that the Old Course could be substituted by other golf courses in FGC as each course was unique with their own characteristics. The training and tournament held in the three different 18-hole courses in FGC had effectively enhanced the skills and techniques of the golfers. Taking away the 8 holes in the Old Course would greatly affect the training of local golfers and would weaken their competitiveness.

43. Mr Lam Tsz Fung Steven made the following main points:

- (a) he was a member of the HKPGA and a golf coach. He was also a youth athlete at the age of nine. Young athletes were allowed to be trained in the three 18-hole courses in FGC. The other sizable golf courses were too remote and difficult for young athletes to go for practice after school. HKGC had offered a programme for junior development golfers to allow them to practice golf at all times and it was more convenient to go there in after school

hours;

- (b) being a golf coach now, he observed that there were many members and non-members participating in golf training in FGC. The facilities in FGC were the most complete amongst other golf courses in Hong Kong. He shared that maintaining a golf course in good condition was challenging, especially in upkeeping the quality of large areas of turfgrasses;
- (c) turfgrasses required sufficient sunlight and air movement to maintain good condition for golfing. Should there be too many tall buildings near the golf course, the potential shadowing and air blockage might adversely affect the healthy growth of turfgrasses; and
- (d) he hoped that the Area could be handed back to HKGC for operation and management as HKGC had rich experience over the years and had paid great efforts in maintaining FGC in good condition.

44. Mr Kan Pak Kin said he was the course director of HKPGA. HKPGA had provided golf professional training programme since 2002. In order to train professional golfers, apart from the software (such as policy support, golfers' hard work, professional coaching, and support from the golf club and the public), having a world class golfing venue was the most essential. While Hong Kong did not have enough golfing facilities overall, preserving the completeness of existing courses in FGC could allow the sustainable development of golf sport. FGC was internationally renowned with a history of over a century, and it was a vital component for Hong Kong's international status. Taking away part of the land of FGC for public housing development would further worsen the insufficiency of golfing facility, and that contradicted the Government's policy of promoting sport professionalism. The Government should work with HKGC to conserve the 18-hole Old Course and to transform it into a training ground for golf athletes.

45. Mr Liu Ping Kwong, chairman of HKPGA, said he had been a professional golf coach since 1979. HKPGA's views on promoting golf development and retaining the Old Course of FGC had been mentioned by other members of the association above. He wished the Government could accept their opinions.

R615 – Huang Hak-Kong Keith

46. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Huang Hak-Kong Keith, made the following main points:

- (a) he was a landscape architect and had rich consulting experiences in the landscape industry in Hong Kong. He considered that the Old Course of FGC was the most outstanding landscape space in Hong Kong with significant landscape features and was a vital golf training ground and a venue for renowned golf tournaments. The proposed public housing development in the Area would be a severe loss for the society and would destroy a great landscape resource;
- (b) the Old Course was in English Garden style with multiple characteristic features, including meandering pathway, expansive meadow, enclosing tree belt, ha-ha over a stream, clumps of trees and designed landform. The origin of the English Garden style was from a landscape designer, named William Kent, in the 18th century. There was nothing in Hong Kong that resembled the landscape features in the Old Course;
- (c) the TPIs in the Old Course were potential Old and Valuable Trees (OVTs). Once the land lease for the Old Course ended, the TPIs would likely be registered as OVTs. The tree survey under the Technical Study showed that there were 70 TPIs in Sub-Area 1. It was recommended in the tree survey to retain 25, transplant 34 and remove 11 TPIs. Development Bureau's Technical Circular for Works No. 5/2020 - Registration and Preservation of OVTs stated that removing any OVTs was prohibited unless they were dead. The tree survey did not provide explanation to demonstrate that the removal was the best available and only practicable option;
- (d) the Old Course was the quickest to drain after raining and playable among the three golf courses in FGC. There was high concentration of organic matters in the soil which led to excellent water permeability and retention.

The Old Course's soil and hydrological system was well-balanced with significant landscape features and assets. However, the Drainage Impact Assessment in the Technical Study did not fully assess the permeability and groundwater hydrology;

- (e) the Old Course was the closest to a heritage landscape as it met the factors established for heritage buildings (i.e. historical interest, architectural merit, group value, social value, local interest, authenticity and rarity). The entirety of the heritage landscape in the Old Course should be preserved. The Old Course had matured into an exemplary heritage landscape and a remarkable statement of Hong Kong's history; and
- (f) the Old Course had served as a recreational area and a sanctuary for the flora and fauna. The proposed public housing development in the Area was an irreversible mistake. The functions of the Board were to promote "the health, safety, convenience and general welfare of the community" when preparing draft plans. The emphasis on Hong Kong's well-being and development should not be limited to the provision of housing alone. Factors such as recreation variety, ecological shelter and landscape heritage made Hong Kong a significant international city. The Old Course was a classic piece of landscape architecture and should not be fragmented for housing development.

R647 – Lee Shuet Kee

47. Ms Lee Shuet Kee made the following main points:

- (a) she objected to taking back part of FGC and urged the Government to retain the Old Course. The proposed public housing development in the Area was not an appropriate land use proposal. The Government claimed that taking back part of the Old Course would not affect hosting international golf tournaments in FGC. Such a claim by the Government showed a lack of knowledge of the golf profession;
- (b) the Government should listen to the objecting views of the organiser of

Aramco Team Series Championship, which was a third party offering objective opinions. Realising that the Government was going to take back part of FGC, Aramco sent a representative to attend the hearing session because they were worried that the next round of Aramco Team Series Championship to be hosted in FGC in October this year would be affected. Aramco had a lot of experiences in hosting international golf tournaments and commented that the scale, type of facilities and condition of FGC were of higher quality as compared with golf courses in other cities. The Chief Executive pledged to tell the world the good stories of Hong Kong and to promote Hong Kong as an international metropolis. The proposed public housing contradicted what the Government was advocating. FGC could help to strengthen the international image of Hong Kong and had latent impact on the overall economic development of Hong Kong; and

- (c) the Government insisted to take back the Area for public housing development and emphasised that there was no other alternative proposal. She disagreed with such claim and said that HYK had proposed another site for public housing development and there were obviously many more land options. The destruction of the completeness of the Old Course and FGC would cause serious and irreversible consequences. She urged the Government not to pursue the public housing proposal and FGC should be retained.

[Mr Wilson Y. W. Fung and Mrs Vivian K.F. Cheung rejoined the meeting during Ms Lee Shuet Kee's presentation.]

R648 – Szeto Chi Shing Thomas

48. Mr Szeto Chi Shing Thomas made the following main points:

- (a) he was a local resident of Hong Kong. He strongly objected to using the Old Course for public housing development;
- (b) FGC was not just a golf course, but a place with great importance to the



overall ecological environment of Hong Kong. This was an important consideration from urban planning perspective;

- (c) FGC had a long history with more than 100 years. The ecological environment would be destroyed should the Area be taken back for public housing development. That violated the Government's conservation policy. The whole of FGC should be permanently preserved, so that the next generations of Hong Kong could continue to enjoy it;
- (d) FGC was open to the public. Apart from playing golf, there were many other recreational activities that were of great benefit to the general public and the community of Hong Kong;
- (e) FGC was important to the international image of Hong Kong as a diverse society. FGC was the only golf course where there were enough space and supporting facilities to accommodate the visitors generated by big international tournaments;
- (f) the Board should consider the livelihood issues caused by the proposed public housing development, including inadequacy of public transportation, road network and community facilities, as well as the population density and distribution. With the expansion of NDH, the traffic congestion in the surrounding area would be of more concern; and
- (g) only 9 ha out of 32 ha of land to be taken back from FGC would be used for public housing development which did not seem to have economic benefit. Many other places in the New Territories would be more suitable for housing development. FGC was a living heritage for Hong Kong people and he hoped the Board would consider the proposal thoroughly.

