

**Minutes of 1313th Meeting of the
Town Planning Board held on 23.2.2024**

Present

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

Chairperson

Mr Lincoln L.H. Huang

Vice-chairperson

Mr Wilson Y.W. Fung

Mr Stephen L.H. Liu

Dr C.H. Hau

Ms Sandy H.Y. Wong

Mr Franklin Yu

Mr Daniel K.S. Lau

Ms Lilian S.K. Law

Mr K.W. Leung

Professor John C.Y. Ng

Professor Jonathan W.C. Wong

Mr Ricky W.Y. Yu

Professor Roger C.K. Chan

Dr Venus Y.H. Lun

Dr Conrad T.C. Wong

Mrs Vivian K.F. Cheung

Mr Vincent K.Y. Ho

Mr Timothy K.W. Ma

Professor Bernadette W.S. Tsui

Chief Traffic Engineer (New Territories West)
Transport Department
Ms Carrie K.Y. Leung

Chief Engineer (Works)
Home Affairs Department
Mr Paul Y.K. Au

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

Director of Lands
Mr Andrew C.W. Lai

Director of Planning
Mr Ivan M.K. Chung

Deputy Director of Planning/District
Mr C.K. Yip

Secretary

Absent with Apologies

Miss Winnie W.M. Ng

Mr Stanley T.S. Choi

Mr Ben S.S. Lui

Mr K.L. Wong

In Attendance

Assistant Director of Planning/Board
Ms Caroline T.Y. Tang

Chief Town Planner/Town Planning Board
Mr Rico W.K. Tsang (except Item 6)
Ms Josephine Y.M. Lo (Item 6)

Senior Town Planner/Town Planning Board
Ms Karen F.Y. Lam (except Item 6)
Ms Bonnie K.C. Lee (Item 6)

Agenda Item 1

[Open Meeting]

Confirmation of Minutes of the 1312th Meeting held on 2.2.2024

[The item was conducted in Cantonese.]

1. The draft minutes of the 1312th meeting held on 2.2.2024 were confirmed without amendment.

Agenda Item 2

[Open Meeting]

Matters Arising

[This item was conducted in Cantonese.]

(i) Update on the Draft North Point Outline Zoning Plan No. S/H8/27

2. The Secretary reported that the amendments to the draft North Point Outline Zoning Plan No. S/H8/27 (the OZP) involved revision of the building height restriction (BHR) of a “Government, Institution or Community) (“G/IC”) site at 210 Java Road to facilitate its redevelopment and rezoning of two sites to reflect the as-built developments under CK Asset Holdings Limited (CKAHL). The Women’s Welfare Club (Eastern District) Hong Kong (WWC)) was one of the owners of the “G/IC” site. The following Members had declared interests on the item:

Ms Doris P.L. Ho - owning a property in North Point;
(*Chairperson*)

Mr Ricky W.Y. Yu - co-owning with spouse a property in North Point, and being the Director and Chief Executive Officer of Light Be which rented a residential unit in North Point;

- Professor Bernadette W.S. Tsui - co-owning with spouse a property in North Point, and her spouse being a director of a company who owned a property in North Point;
- Dr Conrad T.C. Wong - having past business dealings with CKAHL; and
- Ms Lilian Law - the chairperson of WWC was her close friend.

3. As the item was to report the updates of the case to Members, the meeting agreed that all Members who had declared interests could stay in the meeting.

4. The Secretary reported that the OZP, incorporating an amendment for revision of the BHR of a site zoned “G/IC” at 210 Java Road from 8 storeys to 110mPD (Amendment Item A) to facilitate the proposed redevelopment of an existing social services building, amongst others, was exhibited for public inspection under section 5 of the pre-amended Town Planning Ordinance (the Ordinance) on 24.3.2023. Representations and comments on the OZP were considered by the Town Planning Board (the Board) collectively at its meeting on 20.10.2023. The Board decided that the OZP should not be amended to meet the adverse representation and agreed that the OZP was suitable for submission to the Chief Executive in Council (CE in C) for approval.

5. The redevelopment proposal was originally proposed to be undertaken by the Island Evangelical Community Church Limited (IECC) partnered with the owners of the Amendment Item A site, i.e. North Point Kai-Fong Welfare Advancement Association (NPKFAA) and WWC. On 4.2.2024, IECC announced at its Sunday Service and promulgated on its webpage (<https://boldfaith.islandecc.hk/>) that they had secured a property at 413-423 Kings Road, North Point (i.e. G/F to 6/F of the Sunbeam Theatre site) to serve as IECC’s future permanent home in Hong Kong. Upon clarification with the three parties, IECC acknowledged the acquisition of the Sunbeam Theatre premises while NPKFAA and WWC indicated their intentions to continue exploring their redevelopment plan with expanded services at their site to serve the social needs of the community.

6. In view of the above, even if the proposed redevelopment would not be implemented by IECC at the site, Amendment Item A involving relaxation of BHR of a “G/IC” site would still help to optimise the development potential of the site for providing additional community and social welfare facilities and facilitate the redevelopment plan to be pursued by NPKFAA and WWC in the future. When there was a new redevelopment proposal, relevant bureaux/departments (including the Labour and Welfare Bureau and the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau) would be consulted as appropriate.

7. On 16.2.2024, the latest development on Amendment Item A was reported to Members and their views on the way forward were sought by circulation. On 20.2.2024, Members agreed that as the statutory requirements in processing the representations and comments under the Ordinance had been complied with and the amendment was already considered appropriate by the Board in terms of scale and development intensity, despite the change in circumstances, the Board’s decision on Amendment Item A could be maintained and the OZP was still suitable for submission to CE in C for approval. Besides, the relevant part of the Explanatory Statement (ES), which did not form part of the OZP, should be revised correspondingly (with additions in ***bold and italics*** and deletions in ‘~~erossed-out~~’) to reflect the updated position of the redevelopment as follows:

New paragraph added after paragraph 8.9.4 of the ES of the OZP

“The site currently occupied by the North Point Welfare Association at 210 Java Road, an existing social services and community centre operated by the North Point Kai-Fong Welfare Advancement Association and the Women’s Welfare Club (Eastern District) Hong Kong, is subject to a building height restriction (~~BHR~~) of 110mPD. ~~The site is planned to be redeveloped to re-provide the existing services as well as introduce~~ ***to facilitate redevelopment for expanded community and social welfare facilities.*** ~~services, such as Integrated Children and Youth Services, Integrated Family Services, Carer Services, services for the disadvantaged and ethnic minorities, etc. Other than the social services mentioned above, one level of religious hall will be provided.”~~

8. Members noted the updates in paragraphs 5 to 7 above.

(ii) Approval of Draft Outline Zoning Plans and Draft Urban Renewal Authority Development Scheme Plan

9. The Secretary reported that on 6.2.2024, the Chief Executive in Council approved the draft Fanling/Sheung Shui Extension Area Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) (renumbered as S/FSSE/2), the draft Tsuen Wan OZP (renumbered as S/TW/37) and the draft Urban Renewal Authority Kau Pui Lung Road/Chi Kiang Street Development Scheme Plan (DSP) (renumbered as S/K10/URA2/2) under section 9(1)(a) of the Town Planning Ordinance. The approval of the OZPs and DSP was notified in the Gazette on 23.2.2024.

[Mr Vincent K.Y. Ho joined the meeting during reporting of the above item.]

(iii) Hearing Arrangement for Consideration of Representations in respect of the Draft Sha Tin Outline Zoning Plan No. S/ST/37

10. The Secretary reported that the item was to seek Members' agreement on the hearing arrangement for consideration of representations and comments in respect of the draft Sha Tin OZP No. S/ST/37 (the draft OZP).