R686 – 粉嶺區鄉事委員會

49. Ms Au-yeung Fung Chun Jody (歐陽鳳珍) made the following main points:

- (a) she was a village representative and a member of the Fanling Rural Committee;
- (b) many people in the society did not agree to the taking back of part of the Old Course for public housing development as there were a lot of controversial technical and social issues yet to be resolved. The proposal deviated from the policy of being people-oriented. The capacity of infrastructures in the surrounding area was insufficient to cater for additional housing development in the area; and
- (c) she suggested that Members should conduct a site visit before making a decision.

R1281 – Chatjaval Cheng Sheilah (鄭兆齡)

R1776 – Cheng Trinette Tom (鄭譚蕙芯)

R3324 – Hyun Jun John (玄竣)

R3378 – Jim Chi Yung

50. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Professor Jim Chi Yung made the following main points:

- (a) he raised objection to the draft Fanling/Sheung Shui Extension Area Outline Zoning Plan (the draft OZP) as the proposed public housing development would intrude into a rural, bucolic and natural area with exceptionally high ecological, environmental, landscape and historical values;
- (b) the proposed public housing development would cause extensive on-site and off-site impacts, including loss of an invaluable and irreplaceable community heritage, massive decimation of high-calibre nature in the construction stage, continued decline of remnant-degraded nature in the operation stage, and collateral spillover damage to the “protected” nature in the adjacent Sub-Areas 2 to 4;

Irreplaceable natural and cultural endowment

*Valuable natural-cum-cultural landscape*

- (c) the original terrain of FGC had been well-protected with a lot of enrichment due to more than a century of care including planting new trees and preserving the existing ones. The natural-cum-cultural beauty of such highest order should be preserved;
- (d) the Old Course was considered as an extremely high quality cultural landscape and it deserved conservation efforts as much as a natural landscape. The drainage conditions and landforms were well-protected, leading to a large combination of ecological conditions to allow for a very wide variety of micro-habitats to support a very high biodiversity. The whole spectrum of micro-habitats spreading into Sub-Areas 2 to 4 should be protected to maintain the ecological integrity of the whole FGC;

*Unique historical heritage landscape*

- (e) the Area was a superior verdant, rustic and historical landscape with a large collection of potential OVTs and the finest turfgrass in Hong Kong. In most other places, it should be designated as a cultural heritage and protected stringently against on-site and nearby developments;
- (f) 84 TPIs could be identified in Sub-Area 1 alone and those trees were well-qualified as potential OVTs to enhance protection, that would raise the number of OVTs in Hong Kong by over 10%. The Sub-Area 1 could be considered as a ready-made arboretum;
- (g) 89 potential heritage trees were identified by field survey in the Old Course, including Burmese Rosewood, Incense Tree, Camphor Tree, Red Sandalwood, CSC, Formosa Ash Lemon-scented Gum, Red Kapok Tree, Chinese Banyan, Black Olive, etc.;

*Living national treasure CSC and other endangered trees*

- (h) CSC had been put under the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and rated as critically endangered, i.e. just one step towards extinction in the wild. There were not more than 250 CSC in the world and the trend of its population was decreasing due to human activities;
- (i) the Old Course had one of the largest collection of spontaneously reproduced and reproducing subpopulation of the species in the world. It was unthinkable to contemplate development in its vicinity that might threaten its survival in an extremely rare remnant natural habitat. If the impacts could not be ascertained at the current juncture, the precautionary principle should be adopted as the only course of action, which was also an international best practice;
- (j) the entire Old Course was the catchment that collected surface water and drained into the marsh of CSC. As nature was interconnected, any water dumping onto the Old Course would eventually flow to the marsh which was located in a lower level of the Old Course. It was unscientific to artificially or arbitrarily demarcate the catchment and say that Sub-Area 1 was less important or unimportant to the swamp hydrology. Sub-Areas 1 to 3 should be designated as the buffer zone, a usual international nature conservation practice, to shield Sub-Area 4 from harmful impacts. No activities that would threaten the survival of this tree species should be allowed within the buffer zone;
- (k) Governments, including the Mainland, were called upon to spare no effort to protect this tree species to prevent its extinction. Hong Kong should have an international obligation to protect pro-actively the swamp as a nature reserve. CSC should also be designated as OVTs;

*Unimpeded and high-quality rootable soil for meritorious tree growth*

- (l) in the Area, trees spread out at least two to three times of the crown spread because of no physical and soil volume confinement. The landform, soil and water components should not be disturbed to ensure sustained tree excellence;

*Habitat connectivity of ecological green corridors*

- (m) the Area, with a linear configuration, embraced linear and curvilinear woodland strips and intervening turf strips. Animals could move along the greenways offered by the wooded corridors, streams and turf belts. This ecosystem function should be protected by preserving the integrity of spatial connectivity;

*Effective cool island effect suppressing heat island effect*

- (n) vegetation area, especially the Old Course with many trees, could significantly lower the temperature, providing a cool island effect through evaporation and shading. It was considered that extensive and mature vegetation, unsealed soil and water bodies should be kept in order to sustain the cooling function;

*Essential ecosystem service of air pollution mitigation*

- (o) vegetation was known to trap dust and absorb air pollutants so as to improve the air quality. It was considered that the Area's pertinent air-cleaning natural service should be preserved, which would also bring benefits to the surrounding areas;

*Alternative lands with lower ecological and landscape values*

- (p) the proposed public housing development occupied merely some 8 ha, which was equivalent to only 0.4% of the brownfield sites in Hong Kong and 0.027% of the total area of the NM. The population intake of 33,600 residents was equivalent to only 1.44% of the NM projected population of 2.5 million;
- (q) the need for the proposed public housing development in the Area was overtaken by events including the announcement of the NM development, which could easily accommodate 8 ha of housing land and 33,600 residents;
- (r) the population density of the proposed public housing development of 4,200

persons per ha was extremely high, as compared to that of an average of public housing at 2,000 persons per ha. That would have serious implications on residents' physical and mental health and quality of life;

- (s) the housing project should be shifted to ecologically less sensitive areas;

Extensive and lingering harms of the proposed public housing development

- (t) *excessive tree removal* – over 1,000 trees would be felled as a result of the proposed public housing development at Sub-Area 1, some of which were TPis/potential OVTs;
- (u) *harmful tree transplanting* – in Hong Kong, there was no experience of transplanting large natural trees. When trees were transplanted, sufficient root should be provided. It was technically infeasible to transplant large natural trees with extensive root spread/substantially large root balls. The large transplanted natural trees might not survive the brutally excessive root loss. Also, many trees in the Area were growing in close proximity with intimately intertwined and grafted root systems. Transplanting one tree might harm or kill adjoining trees;
- (v) *root damage and loss due to widespread grade change* – the proposed public housing development would require extensive site formation due to the undulating and sloping site topography of the Old Course. Most areas would suffer from grade changes as a result of extensive cut and fill, which were notorious in harming or killing existing trees, either removing soil and roots or burying soil and roots to curtail air and water supply. The EIA did not include an acceptable assessment of grade change impacts on trees;
- (w) *soil sealing impacts on trees* – the shift of the existing trees growing in an unsealed natural soil environment to an extensive sealing surface would lead to trees decline or even killing the trees. Also, sealing the surface would reduce the infiltration of ground water and lower the water table, resulting in the swamp drying up and catastrophic decline or demise of the CSC;

- (x) *soil compaction impacts on trees* – soil compaction was commonly found in construction sites. Once compacted, soil was difficult to return to a proper state, which would affect trees' vigour and vitality;
- (y) *soil contamination impacts on trees* – the soil contaminated during construction and operation stages might go into the ground water and eventually to the swamp, harming the growth of CSC;
- (z) *building foundation impacts on trees* – the building foundation works would affect the water supply, so the ground water to the swamp might reduce. The ground water might also be heated up (underground urban heat island effect), the impact of which on CSC should be studied;
- (aa) *utility trenching impacts on trees* – installing a dense network of underground utilities in limited inter-building space would seriously harm the roots of preserved trees and the subsequent opening up for repairing would impose further damages;
- (bb) *impacts of proximal and densely packed high-rise buildings* – the resulting wind and shading effect would lead to the continued decline of existing and newly planted trees; and
- (cc) based on the above, Sub-Area 1 was unsuitable for housing development. While the resolution of Hong Kong's chronic housing shortage problem was whole-heartedly supported, a community should make the best use of its limited resources and Sub-Area 1 had all the innate traits for a nature park. To achieve a win-win resolution, it was proposed to do a land use swap by changing a site zoned for urban park in nearby NDA to a housing site, and retaining Sub-Area 1 as golf course or nature park.

R1282 – Lau Chun Kay

51. Mr Lau Chun Kay made the following main points:

- (a) it was not a zero-sum game between keeping the golf course intact and building more new housing units. There was a continuous stream of land supply in the foreseeable future, such as the NM and Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands, to cater for housing, commercial and communal requirements; and
- (b) the FGC, being a very unique piece of Hong Kong's heritage, shall be allowed to be kept intact due to its historical, ecological and cultural values. This heritage was irreplaceable and could not be re-created once it was destroyed. He pleaded to Members to preserve the Area.

R1292 – Rowse Michael John Treloar

52. Mr Rowse Michael John Treloar said he had been living in Hong Kong for 50 years and had worked as a civil servant and for public services over the years. He understood that the Government had to solve the housing issues in Hong Kong urgently. However, he was outraged about the housing proposal in the Old Course that was simply absurd. It would damage the integrity of FGC which was a priceless treasure of Hong Kong. He wished that the Board could stop the proposal.

[Dr C. H. Hau left this session of the meeting at this point.]

R1330 – Yip Siu Ming Derrick

53. Mr Yip Siu Ming Derrick made the following main points:

- (a) he was a standing committee member of the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce. Hong Kong had an important responsibility to promote the Mainland and Hong Kong to the consuls of different countries and the foreign chambers of commerce with a view to facilitating bilateral trade and investment. He was also the Vice-chairman of Executive Board of the Hong Kong Real Property Federation with one of the major tasks to provide advice on land and housing policies to the Government. He was attending the



hearing in his personal capacity but his views should be representative of many in the business sector;

- (b) there was a large amount of land in the New Territories that was underutilised and undeveloped, including brownfield sites, fallow agricultural land, etc.. The outdated policies and complicated procedures and mechanisms of land administration and development had made land development in the New Territories difficult. That created a misconception that Hong Kong lacked housing land;
- (c) FGC with a long history of over 100 years was comparable to other built heritages like the Government House or Tai Kwun. Building a century-old golf course took the hard work of several generations and a fair grading should be given to FGC when evaluating its historical value;
- (d) a high quality golf course was essential to a world class financial city. FGC was one of the oldest golf courses in Asia with great historical and ecological significance and had from early days, hosted the HKO that was the oldest professional golf tournament in Asia;
- (e) golf courses were very valuable from a business point of view as golfing was a popular and common activity among business travellers around the world. Many business travellers would be eager to play a round of golf in golf courses with distinct historic value. Other cities in the world had spent a lot of resources on building high quality golf courses to strength their international status, but Hong Kong did not cherish the historic FGC; and
- (f) he opposed the proposal of taking back part of the Old Course. The public housing units developed thereat would not solve the housing problem in Hong Kong in the long run, but would sacrifice the long-term interests of Hong Kong. The business sector had been endeavouring to promote Hong Kong and attract foreign investments. Taking back part of the Old Course was not a wise decision, and it would only give a negative impression to the world.

R1345 – Fang David

54. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Dr David Fang, made the following main points:

- (a) he was a doctor with rich experience in the medicine field and came from a family of golfers;
- (b) he objected to the proposed public housing development as it would destroy a substantial part of the Old Course when alternate sites were clearly available for public housing. Hong Kong's only significant golf venue would be removed from the world map of international golf tournaments and Hong Kong might lose the opportunities to continue to host mega international golf events;
- (c) the Old Course had a 112-year heritage which was the most treasured golf course in Asia. HKGC had done a remarkable job of preserving historic relics and unique flora and fauna which made the Old Course absolutely irreplaceable. The golf course could not function as a whole after the 8 holes were removed;
- (d) it had taken him a long waiting time to become a full member of HKGC as there were very few golfing venues in Hong Kong and there was keen demand. The ratio of golf holes to population in Hong Kong was very low as compared with other developed cities;
- (e) the Old Course was always opened to the local villagers who could play at no cost and had allowed youth to develop golf skills to compete internationally. However, the Government was not supporting golf sport development by taking back part of the Old Course. The further loss of golf courses would deprive young golf talents of training opportunities;
- (f) the photomontages attached to the Paper underplayed the visual impact of the proposed public housing development for local residents and golfers. The tall residential buildings in Sub-Area 1 would be very close to and highly visible in

other parts of FGC;

- (g) Hong Kong was encouraged by Beijing officials to develop more international sport events. The popularity of golf had increased worldwide and it had become a more diverse and inclusive sport;
- (h) the 300 public parking spaces in the proposed public housing development would not be adequate to cater for the needs during international golf events as currently, Sub-Area 1 would accommodate over 1,000 vehicles during golf events;
- (i) the TTIA of the Technical Study was based on the 2016-based Territorial Population and Employment Data Matrix data which might be outdated. Some planned or committed developments in the surrounding areas had been omitted in the TTIA. The planned Tai Tau Leng Flyover would only partly alleviate the traffic flow in future and there would still be bottlenecks at road junctions of Ping Kong Road, Po Kin Road and Fan Kam Road. Existing and new entrances, especially the one for ambulances, to the NDH might be blocked by traffic queues in future. There were 300 A&E cases daily at present and it was estimated that daily attendance would double by 2032, and even triple in the longer term. Traffic planning must cater for the traffic flow of increased number of ambulances to NDH in the future;
- (j) since the Area would be densely packed with very tall residential buildings that were located next to a hospital, there was health concern on exhaust air flow from the hospital being trapped in the Area; and
- (k) the Board should review the Government's proposal and assess its impacts on the surrounding area and the community to ensure that the land development was sustainable and could meet the long-term needs of the community. Public feedback and opinions should be duly considered before the Board made a decision.

R1388 – Kwok Wing Chung Ronald

55. Mr Kwok Wing Chung Ronald made the following main points:

- (a) he was a banker with over 20 years of working experience;
- (b) he strongly objected to taking back part of the Old Course, as it would destroy the history and heritage of the 112-year old Old Course;
- (c) as one of the major international cities in the world, Hong Kong needed a golf course with international standards. While Hong Kong's economy was still recovering during the post-pandemic period, the Old Course had to be kept to restore the image of Hong Kong and to maintain its competitiveness, say with Singapore;
- (d) HKGC was originally scheduled to host the Aramco Team Series Championship in October and the HKO in November this year. In fact, FGC had hosted the HKO since the 1950s. Even if one hole was lost, HKGC would possibly lose the ability to host those tournaments;
- (e) FGC was similar to other tourist spots, such as Ocean Park, Disneyland and the Peak. Many Mainland and overseas tourists, especially businessmen, would visit and play golf in FGC as this golf course was the most unique and professional golf course in Asia;
- (f) in recent years, over 40% of golf games in FGC were played by non-members. FGC held many tournaments every year, such as World City Championship, five-person football matches and inter-school golf tournaments, all in the Old Course. These tournaments had allowed the youngsters to show their talents which could benefit their personal growth; and
- (g) there was heavy traffic in the interchanges near the NDH which had caused serious traffic congestions. Additional population in the proposed public housing development would further worsen the local traffic condition and might

impede ambulance access to the hospital.