11. The Secretary reported that Amendment Item A on the draft OZP mainly involved a public housing development to be developed by the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HKHA) with the Housing Department (HD) as the executive arm, and supported by an Engineering Feasibility Study (EFS) conducted by the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD). Amendment Items C1, C2, D, E and F involved proposed commercial and private residential developments in Shek Mun and Siu Lek Yuen, and some of the technical assessments were conducted by AECOM Asia Company Limited (AECOM). Amendment Item G was to reflect a completed hotel development under a subsidiary of Sun Hung Kai Properties Limited (SHK). Amendment Items H1 and H2 were to take forward the decision of an agreed section 12A application (No. Y/ST/58), and AECOM and Savills were the consultants of the application. Representations had been submitted by the Swire Coca-Cola HK (R41) and Mass Transit Railway Corporation Limited (MTRCL) (R43). The following Members had declared interests on the item:

- Mr Andrew C.W. Lai
(as Director of Lands) - being a member of HKHA;
- Mr Paul Y.K. Au
(as Chief Engineer (Works),
Home Affairs Department) - being a representative of the Director of Home Affairs who was a member of the Strategic Planning Committee and the Subsidised Housing Committee of HKHA;
- Dr C.H. Hau - conducting contract research projects with CEDD; being a member of a focus group of CEDD on the study related to the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands; being an adviser to CEDD on the development of New Territories North; being Principal Lecturer of the School of Biological Science of HKU and his department had received donations from Swire Trust;
- Mr Stanley T.S. Choi] owning a property in Sha Tin;
Professor John C.Y. Ng]
- Mr Vincent K.Y. Ho - having current business dealings with AECOM and SHK and co-owning a property with spouse in Sha Tin;
- Dr Conrad T.C. Wong - having current business dealings with HKHA, SHK, AECOM, Savills and MTRCL;
- Miss Winnie W.M. Ng - being a Director of the Kowloon Motor Bus Company (1933) Limited (KMB) and Long Win Company Limited (Long Win) and SHK was of the shareholders of KMB and Long Win;
- Ms Sandy H.Y. Wong - being an independent non-executive director of MTRCL;
- Mr Franklin Yu - being a member of the Building Committee and Tender Committee of HKHA and his spouse being an employee of SHK; and
- Ms Lilian S.K. Law - being a former ex-Executive Director and committee member of The Boys' & Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong which had received sponsorship from SHK.

12. Members noted that Miss Winnie W.M. Ng and Mr Stanley T.S. Choi had tendered apologies for being unable to attend the meeting. As the item for seeking the Town Planning Board (the Board)'s agreement on the hearing arrangement for the draft OZP was procedural in nature, all Members who had declared interests could stay in the meeting.

13. The Secretary briefly introduced that on 17.11.2023, the draft OZP was exhibited for public inspection under section 5 of the Town Planning Ordinance. During the two-month exhibition period, 43 valid representations were received.

14. The Secretary reported that in view of their similar nature, the hearing of the 43 representations was recommended to be considered by the full Board collectively in one group. To ensure efficiency of the hearing, a maximum of 10 minutes presentation time would be allotted to each presenter in the hearing session. Consideration of the representations by the full Board was tentatively scheduled for March 2024.

15. After deliberation, the Board agreed to the hearing arrangement in paragraph 14 above.

Fanling, Sheung Shui & Yuen Long East District

Agenda Item 3

[Open Meeting]

Draft San Tin Technopole Outline Zoning Plan No. S/STT/C — Consideration of a New Plan

(TPB Paper No. 10954)

[The item was conducted in Cantonese.]

Agenda Item 4

[Open Meeting]

Proposed Amendments to the Approved Ngau Tam Mei Outline Zoning Plan No. S/YL-NTM/12 and Approved Mai Po and Fairview Park Outline Zoning Plan No. S/YL-MP/6 (TPB Paper No. 10955)

[The item was conducted in Cantonese.]

16. The Chairperson said that under Agenda Item 3, the new draft San Tin Technopole Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/STT/C, which mainly covered a major portion of the approved San Tin OZP No. S/YL-ST/8, the northern part of the approved Ngau Tam Mei OZP No. S/YL-NTM/12 as well as some areas previously not covered by any statutory plan, set out the development proposals of the San Tin/Lok Ma Chau (STLMC) area (the Area) of the San Tin Technopole (the Technopole). Under the Northern Metropolis Action Agenda 2023 (NMAA), the Sam Po Shue Wetland Conservation Park (SPS WCP) was proposed to strengthen wetland conservation and compensate for the ecological and fisheries impact arising from the development at the Area of the Technopole. To put the proposed SPS WCP under one single OZP, the northwestern part of the San Tin OZP would be excised for incorporation into the Mai Po and Fairview Park OZP under Agenda Item 4. As the issues concerning the Area and the proposed SPS WCP in respect of the above mentioned OZPs were interrelated, the Meeting agreed that Agenda Items 3 and 4 would be presented and discussed together.

17. The Secretary reported that on 22.2.2024, a joint letter from seven green groups to the Town Planning Board (the Board/TPB) regarding the consequential amendment to the TPB Guidelines No.12C on Application for Developments within Deep Bay Area under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance (the Ordinance) (TPB PG-No. 12C) in relation to Agenda Item 3 was received. The letter was circulated to Members on the same day and tabled at this meeting.

18. In respect of Agenda Item 3, the Secretary reported that the draft San Tin Technopole OZP No. S/STT/C was to take forward the recommendations of the Revised Recommended Outline Development Plan (RODP) of the 'Investigation Study for First Phase Development of the New Territories North - San Tin/Lok Ma Chau Development

Node' (the STLMC Study), which was jointly commissioned by the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) and the Planning Department (PlanD), with AECOM Asia Company Limited (AECOM) as the consultant. The draft San Tin Technopole OZP involved zoning of sites for proposed public housing developments to be developed by the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HKHA) with the Housing Department (HD) as the executive arm, as well as development of proposed San Tin Station of the Northern Link (NOL) Main Line by Mass Transit Railway Corporation Limited (MTRCL). The Conservancy Association (CA) was one of the green groups submitting the joint letter to the Board. The following Members had declared interests on the item:

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| Mr Andrew C.W. Lai
<i>(as Director of Lands)</i> | - being a member of HKHA; |
| Mr Paul Y.K. Au
<i>(as Chief Engineer
(Works), Home Affairs
Department)</i> | - being a representative of the Director of Home Affairs who was a member of the Strategic Planning Committee and the Subsidised Housing Committee of HKHA; |
| Mr Franklin Yu | - being a member of the Building Committee and Tender Committee of HKHA; |
| Ms Sandy H.Y. Wong | - being an independent non-executive director of MTRCL; |
| Dr Conrad T.C. Wong | - having current business dealings with HKHA, AECOM and MTRCL; |
| Mr Vincent K.Y. Ho | - having current business dealings with AECOM; and |
| Dr C.H. Hau | - conducting contract research projects with CEDD; being a member of a focus group of CEDD on the study related to the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands; being an adviser to CEDD on the development of New Territories North; and his spouse being the Vice-chairman of the Board of Directors of the CA. |

19. According to the procedure and practice adopted by the Board, as the proposed public housing sites and future railway stations (including the proposed San Tin Station of

the NOL Main Line) were the subjects of proposals on a new OZP proposed by PlanD, the interests of those Members having affiliations/business dealings with HKHA and MTRCL mentioned above on the item only needed to be recorded and they could stay in the meeting. As Dr Conrad T.C. Wong, Mr Vincent K.Y. Ho and Dr C.H. Hau had no involvement in the STLMC Study and/or the green groups' joint letter sent to the Board, they could stay in the meeting.

20. In respect of Agenda Item 4, the Secretary reported that the proposed Amendment Item A of the Ngau Tam Mei OZP was to excise its northern part into the San Tin Technopole OZP in taking forward the recommendations of the Revised RODP of the STLMC Study, which was jointly commissioned by CEDD and PlanD, with AECOM as the consultant. The proposed Amendment Items A1, A2 and B of the Mai Po and Fairview Park OZP were to take forward the recommendations and findings of the 'Strategic Feasibility Study on the Development of the Wetland Conservation Parks System under the Northern Metropolis Development Strategy' (the WCPs Study) which was commissioned by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), with AECOM as the consultant. The following Members had declared interests on the item:

Dr Conrad T.C. Wong] having current business dealings with AECOM;
Mr Vincent K.Y. Ho]
Dr C.H. Hau	- conducting contract research projects with CEDD; being a member of a focus group of CEDD on the study related to the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands; and being an adviser to CEDD on the development of New Territories North; and
Mr K.W. Leung] owning a property in Mai Po.
Ms Sandy H.Y. Wong]

21. As the properties owned by Mr K.W. Leung and Ms Sandy H.Y. Wong had no direct view of the amendment sites, and Dr Conrad T.C. Wong, Mr Vincent K.Y. Ho and Dr C.H. Hau had no involvement in the STLMC Study and/or the WCPs Study, they could stay in the meeting.

[Professor John C.Y. Ng joined the meeting at this point.]