R1400 – Tse Sik Hung David

56. Mr Cheung Tai Wai David made the following main points:

- (a) the Government's plan to take back part of FGC for public housing development gave an impression of being impulsive and reckless as FGC had very high ecological value and was not a suitable nor reasonable location for housing development. There were other land options for public housing development;
- (b) he enquired whether the development proposal had comprehensively considered the capacity of the infrastructures and other supporting facilities as well as air ventilation impacts. He also questioned whether the pedestrian route between the proposed public housing development and MTR Sheung Shui Station had been planned in detail, as the pedestrian networks in other previous housing developments were not well-planned;
- (c) noting that some trees in the Area were proposed to be transplanted, he questioned about the actual locations for tree transplanting within the proposed public housing estate. It would take decades for tree roots to re-grow after transplanting to new places, and it would require long-term maintenance that was very costly;
- (d) the notional layout of residential blocks for the public housing development would encroach onto a clan grave in Sub-Area 1, and he enquired about the arrangement for the clan grave and whether agreement had been sought from the descendants. It would not be desirable to adversely affect the clan grave as the indigenous villagers had strong belief in 'fung shui';
- (e) noting that there was an aqueduct supply system of Dongjiang water near FGC, he questioned whether the proposed public housing development would require re-routing the existing aqueduct supply system; and

- (f) he did not object to building more housing but wished to preserve the entirety of FGC as HKGC provided the venue for training elite golfers. The housing development proposal should be reconsidered.

R1823 – Pe Hong Teng (白鴻滕)

R1910 – Pe May (白梁秀美)

R1923 – Leung Sau Fan Sylvia (梁秀芬)

R1924 – Lo Siu Fung Lisa (盧小鳳)

R1925 – Leung Kam Wah (梁錦華)

R3964 – Leung Tsz Fung Ray

R3965 – Ng Man Fung (吳雯鳳)

57. Mr Leung Tsz Fung Ray made the following main points:

- (a) there was a lack of standard 18-hole golf courses in Hong Kong. The statistics provided by the Government showed a significant increase in the usage of golfing facilities in recent years. With such a rising utilisation rate, it was reasonable to increase, but not to reduce the number of 18-hole golf courses. Such reduction subverted the Government's policy on promoting sports for all and cultivation of elite athletes. The government officials claimed that the affected portion of the Old Course only involved 8 holes which was about 5% of the entire FGC. However, each hole should not be seen as an independent entity, taking away 8 holes in the Old Course would cause a loss of a standard 18-hole golf course in Hong Kong;
- (b) Singapore had a smaller land area than Hong Kong and had encountered the same housing issue as Hong Kong, but they had 14 18-hole golf courses. Hong Kong would only have about half the number of golf courses in Singapore after the Old Course was gone. The Government should rethink about the impact of taking back part of the Old Course as dismantling a golf course was easy while rebuilding one was not;
- (c) the TTIA in the Technical Study confirmed that road improvement works at a

number of junctions and roads in the surrounding area had to be undertaken to cater for the proposed public housing development. However, only road improvement works at Po Kin Road and Ping Kong Road would be included in the project of the proposed public housing development, while other suggested works would be covered under other projects which had no concrete timetable for the implementation. Should there be any delay in completion of the works before the population intake of the proposed public housing development, the potential traffic impact would be worsened given that the road network in the North District had already reached its capacity;

- (d) according to the statistics quoted by Greenpeace in 2021, there were about 1,958 ha of brownfield which could be suitable for development to meet the housing needs. Priority should be accorded to developing brownfield instead of destroying a mature golf course with ecological value. Besides, other upcoming development projects, such as NM and Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands would be able to provide more land for housing. The Hung Shui Kiu NDA alone would provide 24,000 units, and it was doubted whether there was really a need to provide housing in FGC; and
- (e) there was insufficient information on the future planning of the Area. Apart from the 9 ha of land to be used for housing development, details on the ancillary facilities to support the housing development and the planning for Sub-Areas 2 to 4 were missing. It would be a waste of land resources if there was no detailed and balanced development plan with a long-term vision. HKGC had a long history and was experienced in training young golfers. Sacrificing a standard golf course with ecological value for housing development would bring profound impact to Hong Kong. The Old Course should be preserved for our next generation.

R598 – Allan Hay

R1936 – Robinson James Alexander

R2329 – Robinson Kelly Shim

R3311 – Von Cannon Bruce Douglas

58. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Mr Robinson James Alexander made the following main points including statements of Mr Allan Hay:

- (a) the FGC was a place for many sport activities, other than golf. It also provided a golfing venue for many different organisations to enjoy and hold social gatherings;
- (b) the Old Course, as a world class sports facility of over 100 years and one of the few remaining cultural heritage landscapes in the New Territories, once destroyed, could never be replaced. Future generations of Hong Kong people would be deprived of the Old Course at HKGC and that would affect the grooming of the next generation of younger golfers with potential. Hong Kong's hard-earned brand reputation as one of the World's greatest cities would be dismantled. Professionals of all types and ages would be discouraged to come to Hong Kong because of the policy to drastically reduce the existing public sports facilities, especially that for golfing which had become a very popular sport around the world;
- (c) retaining the 32 ha as a golf course would be a great present for Hong Kong and a considerable asset for the future of the community as a whole. HKGC should be allowed to retain control of the whole FGC as they were the best equipped organisation to do so;
- (d) the Government had provided land and financial resources to promote many types of public sports and recreational pursuits in Hong Kong in the last 45 years, including basketball, tennis and swimming pool, etc.. However, taking away part of the Old Course, which represented a reduction of 25% of public golf access, would seriously deprive the public of their opportunity to enjoy golfing;
- (e) Hong Kong did not have a land supply problem but it had a land management problem for the past 20 years. Despite the increasing population over the years, the Government significantly curtailed the supply of land starting in 2002 and as a result, there was a shortfall in affordable public housing now;



- (f) the proposed high-density “R(A)” or “U” zonings reflected very poor planning and land administration. The FGC was never an easy short-term ‘spade ready’ site to develop and not a quick housing solution. There were other land alternatives more readily available or alternatives were now being expedited by the Government in recently announced new initiatives. If development was to take place, it should do so in those areas with environment that had been degraded;
- (g) by comparison, all existing LCSD managed public sports facilities were on ‘spade ready’ flat pieces of land that could provide extremely suitable and well-located public housing in the very short term. Such option had not been considered by the Government nor TFLS;
- (h) the conditions of the EIA approval, specifically on the preservation of the woodland in the middle of Sub-Area 1, the preservation of the Qing Dynasty grave site and hill, and the very challenging hydrology requirement to provide a ‘sponge city concept’ landscape site plan, would mean a complete redesign by the Government, and made the remaining 5 to 6 ha site even more inappropriate for high-density high-rise low-income rental housing in the short to medium term; and
- (i) while the car park and the multi-purpose pitch might not be ecologically valuable in Sub-Area 1, Holes 1 to 3 had the same ecological and environmental value as Holes 4 through 8 and the remaining holes in the Old Course to the west. The EIA failed to explain why Holes 1 to 3 was considered to have lower ecological and environmental values.

[Ms Bernadette Tsui left this session of the meeting at this point.]

R1945 – Lee Hung Bun (李鴻斌)

R1946 – Lee Christopher (李敬謙)

R1991 – Lee Ying Choi (李英才)

R1992 – Lin Tzu Ping (林紫平)

R2299 – Lee Hung Hing (李鴻興)

R3498 – Lee Shin Yee (李倩儀)

59. With the aid of some Powerpoint slides and visualiser, Mr Lee Hung Bun made the following main points:

- (a) currently, there were nine golf courses in Hong Kong, i.e. about 832,000 people sharing one golf course. This reflected a serious shortage of golf facilities in Hong Kong as compared with other Western and Asian cities such as Singapore where about 432,000 people shared one golf course. If part of the Old Course was taken away, near one million people would share one golf course. Hong Kong was lagging behind in golf development;
- (b) the Government's reply to a Legislative Council question on 7.12.2022 stated that there were only eight, instead of nine, golf courses in Hong Kong. The golf course in Discovery Bay was not counted. It was hard to imagine the neglect of the Government on golf sport as they did not even know the number of golf courses in Hong Kong. Referring to the same reply, there was a significant increase in the number of people playing golf by comparing the figures of Year 2017 with Year 2021, even though some golf courses/facilities were closed in Year 2021 due to the pandemic. The increase ranged from 28% to 56% for an 18-hole golf course, 140% for a 6-hole golf course and from 26% to 343% for golf driving range. The Government should provide more rather than taking away golf facilities;
- (c) after taking back part of the Old Course, the remaining three public golf courses were all in Kau Sai Chau, which were only accessible by sea transport. It was hard for young children and people with mobility impairment to travel all the way to Kau Sai Chau to play golf. In Singapore, all golf courses were accessible by road transport;
- (d) it was unfair to those who were applying and waiting for a long time for the membership of HKGC. He had applied for membership of HKGC for 20 years

and such long waiting time was due to a general lack of golf venues in Hong Kong. The general public would have a lower chance of using the golf facilities in FGC if part of the Old Course was taken back by the Government;

- (e) people applying for public housing might actually want to make money by selling their units years later;
- (f) a long time would need to be spent on building foundation on the Old Course which was a piece of wetland, otherwise land subsidence would result. Using the Old Course for public housing development was not a short-term housing solution from engineering perspective;
- (g) the Government disregarded the importance of golf club on the popularization of the golf sport. There was always a myth that golf sport was enjoyed by wealthy people only. The role of promoting the golf sport was passed to private golf clubs in Hong Kong. HKGC had organised a number of school, local and international golf events at FGC, which performed a significant role on nurturing local young golfers. As a large number (about 40%) of people playing golf in FGC was non-members, taking back part of the Old Course would reduce the tee-time available for non-members and teenagers to play golf;
- (h) the Government also disregarded the importance of golf in attracting overseas talents. Golf was a popular sport for these people. Bankers were attracted to play golf because golf was a volatility sport similar to the investment market and was a pressure relieving activity. The recent Government's policy to attract family businesses to set up offices in Hong Kong and playing golf was important to the investors. Taking away part of the Old Course would undermine the appeal of Hong Kong for foreign investment;
- (i) the ecological value of FGC, which were managed by HKGC, was considered higher than that of the country park. CSC and OVTs could not survive if they were in the country park with no proper management and maintenance. FGC was just like a privately-managed country park serving as an urban lung and contributing to the ecology of Hong Kong;

- (j) Fan Kam Road was a single carriageway road and the roundabout near the NDH was already very congested. It was doubtful if the existing transport network could accommodate such a large increase in population;
- (k) with the proposed public housing development, if the land surface was paved with concrete, the risk of flooding to the surrounding villages would significantly increase;
- (l) technical assessments had not been conducted during the previous land debate before the inclusion of the option of taking away part of the Old Course for public housing development in the TFLS report. Such option divided the community and huge Government resources were devoted to investigate the feasibility of the housing project. If the proposed public housing in the Old Course was finally developed but with a lower density, the cost of each housing unit would be substantial and the project would not be cost effective;
- (m) the Government was currently in a fiscal deficit. The low land price (HKD 4.7 billion or HKD 3,000/square foot) of the Sai Yee Street site in Mong Kok clearly reflected that the Government lacked money. Housing should be built on the Sai Yee Street site instead of FGC in view of its good accessibility to MTR Mong Kok Station and Mong Kok East Station. The expenditure of Hong Kong Government accounted for 28% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), while that in Singapore was only 15.4% of the GDP (with 12% of the expenditure on defence excluded). It was not sustainable for Government's expenditure to be at such a high percentage of GDP, and the fiscal deficit would be worsened if the Government continued to spend public funds unwisely, which was in contravention of the Basic Law in terms of financial management. If Hong Kong could not maintain a low tax regime because of the fiscal deficit, it would be more difficult to attract overseas talents to Hong Kong;
- (n) currently, people could walk the dog, join the eco-tour and play non-golf sports such as woodball in the Old Course. Further releasing the potential and maximizing the use of FGC for bringing benefits to the society, such as holding star gazing and tourism-related activities, should be considered instead of

closing down the Old Course;

- (o) in a television programme, the Secretary for Development said that it was already expected that a large number of people would raise objections to the Board but taking back part of the Old Course for public housing development would go ahead anyway. If so, there was no need to arrange the representation hearing meetings to listen to public views; and
- (p) the increasing number of people playing golf and the severe shortage of golf facilities in Hong Kong as compared with other countries should be taken into account in making a decision on the subject matter. Taking away part of the Old Course would be non-replaceable and irreversible.

[Mr Ricky W. Y. Yu left this session of the meeting during Mr Lee's presentation.]

R1981 – Nishi Yoshihiro

60. Mr Nishi Yoshihiro made the following main points:

- (a) he had been living in Hong Kong for almost 14 years and considered Hong Kong his second home. He was a banker and planned to retire in Hong Kong;
- (b) he was the vice president of the Hong Kong Japanese Golfing Society (HKJGS) which was established in 1957. HKJGS had organised monthly golf tournaments in FGC in the past 66 years. HKGC had helped Hong Kong local Japanese golf community and international golf communities in the Asia-Pacific Region in holding their events over the past decades. Should the Old Course be closed or scaled down, the allocation of tee times by HKGC to non-members would be seriously reduced. He worried that the monthly golf tournament of HKJGS in FGC could not be held in the future. On behalf of the members of HKJGS, he urged the Government not to remove the valuable golfing facilities in the Old Course which had been a vital part of their leisure in Hong Kong;

- (c) he was also a board member of Asian-Pacific Golf Confederation (APGC) representing 47 national golf associations in Asia, Oceania and Middle East. APGC had organised major international amateur championships in the region. He noted that golf had continued to show a strong sign of growth across the Asia-Pacific region. Hong Kong had been an active member in APGC which took the leadership of hosting international events and had become the top golfing destination in Asia;
- (d) APGC had been discussing with HKGA and HKGC to host the Asia-Pacific Junior Championship next year, and had requested to host it in the Old Course of FGC for the young golfers to experience the historical golf course that could not be provided in other countries. Losing or scaling down the Old Course would eliminate Hong Kong from the golf world stage. Hong Kong could not afford losing such valuable golf course and should keep this world class facility to support international golfing events; and
- (e) the Old Course was not suitable for the proposed public housing development from environmental, traffic and wild life perspectives. As a win-win solution, the Old Course should be allowed to be used as golf course even after its return to the Government on 1.9.2023.

61. As the presentations of the representers and their representatives had been completed, the meeting proceeded to the Question and Answer (Q&A) session. The Chairperson explained that Members would raise questions and the Chairperson would invite the representers, 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 Public Housing Development Proposal*

62. A Member asked the following questions:

- (a) the considerations of the proposed public housing development at Sub-Area 1 in respect of compatibility with the surrounding areas, the current timetable for

the development and whether such timetable was an important consideration for the housing project as compared to other options (e.g. NM, Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands, etc.) mentioned by some representers; and

- (b) whether the concern on the clan grave of Qing dynasty as raised by Heung Yee Kuk New Territories (R556) in their oral submission could be addressed.