22. The following government representatives and consultants' representatives were invited to the meeting at this point.

Development Bureau (DEVB)

- Ms Pecvin P.W. Yong - Deputy Director, Northern Metropolis Co-ordination Office (DD/NMCO)
- Mr Eric T.H. Chung - Head, Planning & Development Team, Northern Metropolis Co-ordination Office

Environment and Ecology Bureau (EEB)

- Mr Desmond C.C. Wu - Principal Assistant Secretary for Environment and Ecology (Nature Conservation) (PAS(NC))

Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB)

- Ms Vicky Cheung - Principal Assistant Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry (PAS(ITI))
- Miss Kristy H.L. Chan - Senior Management Services Officer (Innovation, Technology and Industry)

PlanD

- Mr K.W. Ng - District Planning Officer/Fanling, Sheung Shui and Yuen Long East (DPO/FSYLE)
- Mr Kimson P.H. Chiu - Senior Town Planner/Fanling, Sheung Shui and Yuen Long East (STP/FSYLE)

Ms Karen K.Y. Chan]	Town Planner/Fanling, Sheung Shui
Mr Louis H.W. Cheung]	and Yuen Long East
Ms Lily H. Lau]	Town Planner/Studies and Research
Ms Stephenie Y.T. Lee]	

CEDD

Mr Tony K.L. Cheung	-	Project Manager (North) (PM(N))
Ms Kaberlina K.M. Ho	-	Chief Engineer/North

AFCD

Mr Simon K.F. Chan	-	Assistant Director (Conservation) (AD(C))
Mr Boris S.P. Kwan	-	Senior Nature Conservation Officer (North)
Mr Eric K.Y. Liu	-	Senior Conservation Officer (Technical Services)
Ms Virginia L.F. Lee	-	Senior Fisheries Officer (Technical Services)

AECOM

Mr Ivan H.K. Tsang]	
Mr Kelvin T.P. Law]	
Ms Hazel W.N. Yun]	
Mr Martin M.T. Law]	
Ms Becky S.M. Wong]	Consultant
Ms Anna Y.M. Chung]	
Mr Andrew H.P. Ip]	
Ms H.L Li]	
Mr H.W. Tsang]	
Mr Karl An]	

PricewaterhouseCoopers

Mr Wayne Lau	-	Consultant
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23. The Chairperson extended a welcome and invited PlanD's representatives to brief Members on the two items.

24. Mr K.W. Ng, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD briefly introduced the background of the new draft San Tin Technopole OZP No. S/STT/C, the proposed amendments to the approved Ngau Tam Mei OZP No. S/YL-NTM/12 and the proposed amendments to the approved Mai Po and Fairview Park OZP No. S/YL-MP/6 (collectively referred to as "the OZPs"). With the promulgation of the "Outline of the 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035" (the 14th Five-Year Plan) in March 2021 supporting Hong Kong to develop into an international innovation and technology (I&T) centre, the Northern Metropolis Development Strategy (NMDS) was released concurrently in the same year putting forward the proposal of developing the Northern Metropolis (NM) into an international I&T hub which included the comprehensive Technopole comprising the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park (HSITP) at the Loop and the Area. Subsequently, the NMAA, which included the Technopole as part of the 'I&T Zone', was promulgated. Under the NMAA, the Technopole was positioned to serve as the core of industry development of the NM and a hub for clustered I&T development that created synergy with Shenzhen's I&T zone, assisting Hong Kong in developing the 'South-North dual engine (finance-I&T)' industry pattern for the territory. The STLMC Study had carried out a two-month public engagement of the RODP between June and August 2023. An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIA Report) of the STLMC Study to assess the environmental impacts of the proposed development under the Revised RODP had been exhibited for public inspection under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO). With the site formation and infrastructure works targeted to commence in end 2024, it was necessary to kick-start in parallel the statutory planning process involving the OZPs to ensure timely supply of land for I&T developments.

25. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Kimson P.H. Chiu, STP/FSYLE, PlanD briefed Members on the Planning Scheme Areas of the OZPs; the background and strategic planning context of the Technopole and its surroundings; development character areas of the Area; the major planning themes of (i) developing a world class I&T hub, (ii) ecological conservation with enhancement measures proposed in the EIA Report of the STLMC Study, (iii) balanced, vibrant and liveable community, (iv) urban-rural integration,

(v) smart, green, resilient exemplar, proposed land use zonings and development controls of the draft San Tin Technopole OZP; consequential amendment to the TPB PG-No. 12C; the proposed amendments to the approved Ngau Tam Mei OZP and the approved Mai Po and Fairview Park OZP; and the consultation with the Yuen Long District Council and the San Tin Rural Committee (STRC), as detailed in TPB Papers No. 10954 and 10955.

[Mr Paul Y.K. Au left the meeting temporarily, and Ms Sandy H.Y. Wong, Mr Franklin Yu, Ms Lilian S.K. Law and Professor Bernadette W.S. Tsui joined the meeting during PlanD's presentation.]

26. After the presentation of PlanD's representatives, the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members.

Location of the Technopole

27. A Member pointed out that when planning a new development area, the first and foremost principle should be given to avoiding any development in ecologically sensitive areas. Part of the Area was located in the Deep Bay Area which was recognised as a wetland of international importance with its habitat supporting a variety of species of waterbirds and a stopover site for migratory birds. Avoidance was the most effective strategy in preserving ecologically sensitive areas and their functions, and should be the primary consideration in the planning of the Area. A few Members expressed that once those areas were destroyed or altered, it would be challenging, if not impossible, to entirely mitigate the loss of their ecological functions.

28. In connection to the said issue, two Members had the following question and views:

- (a) noting that the I&T land in the previous development proposal under the Initial Land Use Plan would not affect the existing wetlands in the northwestern part of the Area around San Tin, why the currently proposed I&T development would encroach onto the said wetlands as shown on the draft San Tin Technopole OZP; and

- (b) alternative proposal should be explored to accommodate the I&T land without sacrificing the fishponds and wetlands. Consideration should be given to moving the I&T land to the proposed San Tin Town Centre (STTC) in the southern part of the draft San Tin Technopole OZP while relocating the proposed residential use thereat to the adjacent Kwu Tung North New Development Area (KTN NDA).

29. In response, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, Mr K.W. Ng, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD and Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM(N), CEDD made the following main points:

- (a) to tie in with the proposal of developing the NM into an international I&T hub which included the Area under the NMDS, the development boundary of the Area had to be expanded. Together with the HSITP at the Loop, the Technopole would provide about 300 hectares (ha) of I&T land, which was capable of accommodating a total gross floor area (GFA) of about 7 million m². The I&T land at the northwestern and southeastern parts of the Area covered a total area of about 210 ha providing a total GFA of about 5.7 million m² with a view to creating a critical mass to foster I&T advancement, driving the development of an international I&T hub and deepening the I&T collaboration with Shenzhen and the world. The planned I&T land in the northwestern part of the Area could create synergy effect with the HSITP at the Loop under construction, as well as the Shenzhen's I&T zone in Futian and Huanggang across the Shenzhen River, hence improving the I&T ecosystems in Hong Kong and Shenzhen. Should the planned I&T land be accommodated in the southern part of the Area only, it could hardly achieve the critical mass and synergy for I&T development;
- (b) when planning the expansion of the previous boundary of an Initial Land Use Plan released in mid-2021, the feasibility of developing surrounding areas apart from the northern part of the Area which was mainly occupied by wetlands had been duly considered. Most of the mountainous areas to the south of the Loop were natural hillsides with high and steep terrain intermixed with permitted burial grounds and government, institution and

community (GIC) facilities. The foothills were covered with woodland. Moreover, those areas were close to the main flight paths of migratory birds between the Lok Ma Chau Meander and Sam Po Shue and the compensation wetlands at the ecological area at the southern part of the Loop. To create sizable development land in those mountainous areas, large-scale slope cutting, surface blasting, retaining wall construction, land formation and infrastructure works would be required. According to the preliminary assessment, the related works would take a long time, and the surface blasting works would cause long-term nuisance to nearby residents and the surrounding environment. These would impact the above-mentioned compensation wetlands in the Loop and the said main flight paths of migratory birds, and directly affect the Lok Ma Chau Police Station which was listed as a Grade II historic building. After taking into account relevant considerations, such as environmental impacts, green groups' views, estimated project costs, development programme, etc., it was not recommended to develop the mountainous areas for I&T use; and

- (c) with reference to overseas experiences, successful I&T development had to be sustained by a range of supporting services/facilities. Given that the KTN NDA was not in close proximity to the Area, it was considered necessary to have a threshold population with sufficient housing choices in the southern part of the Area for a self-contained community to support the development of I&T industry in the Area.