63. In response, Mr Anthony K.O. Luk, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD, made the following main points:

- (a) the Area was elongated in shape with the proposed public housing development located in its northern portion (i.e. Sub-Area 1) that was in close proximity to the existing Fanling/Sheung Shui New Town. The proposed public housing development was considered compatible in the locality given that it was located near the existing new town development area, and the existing/planned provision of infrastructure, facilities and transport network was capable of accommodating such development;
- (b) in terms of development intensity, the existing public housing estates nearby such as Ching Ho Estate and Cheung Lung Wai Estate were developed with a PR of about 5 and maximum BHs of about 120 to 130 mPD, while the proposed public housing development at Sub-Area 1 with a higher development intensity in accordance with the prevailing Government policy (a domestic PR of 6.5 and a non-domestic PR of 0.5) would inevitably be taller (about 170 mPD);
- (c) it was originally targeted to complete the proposed public housing development for population intake by 2029. To meet the conditions of the EIA approval, a review of the development scheme would be undertaken, which was estimated to be completed in 12 months by the CEDD. If the review outcomes were subsequently agreed by the Director of Environmental Protection, the “U” zone on the draft OZP would be amended to facilitate implementation of the proposed public housing development. If the review was smooth, it was expected that the completion date of the proposed public housing development would not deviate significantly from 2029 and would still be a medium term supply in the

coming 10-year period. In that regard, the timetable was an important consideration in respect of the proposed public housing development. No alternative option e.g. the Ping Kong site mentioned by the representers would be able to meet the medium term supply given the need to resume private land and carry out infrastructure works; and

- (d) the block layout shown in the Drawings of the Paper was for illustrative purpose to demonstrate the feasibility of the public housing with the development restrictions stipulated under the “R(A)” zone. When reviewing the layout of Sub-Area 1, how to avoid affecting the clan grave of Qing Dynasty would be explored. There were previous cases of public housing development involving relocation of graves and the Government would liaise with the descendants on suitable relocation and compensation arrangements according to established procedures.

#### *Planning Intention of “U” Zoning*

64. A Member asked whether the recommended “U” zone still meant that Sub-Area 1 would be for residential development and if so, whether it was only intended for public rather than private housing. In response, Mr Anthony K.O. Luk, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD, with the aid of visualiser, said that as stated in paragraph 9 of the Explanatory Statement of the draft OZP, the northern-most portion of the Area was for public housing development. However, during the interim period when the Government conducted a review to meet the conditions of the EIA approval, a “U” zoning was recommended in the Paper to serve as a stopgap arrangement while it remained Government’s intention to pursue public housing development at Sub-Area 1.

#### *“Other Specified Uses” annotated “Conservation cum Recreation” (“OU(CR)”) Zoning*

65. A Member asked about the rationale of zoning Sub-Areas 2 to 4 as “OU(CR)” and whether there were any specific measures on ecological conservation therein by the Government. In response, Mr Anthony K.O. Luk, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD, made the following main points:

- (a) the zoning for Sub-Areas 2 to 4 with moderate or moderate to high ecological value had been discussed when the subject OZP was submitted to the Board for



consideration last year. Given that the Area was used for playing golf and other non-golf sports (such as tree climbing, cross country running and other more passive sports), the Board considered that it was not appropriate to zone Sub-Areas 2 to 4 for more restrictive zonings such as “Conservation Area” under which existing uses including ‘Golf Course’ and ‘Field Study/Education’ were not permitted;

- (b) the LCSD would have special opening up arrangement for Sub-Area 4 which had a higher ecological value with the presence of the CSC. Initially, LCSD advised that there would be control on public access to Sub-Area 4 in terms of the number of visitors, types of activities to be held and the opening hours to ensure proper management of that area; and
- (c) the zoning of “OU(CR)” for Sub-Areas 2 to 4 had struck a balance between the opening up of the area for public access and conservation needs.

#### *Future Management of the Area*

66. Two Members raised the following questions:

- (a) whether allowing the 32 ha of land of FGC to be managed by HKGC after it was returned to the Government on 1.9.2023 was an option;
- (b) any update regarding the liaison between LCSD and HKGC on future management issues; and
- (c) how the Area would be managed to avoid HKGC’s and other representers’ concern that the Area would be mismanaged after it was handed back to the Government.

67. The Chairperson said that LCSD would manage the Area after it was returned to the Government and be responsible for co-ordinating the activities to be held therein. To allow HKGC to continue to manage the Area as a golf course on 1.9.2023 was not an option currently being considered. LCSD met with HKGC a week before to get a better understanding of the land

and facilities therein as well as the assistance required to be provided by the Government to HKGC for hosting the international golf tournaments to be held in October and November 2023. She emphasised that the Government was willing to and also should provide necessary support so as to facilitate the international golf tournaments to be held successfully.

68. On the management issue, Mr Anthony K.O. Luk, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD, supplemented that LCSD would engage outsourced professional teams to manage the Area. Activities to be organised would have regard to the ecological conditions. LCSD would also liaise with parties which had organised non-golf activities in FGC before to see how those activities could continue to be held. More control on access to Sub-Area 4 would be implemented as mentioned earlier. Sub-Area 1 pending commencement of works for the public housing development could be temporarily made available to HKGC for car parking, golf watching event, food and beverages (F&B) outlets, etc. during golf tournaments.

*Public Access to FGC*

69. In response to a Member's questions on the current membership system and public access to FGC as compared with The Jockey Club Kau Sai Chau Golf Course (KSCGC), Mr Bryant Lu Hing Yiu (**R3486**) and Mr Jeffrey Cheung Shee Chee (**R406**) made the following main points:

- (a) any resident in Hong Kong could apply for a membership of HKGC by filling in a form with a proposer and a seconder;
- (b) the lease conditions restricted the uses and activities permitted within the FGC, including F&B outlets and restaurants which were restricted for use by HKGC members only;
- (c) members of the public who were non-members could book to play golf on weekdays. For the KSCGC, the general public could book to play golf any time during the week, including weekends. The current level of public access to FGC was considered the highest among other private golf clubs around the world;
- (d) many people joining the charity golf day and corporate golf days in FGC were

also usually non-members. A separate fee would not be charged to charity organisations; and

- (e) HKGC had assumed the role of promoting golf sport in Hong Kong, and Hong Kong squads held training at FGC daily. The KSCGC could not be blocked off for a period of time for training purpose and there were less supporting facilities therein compared to FGC.

70. The Chairperson said that there were three 18-hole golf courses in KSCGC, which was a public golf course. Any member of the public could make a booking throughout the week and would pay a lower green fee. For FGC, some time slots were available for booking by the general public but those time slots were confined to weekdays.

71. Mr Andy Kwok Wing Leung (**R354**) made the following main points:

- (a) FGC was governed by a private recreational lease and HKGC had gone an extra step to facilitate more access by members of the public;
- (b) the three golf courses in FGC were opened to the public on weekdays on a rotational basis;
- (c) the Old Course was also open for indigenous villagers and the HKGA's squads to play golf. The Old Course was also open to public for many non-golf sport activities;
- (d) during the pandemic, the general public could only make four bookings per month for playing golf at KSCGC while there was no such limit at FGC;
- (e) people playing golf on fund raising/charity day and corporations' and golf societies' open day were usually non-members. Such open days and other events for entertainment purpose could neither be held at KSCGC which was a public golf course nor at other private golf clubs in Hong Kong with limited facilities; and

- (f) as for the fees, while the green fees at FGC might be higher than that for KSCGC, car parking was provided free of charge. For KSCGC, players had to pay for car parking and ferry fares, so the actual difference would not be great.

*Demand for Golfing Facilities and Golf Sport Development in Hong Kong*

72. A Member asked Mr Lee Hung Bun (**R1945 and R1946, R1991, R1992, R2299 and R3498's representative**) to clarify the actual years being covered in the data he presented about the increase in people playing golf in Hong Kong, and asked whether the increase was due to the pandemic as people could not travel abroad. In response, Mr Lee, with the aid of visualiser, said that by comparing Year 2017 and Year 2019 (that was before the pandemic), the number of participants playing golf at the golf courses and driving range at KSCGC increased from 138,273 to 149,823 and from 126,904 to 149,988 respectively; at FGC from 119,834 to 129,559; and at the golf driving range at South China Athletic Association (located in urban area with convenient access) from 36,078 to 62,450. The overall increases were quite significant. The even higher figures during the pandemic reflected the actual demand for golfing facilities in Hong Kong. Those figures were quoted from the Government's reply to a Legislative Council question on 7.12.2022.

73. In response to a Member's question on the Government's policy in promoting golf sport in Hong Kong and grooming local elite golfers, Mr Anthony K.O. Luk, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD, with the aid of a Powerpoint slide, said that whilst he was not in a position to comment on sport policy, golfing was considered a non-core recreation activity in the HKPSG. While the 32 ha of the FGC would be returned to Government on 1.9.2023, the remaining 140 ha to the west of Fan Kam Road would not be affected and could continue to be used for golfing activities, hosting international tournaments and training young golfers. As advised by LCSD, Government had been promoting golfing development through multiple means. For example, through the Elite Athletes Development Fund, Hong Kong Sports Institute was subsidized for training elite athletes, and through the Arts and Sport Development Fund, elites were subsidized to prepare for and participate in national games, Olympic Games and Asian Games, etc. and HKGA was also subsidized to host international golf events in Hong Kong. Moreover, LCSD provided subventions through the Sports Subvention Scheme to support HKGA on golf promotion in schools, training and for organizing golf tournament.

74. In response to a Member's question on whether a replacement site for golfing facilities would be provided (if Sub-Area 1 was used for housing development) to meet the increasing demand for playing golf as pointed out by **R1945**, Mr Anthony K.O. Luk, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD, said that the Area was government land, and there was no compensation plan for the FGC golf course. The Government would plan for golfing facilities taking note of the demand and other relevant considerations.

#### *Economic Impact Assessment*

75. A Member asked whether an economic impact assessment had been conducted to assess the economic cost for losing part of FGC given individual representers' views on its importance to attract businesses, visitors and international golf events. In response, Mr Anthony K.O. Luk, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD, said that an economic impact assessment had not been conducted under the Technical Study. That said, given that the portion of FGC to the west of Fan Kam Road with a land area of about 140 ha would be kept intact, HKGC would still be able to host international golf events.

76. The Chairperson said that the Government had regularly consulted the foreign Chambers of Commerce on the factors that would be crucial for businesses from their countries to set up offices in Hong Kong. Key factors quoted included simple taxation and low tax rate, a clear legal system, efficient government, and robust infrastructure but there was no mention that golf course was a critical factor for consideration.

#### *Public Housing Flat Production and Alternative Housing Land Supply Options*

77. Two Members asked whether it was a political consideration to take back the land at FGC for public housing development as repeatedly claimed by a number of representers in their oral submissions or it was just one of the options taken by government to increase housing land supply. In response, Mr Anthony K.O. Luk, DPO/FYLE, PlanD, with the aid of some Powerpoint slides, said that during the public consultation in the form of questionnaire and phone survey conducted by the TFLS, public views were solicited on the option of alternative uses of land under private recreational leases (without specifically mentioning FGC), but a number of respondents suggested using larger sites held under private recreational lease, particularly FGC, under that option. Based on the public views, the proposal regarding the 32 ha of land of FGC to

the east of Fan Kam Road was put forward in the TFLS report. Upon the Government's acceptance of the TFLS report, PlanD together with CEDD had carried out the Technical Study on the proposed public housing development at the 32 ha of land of FGC.

78. Some Members raised the following questions:

- (a) whether the public housing development proposal at FGC was still a quick solution to the public housing shortage problem in Hong Kong, the procedures involved, and the programme for construction works and completion;
- (b) as Government had indicated that sufficient land had been identified for the provision of 360,000 housing units in the coming 10-year period, the necessity of developing FGC for public housing; and whether the 360,000 housing units included the proposed public housing development of 12,000 public housing units in FGC;
- (c) whether the options of developing the peripheral areas of country parks (such as Tai Lam Country Park) or the NM were alternative options to the public housing proposal at FGC; and
- (d) the procedures and timing for using the Ping Kong site as proposed by HYK for public housing development.

79. In response, Mr Anthony K.O. Luk, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD, with the aid of some Powerpoint slides, made the following main points:

- (a) according to the Long-term Housing Strategy, the supply target for the coming 10 years was 301,000 public housing units. While sufficient land had been identified for the provision of 360,000 public housing units in the coming 10-year period, site formation works, land resumption and relocation of affected residents/business operators, and provision of necessary infrastructure were required for most of the projects, in particular for those in the latter five years. As any timing mismatch or delay would lead to the change in actual flat production hence affect Government's ability in meeting the housing supply

target, the Government would not give up any possible options for housing supply lightly. Since FGC was a piece of Government land and no rehousing or demolition was required, it was a relatively easier option for public housing development in the medium term;

- (b) under the NMDS, about 165,000 to 186,000 new housing units would be provided. Taking account of this new supply together with the existing 390,000 housing units and another 350,000 units being planned/developed, a total of about 905,000 to 926,000 housing units would be accommodated. The proposed public housing project in FGC belonged to the 350,000 units category which would continue to be taken forward together with those newly identified sites in the NM;
- (c) there was currently no plan to further study developing the peripheral area of country parks for housing, and in fact, it was not a quick option as technical feasibility study would still be required; and
- (d) according to the TFLS report, short-to-medium term options of land supply were largely contributed by brownfield sites and agricultural land, which were subsumed and being taken forward in the NDAs such as Kwu Tung North and Fanling North. For these NDAs, planning process and detailed design had been completed and land resumption for the remaining phase was targeted in around 2024, to be followed by land formation and provision of necessary infrastructure for achieving housing production in the latter half of the coming 10-year period. It was considered impossible to identify greenfield or agricultural sites (e.g. the Ping Kong site (without road access) as suggested by HYK) for public housing development whilst meeting the delivery time of Year 2029 as a number of processes/procedures such as detailed design and technical feasibility study would be involved.

80. The Chairperson said that country parks were protected under the Country Parks Ordinance (Cap. 208). Other than technical feasibility studies, statutory processes were involved for using land therein for non-country park uses. She recalled that development of toll plaza of Route 3 was the most recent example of converting country parks into other uses. Given the

above complications, developing periphery of country parks could hardly be considered as a short nor medium-term option for public housing.

*Tree Preservation, Ecological and Hydrological Aspects*

81. Two Members raised the following questions:

- (a) special arrangement for transplanting TPIs in view of the issues on excessive root loss, collateral damage and grade changes raised by Professor Jim Chi Yung (**R3378**);
- (b) the different stages of development of FGC, given that some of the representers mentioned that a lot of trees were felled during World War II;
- (c) whether CSC was native to FGC or exotic in nature; and
- (d) the potential hydrological impact on CSC in Sub-Area 4 as a result of the proposed public housing development at Sub-Area 1; and whether the land uses in the immediate surroundings of Sub-Area 4 would pose more significant impact on the water flow to CSC.

82. In response, with the aid of some Powerpoint slides and aerial photos, Mr Anthony K.O. Luk, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD, Mr Boris S.P. Kwan, SNCO(N), AFCD, and Mr Emeric W.K. Wan, the Consultant, made the following main points:

*Tree Preservation and Transplantation*

- (a) as at end 2021, about 1.6 million trees were managed by eight core Government departments, among which only about 500 were OVTs;
- (b) according to the tree survey in the EIA, 70 trees were identified as TPIs in Sub-Area 1, 46 of which were rare/protected species and the remaining 24 trees were of diameter at DBHs greater than 1m. 11 trees (all with DBHs greater than 1m) were proposed to be felled, including six *Melaleuca cajuputi subsp. cumingiana*



(白千層) and one *Pterocarpus indicus* (紫壇). These 11 trees proposed to be felled were included in the 33 mature trees that HKGC claimed to be potential OVTs;