30. In response to Members' enquiry on avoidance of development on fishponds and wetlands, Mr Terence S.W. Tsang, Assistant Director (Environmental Assessment) (AD(EA)), Environmental Protection Department (EPD) supplemented that the general policy for mitigating ecological impacts including avoidance, minimising and compensation had been considered and adopted in the EIA Report of the STLMC Study. Appropriate mitigation measures would be devised after all practical means had been explored to avoid or minimise the potential impacts.

31. Regarding Members' enquiry on the significance of the residential development in the Area, Mr Ivan M.K. Chung, Director of Planning, highlighted the planning background

and evolving planning circumstances of the Area. To take forward the development of New Territories North as a strategic growth area, the Area was previously identified as having potential for development to help address the housing shortage in the territory in addition to Kwu Tung North/Fanling North NDA. In that connection, land use proposal for the Area as a development node with residential use was clearly formulated and promulgated in the public engagement of ‘Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030’ (HK2030+) in 2016/17, and incorporated as part of the finalised HK2030+ announced in 2021. Besides, the NMDS set out the proposal of developing the Technopole to support Hong Kong to become an international I&T hub which covered both the Loop and the Area. The whole Technopole would provide about 300 ha of I&T land which was comparable to the size of Shenzhen’s I&T zone on the other side of the Shenzhen River. While the counterpart in Shenzhen had already formulated the ‘Development Plan for the Shenzhen Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Cooperation Zone’, the synergy effect created by the Technopole and the Shenzhen’s I&T zone for development of an international I&T hub and implementation of the concept of ‘One River, Two Banks’ and ‘One Zone, Two Parks’ would be crucial. NMDS also proposed to establish a Wetland Conservation Parks (WCPs) System with a view to conserving the wetlands and fishponds with ecological values. Through the establishment of the proposed SPS WCP by the Government, the measures proposed to be implemented would enhance the ecological function and capacity of the wetland areas.

32. The Chairperson remarked that in the course of formulating development proposals of the Area, the general principle of avoiding unnecessary encroachment onto the areas with ecological value had been adhered to. The site constraints such as presence of permitted burial grounds, recognised villages, wetlands, and fishponds within the Area, as well as surrounding mountainous areas, had been taken into account in delineating the boundary of the Area and its I&T development after striking a proper balance of relevant considerations. The LMC Loop currently being developed was the core area of the San Tin Technopole and was identified by the Central People’s Government as the key base for I&T collaborations between Hong Kong and Shenzhen’s I&T zone. Hence, to maximise the synergy effect, land for further expansion of the I&T development should be centred around and physically attached to the Loop and be primarily located in the northern part of the Area.

Ecological Conservation with “No-Net-Loss” in Ecological Function Principle

Ecological Function of the Wetlands

33. Some Members raised the following questions:
- (a) how ecological function and capacity of the wetlands concerned and their conservation importance were defined; and
 - (b) apart from waterbirds, what flora, fauna and other habitats/species were of conservation importance.
34. In response, Mr Simon K.F. Chan, AD(C), AFCD and Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM(N), CEDD made the following main points:
- (a) the previous ‘Study on the Ecological Value of Fish Ponds in the Deep Bay Area’ had confirmed the importance of the fishpond ecosystem in the Deep Bay Area which had been functioned ecologically as a substantial source of food supply and as an important habitat for roosting and foraging of waterbirds. Fishponds in the Area were mainly man-made waterbodies for the purpose of cultivating fishes under commercial operation, which had been in existence as early as 1950s and 1960s. Beyond the economic benefits, fishponds possessed ecological value for its intrinsic variety of aquatic species including those fishes without market value and invertebrates found in the ponds, which would serve as food supply for numerous waterbirds and wetland-dependent species, including various species of conservation importance such as Black-faced Spoonbill (黑臉琵鷺) and Great Egret (大白鷺). Fishermen normally drained down the water levels of the fishponds for harvesting the fishes with market value, and the drained down ponds provided an opportune moment for the waterbirds to wade in shallower waters to spot and catch the leftover fishes without market value;

- (b) an ecological field survey under the EIA Report of the STLMC Study revealed that wetland habitats were mostly found in the northern part of the Area while woodland habitats dominated the southern part of the Area. Ponds (including fishponds) were one of the major habitat types in the northern part of the Area intermixed with other habitat types such as mixed woodland and marsh/reed; and
- (c) ponds performed varying levels of ecological function, which could be affected by various factors including the level of human activities/disturbance such as heavy vehicles operating along the pond bunds, brownfields, etc. The proposed filling of ponds in the northern part of the Area was about 89 ha, about half of which was found to be inactive, having a reduced carrying capacity of ecological function. Amongst the 288 ha of wetlands with enhanced ecological function and capacity to be established under the proposed SPS WCP, 253 ha would be “ecologically enhanced fishponds” compensating for the loss of pond habitats arising from the developments in the Area, and 35 ha of “enhanced freshwater wetland habitats” would compensate for the loss of other freshwater wetland habitats.

35. Mr Terence S.W. Tsang, AD(EA), EPD said that the EIA Report of the STLMC Study should demonstrate that the same kind/level of ecological function and capacity could be achieved through the measures to compensate for the ecological impacts. Such approach of compensating ecological impact through enhancing the ecological function and capacity, rather than compensation by area of habitats, had been adopted in some other approved EIA reports. He quoted an example that the ecological function and capacity of the loss of a wetland of 1 ha in size might not be adequately compensated by four pieces of scattered wetlands with a total size of 1 ha. The ecological function and capacity of a particular habitat should be assessed on a case-by-case basis as there were numerous types of habitats, each with different characteristics and functions. Majority of the wetland habitats affected by the development proposal of the Area were in the form of fishponds, which mainly served the ecological function of providing food sources and roosting sites for birds. In general, mitigation measures should be formulated correspondingly to

compensate for affected wetland habitats through enhancing the ecological function and capacity of the wetlands in the proposed SPS WCP.

“No-Net-Loss” in Ecological Function

36. In response to some Members’ enquiry on how the ecological function of pond habitat in the northern part of the Area could be maintained in adherence to the “no-net-loss” principle, Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM(N), CEDD made the following main points with the aid of some PowerPoint slides:

Decrease in Functional Value due to Loss of Ponds

- (a) the estimation of the loss of ponds due to the development proposal of the Area was the first crucial step to ascertain whether the no-net-loss in the ecological function and capacity could be attained through the establishment of the proposed SPS WCP. Ponds carried different magnitude of ecological function subject to various factors including the level of management. While active fishponds, which were being operated and managed for fisheries production, would carry high ecological function, inactive or abandoned fishponds lacking management would have lower ecological function. It was estimated that the direct loss of ponds, which were proposed to be filled for the proposed development in the northern part of the Area, was about 89 ha; and adjacent ponds being prone to indirect disturbance impact arising from the development proposal of the Area were about 63 ha;
- (b) under the development proposal of the Area, a stepped building height (BH) profile in the northern part fronting the proposed SPS WCP would be adopted. Developments with a certain level of BH might result in varying levels of disturbance impact to the larger and disturbance sensitive avifauna species. To assess the indirect disturbance impact for indicating avifauna species, an Exclusion Zone (EZ) being closer to the source of disturbance (i.e. setting from 0-100m for low-rise building and 0-200m for high-rise building) where disturbance levels were high enough to prevent

species from using the pond habitats, even with the presence of suitable habitat (i.e. 0% usage assessed), and a Reduced Density Zone (RDZ) (i.e. setting from 100-200m for low-rise building and 200-400m for high-rise building) further away from source of disturbance where species would use suitable wetland habitats but likely at a reduced density (i.e. 50% usage assessed), had been delineated around the disturbance source of the proposed development in the northern part, resulting in 63 ha of indirect disturbance impact zone (i.e. EZ plus RDZ);

- (c) it was estimated that there would be a total loss in functional value for the 89 ha of direct impacted ponds due to the entire filling of the ponds, and 100% and 50% loss in functional value in EZ and RDZ respectively in the 63 ha of indirect impacted ponds;
- (d) to estimate the compensation requirement for pond habitats, four larger wetland avifauna species (i.e. Black-faced Spoonbill (黑臉琵鷺), Great Cormorant (普通鸕鷀), Great Egret (大白鷺), and Grey Heron (蒼鷺)) had been adopted as indicator species because they were relatively higher disturbance sensitivity and were key species in the pond habitats. It was assessed that if wetland mitigation targets could be achieved for those four large and disturbance sensitive species, with similar or higher levels of enhancement measures in place, it could be reasonably assumed that the targets could also be met for other less disturbance sensitive wildlife species;

Increase in Functional Value due to Enhancement Measures

- (e) the wetland compensation strategy for the development proposal of the Area had been formulated to comply with the compensation requirements in accordance with the EIAO and EIAO-Technical Memorandum with a view to making up for the loss in functional value arising from the proposed development in phases;

- (f) under the wetland compensation strategy, the proposed enhancement measures would enhance the ecological function of the pond habitats to a mitigation target (i.e. 45% increase in terms of numbers of birds at active/inactive fishponds, while the actual percentage increase could be higher as some existing ponds (e.g. abandoned ponds) were of lower functional value) as benchmarked to the approved EIA report for the proposed development at Fung Lok Wai, Yuen Long. Ecological enhancement measures proposed in the EIA Report of the STLMC Study included:
- (i) increase in pond area and enhance connectivity;
 - (ii) physical modification of pond habitats to increase environmental carrying capacity;
 - (iii) managing and sequencing pond drain down across multiple ponds in the dry season to maximise feeding opportunities for avifauna and other wildlife;
 - (iv) providing fencing/controlling access to reduce disturbance from human activities and also prevent disturbance and predation of wildlife by feral dogs;
 - (v) removal of existing bird scaring devices at actively managed ponds, where appropriate; and
 - (vi) stocking ponds with suitable prey items (i.e. trash-fish) for target wildlife species;
- (g) amongst the four larger wetland avifauna indicator species, Great Egret (大白鷺) was the determining species for estimating the enhancement area requirement as this species would have the smallest proportional increase in overall functional value (i.e. 0.9 vs other species with 2.0, 76.2 and 198.1)

due to the relatively low magnitude of increase in Post-Project Functional Value (PPFV) as compared to the exiting functional value of the enhancement area of 253 ha after carrying out the enhancement measures in the proposed SPS WCP; and

- (h) with the increase in functional value of at least 45% upon the implementation of ecological enhancement measures through the provision of ecologically enhanced fishpond habitats within the proposed SPS WCP, the total area of wetlands required to compensate for the loss of the pond habitats for the proposed development in the Area (i.e. about 152ha) was assessed to be 253 ha, in order to achieve no-net-loss in ecological function and capacity of the wetlands concerned.

37. Mr Andrew H.P. Ip, the consultant's representative, supplemented that a 12-month ecological field survey covering the assessment area (i.e. 500m from the study boundary) of the Area was conducted under the EIA Report of the STLMC Study. Amongst others, flight path surveys for the ardeids were undertaken to observe and record the flight path and roosting habitats at the proposed vantage points. Through the imposition of the proposed non-building areas (NBAs) and BH restrictions as well as other relevant urban design measures, the disturbance to ardeids in the wetland habitats could be mitigated.

38. A Member raised the following questions:

- (a) to compensate for the pond habitats loss stemming from the construction of Sheung Shui to Lok Ma Chau Spur Line (LMC Spur Line), a Lok Ma Chau Ecological Enhancement Area (LMC EEA) was provided to create the suitable habitats for fauna recorded near the LMC Spur Line and Lok Ma Chau (LMC) Station, which had been in operation for almost 20 years. Why the EIA Report of the STLMC Study did not make reference to the 20-year actual operation data of the LMC EEA, but adopted the assumptions of the approved EIA report for the proposed development at Fung Lok Wai, Yuen Long, which had never been put into effect since its approval and in the absence of actual data, the effectiveness of the recommended measures in the EIA Report of the STLMC Study was not

yet confirmed; and

- (b) Little Egret (小白鷺) was also one of the key disturbance sensitive species roosting in the pond habitats in the Deep Bay Area, being listed as target species for mitigation in the approved EIA report of LMC Spur Line. Why Little Egret was not taken as indicator species in the EIA Report of the STLMC Study.

39. In response, Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM(N), CEDD made the following main points:

- (a) the enhancement measures proposed in the EIA of Fung Lok Wai, Yuen Long, were akin to those proposed under the EIA Report of the STLMC Study. According to the current EIA Report, the Government would enhance the ecological function and capacity of 288 ha of wetlands in the proposed SPS WCP and fisheries resources of 40 ha fishponds through active conservation management and modernised aquaculture with a view to compensating for the loss of wetland habitats and fisheries resources. One of the measures proposed under the approved EIA report of LMC Spur Line was to adopt fish-stocking method by directly putting fishes to fishponds to increase food availability for birds. Should the EIA Report of the STLMC Study be referenced to the data of LMC EEA under the approved EIA report of LMC Spur Line, such fish-stocking method would easily result in the over-estimation of the functional value of the ponds as it was neither the natural means to enhance its ecological function and more importantly, nor sustainable for application to an area of 253 ha. Such measure was only recommended as a contingency ecological enhancement measure in the proposed SPS WCP under special circumstances if the effectiveness of other ecological and fisheries enhancement measures could not meet the standard; and
- (b) the four larger wetland avifauna species selected as mitigation targets to estimate the overall functional value change of the pond habitats under the EIA Report of the STLMC Study had cross-referenced the approved EIA

report for the proposed development at Fung Lok Wai, Yuen Long.

40. Mr Simon K.F. Chan, AD(C), AFCD added that the EIA Report of the STLMC Study had taken into account the approved EIA report of LMC Spur Line, and the minimum of 45% target enhancement of functional value at the enhancement area in the proposed SPS WCP was a conservative estimation. The enhancement in ecological functional value and capacity to be achieved through the establishment and operation of proposed SPS WCP would be through the implementation of ecological and fisheries enhancement measures rather than by direct stocking fishes to fishponds. Should the measure of direct stocking of fishes to the ponds be adopted, it was anticipated that a smaller wetland compensation area would be required. Mr Terence S.W. Tsang, AD(EA), EPD said that the number or types of target avifauna species to be monitored could be further recommended in the Habitat Creation and Management Plan (HCMP) to be submitted, if necessary, taking into account the actual circumstances.

41. Two Members considered that the wetland compensation strategy under the EIA Report of the STLMC Study was merely a computation of scientific data where the impacts of the proposed development on wetlands were quantified and corresponding compensation measures were worked out. Apart from scientific calculations, taking forward the conservation of ecological function involved comprehensive considerations of a basket of factors (e.g. whether birds would follow the path along the designation of NBAs or not) and collaboration with stakeholders (e.g. fishpond operators and land owners). Some Members had concerns on whether the future operation of the proposed SPS WCP could achieve the no-net-loss of the wetland ecological functions and how the proposed SPS WCP would be properly managed and monitored.

42. Some Members enquired how to ensure that the implementation of the ecological enhancement measures would result in increase in ecological function value of the fishponds so as to achieve the targets as set out in the EIA Report of the STLMC Study, and what resources would be involved in putting forward the wetland conservation strategy (e.g. subsidy to fishpond operators). In response, Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM(N), CEDD made the following main points:

- (a) the target of at least 45% increase in functional value (in terms of number of birds) in the proposed SPS WCP was based on a conservative assumption as stipulated in the EIA Report of the STLMC Study. Ponds could be physically modified to enhance ecological function and capacity. Typical measures to be implemented included: (i) consolidating smaller and fragmented ponds into larger waterbodies; (ii) re-profiling of pond banks to make the edges more gently sloping and shallower and increasing the available foraging area for waterbirds; (iii) creating habitat islands; and (iv) providing additional foraging areas through the floating platforms/wetlands;

- (b) to further enhance the functional value of fishpond habitats, the total number of ponds drained down at any one time could be increased through the coordination with fishpond operators by implementing the proposed ecological enhancement measures as identified in the EIA Report of the STLMC Study. One of the key conservation objectives was to restore and enhance the conservation value of commercial fishponds in the Deep Bay Area and to build up a more harmonious relationship between local fishpond farming and bird conservation. Under the current practice, a relatively small number of the existing ponds within the boundary of the proposed SPS WCP were drained down at any one time, and most of the ponds were only partially drained for a period of seven days. With active management of the proposed SPS WCP, the feeding opportunities could be enhanced as the total area of fishponds drain-down at any one time could be increased and full drain-down would be implemented rather than partial drain-down. Moreover, where ponds had been reprofiled to have a shallower gradient, this would result in progressive exposure of the larger areas of shallow water/mud for roosting of the birds; and

- (c) in a nutshell, the ecological enhancement measures in the proposed SPS WCP would provide a more stable, high-value feeding habitat for avifauna. During the interim period before the full establishment of the proposed SPS WCP, the measures of fish-stocking into fishponds to enhance their ecological function and capacity would be considered under the

development proposal of the Area. With reference to the operation of the LMC EEA, the cost incurred in fish-stocking to fishponds in the proposed SPS WCP would be relatively low in comparison with the overall project construction cost.