- (c) 32 of the rare/protected species and two of the mature trees with DBHs greater than 1m would be transplanted. In determining whether a particular tree was suitable for transplanting, factors including health condition, types of species, location, etc. were taken into account. For the 32 rare/protected trees to be transplanted, they were not large trees and were mainly located in the woodland. Their existing conditions were considered suitable for transplanting. For the two mature trees with DBHs greater than 1m to be transplanted, they were individual trees and not connected with other trees nor situated on sloping ground. It was expected that the root balls could be retrieved and retained, and their height, width and form were considered suitable for transplanting. The extensiveness and conditions of the roots would be determined using special equipment and by means of inspection before deciding on the way to transplant each of the trees;
- (d) as regards the different stages of development of FGC, based on past aerial photos from 1945, it was not until 1990s that the FGC had taken the current form with winding fairways and tree flanking the golf course. The Burmese Rosewood (*Pterocarpus indicus* (紫壇)) in the car park was not seen in the 1964 aerial photo. It appeared that some trees around the 0.39 ha of woodland in Sub-Area 1 were felled around 2010;

*Chinese Swamp Cypress (CSC)*

- (e) there was no disagreement that CSC was assessed as a critically endangered species in 2010 by the IUCN. According to the current classification of AFCD, CSC was considered as an exotic species but that might be reviewed taking account of new research and study findings. The EIA had recommended that it was of conservation value, despite its classification as an exotic species. There was no government record on the age of the CSC cluster in Sub-Area 4,

whilst some sources said it might include CSC of 200 years old. According to the literature review and aerial photos taken in 1956, the current cluster of CSC was not evident but that did not preclude the presence of individual CSC at that time;

- (f) to address ACE's previous concerns, Dr Ting Fong May Chui, Associate Professor of the University of Hong Kong, was commissioned to undertake a hydrological impact analysis to investigate the potential impact of the proposed public housing development in Sub-Area 1 on the water source for CSC in Sub-Area 4. Since the CSC cluster in Sub-Area 4 was at a higher site level than Sub-Area 1, the surface water flow was from the south to the north (i.e. from Sub-Area 4 to Sub-Area 1). Preliminary site investigation on the underground rock and soil layers also revealed that the underground water flow was also from the south to the north. As such, it was considered that the water source for CSC in Sub-Area 4 would not be affected by the proposed public housing development in Sub-Area 1; and
- (g) a small knoll to the south of Sub-Area 4 (outside FGC) and the New Course and Eden Course to the west of Fan Kam Road were at higher levels than Sub-Area 4. As a result, water flowed from the south and west towards the CSC cluster in Sub-Area 4 at a relatively lower level. It was considered that protection of the water catchment area in the immediate surroundings of the CSC in Sub-Area 4 was important in preserving the CSC.

### *Natural-cum-Cultural Landscape*

83. Noting that the cultural heritage value of FGC (except the built heritage) had not yet been graded by the Antiquities Advisory Board, a Member asked Professor Jim Chi Yung (**R3378**) how such cultural heritage landscape was assessed by other countries or the UNESCO.

84. In response, Professor Jim Chi Yung (**R3378**) made the following main points:

- (a) in general, the landscape spectrum for assessment ranged from purely natural to purely artificial and the landscape types in between with different levels of

human interventions might broadly be classified as cultural landscape. Golf course like the FGC was closer to natural landscape in the spectrum, and there were some cultural elements including the tree planting and turfgrasses;

- (b) the very high quality nature-cum-cultural landscape of golf course similar to FGC was rare, not only in Asia but also in the world, and would definitely be preserved if in other countries. It was difficult, if at all possible, to be replicated as it had been developed over more than a century. FGC was the treasure and gem of Hong Kong, which should be protected and preserved in-situ rather being used for housing development; and
- (c) in Hong Kong, built heritage and natural landscape were protected by relevant parties but there was no protection for cultural landscape. The fact that there was yet a system for grading nor a party to protect it, did not mean that cultural landscape was not valuable. It was very difficult to find a purely natural landscape today, in particular in Hong Kong which was an urbanised area. A natural-cum-cultural landscape of such a high quality as a result of careful monitoring and enhancement should be graded and protected.

### *Traffic Impact*

85. Two Members raised the following questions:

- (a) the details of the access road and projected traffic conditions near the NDH;
- (b) any backup option for ingress/egress of the NDH in case of traffic congestion;
- (c) response to R1345's submission that the data/assumptions used in the TTIA was not updated; and
- (d) whether the road traffic to/from the Ping Kong site recommended by HYK would be similar to Sub-Area 1, i.e. using the same roads, junctions and roundabouts.

86. In response, with the aid of some Powerpoint slides, Mr Gavin C.P. Wong, CE/N, CEDD, made the following main points:

- (a) according to the latest site plan of expansion of NDH, the ambulance ingress/egress would be via Fan Kam Road, and two proposed new vehicular ingress/egress points would be via Po Kin Road and Po Ping Road. Appropriate traffic measures such as no-stop 'yellow box' road marking outside the ingress/egress points of the hospital would be considered to avoid blockage of access to the hospital;
- (b) the alternative route to the NDH could be via Kai Leng Roundabout, Pak Wo Road, Po Kin Road and Po Ping Road to the proposed new ingress/egress of the hospital. Upon completion of the expansion project of NDH, the internal roads within the hospital would be well-connected. Also, improvement works for Kai Leng Roundabout was being planned for tentative completion by Year 2030;
- (c) to cope with the planned developments in the North District, a number of road improvement measures would be carried out, including Tai Tau Leng Roundabout, Kai Leng (So Kwun Po) Roundabout, junction of Castle Peak Road – Kwu Tung Section/Fan Kam Road, junction of Fan Kam Road/Po Kin Road, and junction of Po Kin Road/Ping Kong Road;
- (d) in conducting the TTIA, references had been made to other TTIA's undertaken by other consultants for different projects in the North District. In respect of the Tai Tau Leng Roundabout, similar results were obtained as compared with other TTIA's in terms of volume to capacity (V/C) ratio. With the implementation of the proposed road/junction improvements, the V/C ratios would be in the acceptable level with the proposed public housing development at Sub-Area 1. The NDH expansion project had been taken into account in the TTIA; and
- (e) as there was no information on the proposed scale of development at the Ping Kong site recommended by HYK, whether the proposed widening of Ping Kong Road and the junctions in the area could cope with the associated increase in

traffic flow could not be ascertained without more detailed assessment.

87. In response to a Member's question on the proposed road network to support the proposed public housing development at the Ping Kong site, Ms Lau Man Kwan Julia (**R556, R2413 and R2416's representative**) advised that currently there was no internal road to the Ping Kong site, and there was flexibility to design its connection to the surrounding road networks. The Ping Kong site would use similar road network as the proposed public housing development at Sub-Area 1. As such, with the implementation of the proposed road/junction improvement works suggested by the Government, the road network in the area would be able to cope with the traffic flow generated by the proposed public housing development at the Ping Kong site, if the proposed public housing development at Sub-Area 1 would not go ahead.

#### *Others*

88. In response to a Member's question regarding the problem with foundation works at Sub-Area 1 raised by R1945, Mr Gavin C.P. Wong, CE/N, CEDD, said that foundation works would be carried out by the Housing Department and CEDD would be responsible for the site formation works. According to the initial findings of the Technical Study, no major problem on building foundation due to geographical conditions of Sub-Area 1 was envisaged. That said, more detailed ground investigation works would be conducted at the detailed design stage.

89. A Member asked for a response to the opposing views that the proposed public housing development would destroy not only the Old Course but also the integrity of the whole FGC as a cultural landscape, which was a precious gem of Hong Kong. In response, Mr Anthony K.O. Luk, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD, said that planning for development involved trade-offs. About 140 ha of land in FGC would still be kept intact for HKGC and the 21 ha of land (i.e. Sub-Area 2 to 4), if necessary, could be provided temporarily in future for supporting HKGC for hosting international golf events. Such arrangement was considered a reasonable balance between addressing housing needs and providing support to golf sport in Hong Kong.

90. As Members had no further question to raise, the Chairperson said that the hearing session on the day was completed. She thanked the representers 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 and their representatives and the government representatives left the meeting at this point.

[Mr Daniel K. S. Lau left this session of the meeting during the Q&A session.]

91. This session of the meeting was adjourned at 10:40 p.m.