43. Mr Simon K.F. Chan, AD(C), AFCD supplemented that based on the monitoring study conducted by the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society, the fishpond drain-down measure was effective, which would help increase the number/species of birds up to many times.

44. Some Members raised the following questions:

- (a) given that the establishment of the WCPs System as proposed in NMDS was to conserve the wetlands with ecological values in the Deep Bay Area, why the proposed SPS WCP would become the wetland compensation area for the development proposal of the Area;
- (b) the rationale of not including an area to the south of the LMC Station into the “Other Specified Use” annotated “Wetland Conservation Park” (“OU(WCP)”) zone covering the proposed SPS WCP;
- (c) noting that not all the land proposed to be used for wetland conservation was Government-owned and there might be uncertainty in adopting public-private partnership (PPP) approach as the land owners and fishpond operators might be reluctant to collaborate with the Government to take forward the wetland conservation measures, how the proposed SPS WCP could be operated and managed, and how the wetland compensation strategy could be successfully implemented;
- (d) whether the promotion of modernised aquaculture by placing of containers for enhancement of fisheries resources would further disturb the wetland habitats in the proposed SPS WCP; and
- (e) why the ecological enhancement measures would involve fencing of/controlling access to the proposed SPS WCP, which was supposed to be

used by the public and for public enjoyment.

45. In response, Mr Simon K.F. Chan, AD(C), AFCD, Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM(N), CEDD and Mr K.W. Ng, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD made the following main points:

- (a) NMDS proposed to establish a WCPs System to conserve the wetlands with ecological values in the Deep Bay Area and increase the environmental capacity for the development of NM. AFCD commissioned the WCPs Study to examine the relevant details for taking forward the implementation of the proposed WCPs System, including the location/boundary, functions, positioning and management model, etc., and the WCPs Study recommended to develop the proposed SPS WCP first, given its location situated along the core section of the flight path for migratory birds, and in close proximity to the large areas of other wetlands in the Deep Bay Area. The 2023 Policy Address also announced that the Government would establish the proposed SPS WCP and it would be the top priority to conserve the core bird flight path. According to the recommendations of the WCPs Study, the theme of proposed SPS WCP was positioned “Biodiversity and Aquaculture in Harmony”. While the proposed SPS WCP was to protect the flight path for migratory birds, it would also create synergy with the existing conservation areas, conserve the wetland ecosystem in the Deep Bay Area more effectively, facilitate the modernisation of aquaculture industry, and provide eco-education and eco-recreation facilities and experiences for public enjoyment. Through the establishment of the proposed SPS WCP, it could also help compensate for the ecological and fisheries impact arising from the development proposal of the Area to achieve no-net-loss in ecological function and capacity of the wetlands concerned;
- (b) the area to the south of the LMC Station covering some ponds, i.e. LMC EEA, was used as compensation for pond habitat loss stemming from the construction of LMC Spur Line. The LMC EEA and Clean-up Reedbed around the LMC Station were under the management of MTRCL, while the proposed SPS WCP together with the LMC Terminus Public Transport

Interchange Compensatory Pond and the offsite wetland compensation areas under the development of the Loop (i.e. the area to the north of LMC EEA) was proposed to be/would be under the management of the Government. In that regard, the boundary of the “OU(WCP)” zone covering the proposed SPS WCP was delineated based on the management and maintenance agents as mentioned, and the entire zone would fall within the Mai Po and Fairview Park OZP;

- (c) with private land accounting for about half of the area of the proposed SPS WCP, the WCPs Study recommended, amongst others, three possible management models for the proposed SPS WCP to be further studied at the next stage, which were (i) direct management by the Government; (ii) collaboration with non-government organisations, local communities, and agriculture and fisheries associations for management of the parks under a regulatory framework formulated by government department(s); and (iii) collaborations with private land owners in managing the parks through PPP, where private land owners could initiate suitable land use proposals compatible with the functions of the WCPs System to the Government for consideration. The Government would take on board the outcomes of the WCPs Study to put forward the establishment of the proposed SPS WCP, including undertaking of further detailed studies on the investigation, design and construction in the next stage;

- (d) the proposed SPS WCP would promote the adoption of ecologically enhanced ponds with the fishermen. Placement of containers for the Container Recirculating System in fishponds could facilitate farming of high-value fish species or in high intensity without predation by waterbirds. However, they would only be placed at selected areas without affecting the pond habitats in the proposed SPS WCP. By focusing on high-value fish species or culture in high intensity, fishermen could maximise the revenue potential; and

- (e) the provision of fencing/controlling access was to minimise the human disturbance to those ecologically more sensitive areas and prevent predation of wildlife by feral dogs, and the proposed SPS WCP would not be completely fenced off and public access to most parts of the proposed SPS WCP would be allowed.

46. Mr Desmond C.C. Wu, PAS(NC), EEB said that the Mai Po Deep Bay Ramsar Site of Hong Kong and the LMC area were ecologically linked and formed integral parts of the Shenzhen Bay (Deep Bay) wetland ecosystem, which served as internationally important over-wintering sites and refueling stations for waterbirds. A framework arrangement for the conservation of Shenzhen Bay (Deep Bay) wetlands to establish sister wetlands concerned was signed by the representatives from Hong Kong and Shenzhen in 2023, with measures already taken by both sides starting from mid-2023 to enhance conservation of the wetlands in Shenzhen Bay (Deep Bay) area. Besides, the Government had nearly 20 years of experience in managing the Hong Kong Wetland Park, supporting the implementation of a quality SPS WCP in future.

Monitoring of Enhancement Measures

47. Noting that the extensive wetlands would be affected, a Member strongly requested that a specific mechanism should be adopted to ensure the 'no-net-loss' principle and safeguard the ecological value of the wetland. Besides, since the development proposal of the Area was classified as a designated project under Schedule 3 of the EIAO (i.e. an urban development or redevelopment project covering an area of more than 50 ha), which only required the approval of an EIA report prior to its implementation, but not a Schedule 2 project subject to an environmental permit (EP) which could impose conditions, the Member queried how the wetland compensation could be monitored and suggested a HCMP be imposed as an approval condition of the EIA.

48. In response, Mr Terence S.W. Tsang, AD(EA), EPD said that apart from the development proposal of the Area as a designated project under Schedule 3 of the EIAO, other components of the proposed development, including effluent polishing plant, water reclamation plant, recreational development within Deep Bay Buffer Zone 2, etc. were also designated projects under Schedule 2 of the EIAO, requiring EP(s). The specific

recommendations in the EIA Report of the STLMC Study could either be included in the EPs or imposed as one of the approval conditions to the EIA Report. The project proponent, being a government department, would ensure that the respective conditions would be fully complied with. It was proposed to include the requirement for submission of a HCMP as a condition for the approval of the EIA for the STLMC Study. According to the established administrative arrangement, EPD and relevant government departments would monitor compliance of the EIA approval/EP conditions, and any non-compliance needed to be rectified. Mr Simon K.F. Chan, AD(C), AFCD said that the EIA Report of the STLMC Study proposed to prepare a HCMP to guide and monitor the implementation of compensation measures throughout various phases of development to ensure the effectiveness of the wetland enhancement. Mr Kimson P.H. Chiu, STP/FSYLE, PlanD supplemented that the EP for the proposed development at Wo Shang Wai, Yuen Long, included various conditions, such as measures to mitigate ecological impacts, relevant environmental monitoring and audit requirements (with electronic reporting to the general public), and long-term management of the Wetland Restoration Area.

49. The same Member further enquired about the consequences for failing to comply with the wetland compensation requirements under the current mechanism and any precedent case. In response, Mr Terence S.W. Tsang, AD(EA), EPD said that under the current practice, any breach of the approval conditions of EIA Report approval/EP by works departments would be reported to the Chief Secretary for Administration and so far, no precedent case was noted.

50. Upon the Chairperson's request, Mr Terence S.W. Tsang, AD(EA), EPD further explained that the EIA Report of the STLMC Study had been prepared to assess the environmental impacts of the proposed development under the Revised RODP. The EIA Report was being exhibited for public inspection from 2.2.2024 to 2.3.2024 under the EIAO. There were detailed assessments in the EIA Report covering the ecological impact and proposed wetland compensation measures, which were highlighted below:

- (a) an assessment on effectiveness of the proposed ecological enhancement measures (i.e. increase in ecological value of fishpond habitats) was conducted with reference to the approved EIA reports for the proposed development at Fung Lok Wai, Yuen Long and LMC Spur Line. Actual

data in relation to the operation of enhancement measures in Mai Po area under management agreement practices, including fishponds drain-down levels was also collected from AFCD and reviewed. The experience of the wetland enhancement measures being adopted in LMC EEA, which indicated the increase in functional value of the fishponds through fish-stocking method could well exceed the estimation as stated in the approved EIA report of LMC Spur Line, was also taken into account;

- (b) the EIA Report of the STLMC Study took into account the scale of the development proposal of the Revised RODP, and had proposed to prepare a HCMP to guide and monitor the implementation of compensation measures throughout various phases of development to ensure the effectiveness of the wetland enhancement;
- (c) a working group would be formed between CEDD (as the works agent of the Area) and AFCD (as the proposed SPS WCP's sponsoring department) to coordinate and monitor the progress of pond filling for the Area and the implementation of proposed SPS WCP. The working group would also keep track of the effectiveness of the proposed ecological and fisheries enhancement measures to increase the ecological function of fishpond habitats, including the close monitoring of the abundance and/or density of target indicator waterbird species; and
- (d) according to CEDD, they would target to maintain the ecological function and capacity within the Area at least at the original level, and if deficits in wetland ecological function were identified, additional measures such as fish-stocking method might be considered to strengthen further enhancement and compensation of the habitats.

51. The Chairperson remarked that there was a comprehensive monitoring mechanism through the EP procedures/approval conditions upon approval of the EIA Report of the STLMC Study, in particular the submission of the HCMP to monitor the overall progress of the implementation of ecological enhancement measures. CEDD as the project proponent would set out implementation details of the enhanced wetlands, the associated

management and monitoring requirements (e.g. monitoring location, frequency and parameters) in the HCMP for approval from relevant government departments, including AFCD and EPD. It was expected that the monitoring frequency would not be less than once annually. Should the monitoring outcome indicate the lower abundance and/or density of indicator species as compared with the mitigation target, further ecological function enhancement measures would be implemented to remedy the situation.

52. Some Members further suggested that upon gazettal of the draft San Tin Technopole OZP, more briefings and elaboration on the ecological impact of the development of the Technopole should be provided to the general public.

I&T Development

53. A Member said that one of the main purposes of the statutory plan-making process was to solicit the public views on the land use proposals in the OZP in accordance with the Ordinance, as applicable to the draft San Tin Technopole OZP. However, with regard to the promulgation of the 14th Five-Year Plan which supported the development of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) into an international I&T hub, there was concern on whether the implementation timeframe of the Technopole would be able to tie in with such plan. Noting that the Technopole including the Loop area, which was strategically located in close proximity to Shenzhen's I&T zone in Huanggang and Futian, would have considerable edge in developing strategic technology industries, two Members said that the positioning and vision of the Technopole were crucial, having regard to the successful development of different international I&T hubs in Silicon Valley, Boston, London, Taiwan and Suzhou. Some Members remarked that it was important to have a thorough understanding of the specific requirements and demands of I&T development in order to ensure that the land and supporting facilities in the Technopole would be able to cater for the needs of the I&T enterprises, thereby preventing it from becoming a property development project.

54. In response to some Members' enquiries on the positioning of the Technopole and whether the land reserved for 300 ha for the I&T development for the Technopole was sufficient in long run, Ms Vicky Cheung, PAS (ITI), ITIB and Mr K.W. Ng, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD made the following main points:

- (a) the 14th Five Year Plan supported the development of “eight centres” in Hong Kong, including the development as an international I&T hub. It had also indicated to proactively take forward the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao GBA, and to improve the ‘Two Corridors and Two Poles’ framework system which comprised the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong, Guangzhou-Zhuhai-Macao I&T Corridors and the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Loop, Guangdong-Macao-Henqin I&T Poles. The Technopole, which was located at the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Loop I&T Pole, would have important functions and roles to play;
- (b) following the release of NMDS in 2021, the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint was promulgated in 2022 to stipulate the directions for Hong Kong’s I&T development with the vision to develop Hong Kong into an international I&T hub, focus on the development of I&T industries such as life and health technology, artificial intelligence and data science, and advanced manufacturing, etc. and promote interactive development of the upstream, midstream and downstream sectors. Being in close proximity to Shenzhen’s I&T zone, the Technopole would become a hub for clustered I&T development, creating synergy with Shenzhen I&T zone;
- (c) a comprehensive I&T ecosystem consisted of various stages including upstream (R&D basic research), midstream (prototype, pilot trial and testing development) and downstream (production). Hong Kong had long been focusing on upstream R&D development. The Government invested an insurmountable amount of resources in supporting basic research in the universities. The midstream and downstream development had been relatively weak, but those stages were where the profits and patents mostly generated. The development of the Technopole would bring a timely opportunity to Hong Kong by providing a large piece of new land for I&T development, which could offer spaces for I&T firms and institutions to test-run their products in different scenario setting, thereby supporting prototype development. Indeed, due to the

shortage of land for I&T development in Hong Kong, quite a number of I&T firms had chosen to set up pilot and testing base in the Mainland (particularly Shenzhen), resulting in a barrier in developing a comprehensive I&T ecological chain in Hong Kong. That said, in tandem with the Loop, about 300 ha of I&T land (accommodating 7 million m² of GFA, equivalent to 17 Hong Kong Science Park) would be available at the Technopole now, which could help address the issue of lack of space for supporting the development of different I&T stages; and

- (d) the Area comprised mainly the I&T clusters and the STTC, which would provide diverse employment opportunities and various housing choices (including talent accommodation), as well as commercial uses, open space and community facilities and infrastructure with good accessibility to ensure the quality of life. All these would be conducive to the attraction of I&T talents in setting up operations. Taking Hong Kong Science Park as an example, the gradual completion of residential developments nearby had successfully transformed the area into a self-contained community bringing positive changes to the ambience which in turn also facilitated and promoted I&T development.

55. Some Members had the following questions:

- (a) the implementation timeframe of the Area;
- (b) whether there would be any research or consultation made with the targeted I&T enterprises/stakeholders in considering I&T use, demand and their land requirements etc., and which party and government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) would be responsible for the promotion of the I&T development and attracting the investment of the I&T enterprises for setting up operations at the Area; and
- (c) whether the Government had set aside any area within the proposed I&T hub for deployment by local university, which would create a conducive environment for collaboration and innovation as well as synergy to foster

a chain of I&T development from research to production stage.

56. In response, Ms Vicky Cheung, PAS (ITI), ITIB and Mr K.W. Ng, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD made the following main points:

- (a) the HSITP at the Loop as part of the Technopole was under construction and the first phase of buildings of the HSITP would be completed from the end of 2024 onwards. As for the development of the Area, the associated supporting infrastructure would be implemented in phases. Site formation and infrastructure works of the Area were planned to commence in end 2024 and the first batch of land for I&T use was targeted to be available in 2026/2027 the earliest for handing over to the implementation agent for development. The first population intake would start from 2031 and the targeted completion of the Area would be 2039. It was necessary to kick-start the statutory planning process in parallel to ensure timely supply of land for I&T developments, given the time required for going through other procedures in the development process;
- (b) ITIB had commenced a consultancy study on the formulation of a development plan for the planned I&T land in the Area with a view to recommending the specific I&T uses throughout the whole I&T value chain on different land parcels, taking into account market research and consultation with different stakeholders, including I&T enterprises. Within the I&T land, planning areas of various sizes, including some sizable ones, would be designed to provide flexibility to cater for the needs of I&T facilities of different scales and purposes. To ensure that the requisite infrastructure and supporting facilities could suitably meet the specific requirements of different I&T uses (e.g. sufficient electricity supply for data centre development) in various planning areas of the Area, ITIB would maintain close liaison with the study team of the STLMC Study and relevant B/Ds during the planning and design stages. There were different development modes of I&T hubs around the world. For example, Silicon Valley in San Jose and Kendall Square in Boston adopted a bottom-up development approach originated from clustering of I&T start-ups in an area, while the I&T Parks in the Mainland and Singapore

adopted a top-down approach which was mainly initiated by the Government by designating an area for I&T development. In the consultancy study, ITIB would look into different development modes and identify the suitable model that would best suit the needs and conditions of Hong Kong; and

- (c) universities and higher-education institutions in Hong Kong possessed strong R&D abilities, in particular in the field of life and health science. For further development, universities were encouraged to collaborate with I&T enterprises (e.g. pharmaceutical companies) to realise and transform their R&D outcomes. Nevertheless, such collaborations would require supply of sufficient space and the Technopole could meet such demand. According to the NMAA, the Government planned to reserve land in the Ngau Tam Mei area for post-secondary institutions, with a focus on scientific research, to complement the I&T development in the Technopole, promoting 'research, academic and industry' collaboration.

57. Some Members asked whether there was an overall planning vision for the development of the Area and the proposed SPS WCP into a leisure attraction and even a world-renowned destination with an enriched system of conservation, culture and technology. In response, Mr K.W. Ng, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD explained that the Area and the proposed SPS WCP would be planned comprehensively to strike a balance between development and conservation. While the detailed design of the proposed SPS WCP would be further studied by AFCD, the development of Area would be closely linked-up with the proposed SPS WCP through the provision of pedestrian footpaths/walkways and cycle tracks, and suitably incorporate urban design requirements and measures in a comprehensive manner. Moreover, various eco-education, eco-recreation and eco-tourism facilities would be provided in the proposed SPS WCP.

58. The Chairperson said that given the ever-changing I&T needs, the draft San Tin Technopole OZP had adopted flexible zonings allowing a wide range of uses in the I&T land whereas non-conventional land disposal means would also be considered later. The future land grant for I&T uses in the Area could leverage market forces to expedite the development process such as requiring the proponent to carry out I&T development as well as the relevant

site formation works.

59. Some Members raised the following questions:

- (a) the detailed development proposals of the I&T land planned in the draft San Tin Technopole OZP; and whether minimum GFA requirement(s) would be stipulated in the OZP for I&T related uses so as to ensure that the Technopole could proceed as intended/planned;
- (b) whether there would be area for other possible related businesses such as financial services in the I&T land;
- (c) whether the proposed relatively high BH bands in the I&T land were considered suitable for the I&T development, considering that overseas I&T developments were mostly of low-rise character;
- (d) given that the two separate I&T clusters were proposed in the northern and southern parts of the Area, how their accessibility and connectivity would be; and
- (e) noting that 6,400 talent accommodation units would be provided to support the proposed I&T development, what the assumptions/rationale for the demand for such accommodation were.

60. In response, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, Mr K.W. Ng, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD made the following main points:

- (a) the planned I&T land in the different planning areas would be of various sizes so as to provide flexibility for I&T facilities of different scales, fields and stages of the I&T value chain. In order to nurture a more comprehensive I&T ecosystem, a wide range of uses complementary to I&T development (e.g. ‘Educational Institution’, ‘Exhibition or Conventional Hall’, etc.) to provide business support, living support and other talent attractive uses would be always permitted under the “Other Specified Uses” annotated “Innovation and Technology” (“OU(I&T)”)

zone. While there was no maximum GFA/PR restriction for the zone stipulated under the Notes of the OZP, the Explanatory Statement of the OZP already stated that the total GFA for the I&T development in the Area would be about 5.7 million m², which was recommended under the STLMC Study taking into account the technical feasibility. The “OU(I&T)” zone in different planning areas would also be subject to development restrictions in terms of BH and NBAs with a view to providing greater flexibility for different I&T facilities and future users to be further identified at a later stage. As planning proceeded forward, detailed development control for individual planning areas/sites would be set out in the departmental Outline Development Plan (ODP) as appropriate, and stipulated in the relevant documents for allocation/disposal of sites;

- (b) the “OU(I&T)” zone and “Other Specified” annotated “Mixed Use” zone on the draft San Tin Technopole OZP would allow flexibility to cater for business operations other than I&T uses. Besides, in accordance with the NMAA, the Technopole was planned as an international I&T hub, while other services with development theme and industries positioning for high-end professional services and logistics hub could be located at the Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen New Development Area;
- (c) the proposed I&T land was designed to provide flexibility in land allocation for I&T developments of different scale, fields and stages of the I&T value chain. While the proposed BH bands set out the maximum limit for developments within the “OU(I&T)” zone, individual I&T firms could develop individual land parcels with their desirable BHs, as long as not exceeding the specified BH restrictions;
- (d) as the Area was dissected by San Tin Highway/Fanling Highway, underpasses and footbridges in addition to the existing ones were proposed to further strengthen the pedestrian connectivity between the northern and southern parts of the Area. Those facilities included a proposed landscaped deck for both pedestrians and cyclists spanning across San Tin

Highway on the west near the existing San Tin Interchange. Besides, a comprehensive pedestrian and cycle track network was planned to enable the residents to reach the GIC facilities for daily necessities, open space and major transport facilities within 15 minutes by walking or cycling, realising the '15-minute neighbourhood' concept; and

- (e) based on the research on the Mainland and overseas cases conducted by the consultants of STLMC Study, about 10% of the staff members was assumed to live in the talent accommodation units in close vicinity to the I&T developments. With an estimate of 120,000 I&T workers in the Area and a further assumption that each unit would on average accommodate 1.9 persons, a total of about 6,400 talent accommodation units would be required.

61. Two Members suggested that I&T buildings and/or land should be explored to be built underground below the wetlands or with piling atop of the wetlands under innovative methods.

Urban-rural Integration

62. Noting that the existing seven recognised villages (namely Tung Chun Wai, Yan Sau Wai, On Loong Tsuen, Wing Ping Tsuen, Fan Tin, San Loong Tsuen and Ching Loong Tsuen) (seven villages) were surrounded by the proposed high-rise development of I&T land to its north and STTC to its south, some Members asked whether it would resemble the "urban villages" in the cities of Mainland as a result of the rapid urbanisation in the past and how urban-rural integration could be better achieved. In response, Ms Pecvin P.W. Yong, DD/NMCO, DEVB made the following main points:

- (a) the Government all along maintained a close liaison with the STRC, including conducting site visits earlier to identify areas for improvement to enhance the living environment in the recognised villages in San Tin. The progress of follow-ups was reported at a subsequent meeting with STRC. In general, STRC welcomed the development proposal of the Area;

- (b) while the seven villages at the centre of the Area would be retained under the prevailing government policy, due consideration had been given to facilitating improvement of the living environment in formulating the development proposals for the Area. For example, the provision of sewerage system in association with the Area would allow convenient connection with that from the villages in future. With the proposed upgrading of the drainage infrastructure in the Area as a whole, the existing risk of flood to the villages would be greatly alleviated, in particular during extreme weather conditions. Transport connectivity of the seven villages would also be greatly enhanced by the proposed new railway stations in San Tin and near Chau Tau, the proposed NM Highway as well as the new footpath and cycling tracks. The comprehensively planned GIC facilities as well as open space would also bring benefits to the villages;
- (c) imposition of BH restrictions for the I&T land and the provision of breezeways between the villages and the surrounding wetlands and mountain backdrop could minimise visual and air ventilation impacts on the seven villages in San Tin; and
- (d) existing historic monuments in the seven villages would be preserved while the traditional characteristics of the villages would be promoted. For example, DEVB assisted in a video production of the re-opening of Man Ancestral Hall upon completion of its renovation in October 2023.

63. Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM(N), CEDD supplemented that most of the villagers indicated their support to the development proposal of the Area and urged for early implementation with a view to improving the local traffic, drainage and sewerage infrastructure. Mr K.W. Ng, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD said that with the development proposal of the Area in place, provision of infrastructure, GIC facilities and open space in San Tin would be significantly improved. Besides, it had been stipulated in the Notes of the “Village Type Development” (“V”) zone that ‘Eating Place’ and ‘Shop and Services’ were always permitted on the ground floor of New Territories Exempted Houses. Together with the I&T developments and a new community in the surroundings, there would be

opportunities to revitalise the existing villages and uplift their environment.

64. Some Members raised concerned that the proposed high-rise I&T development in the northwestern part of the Area would significantly block the air ventilation in the “V” zone, in particular the northwestern part of the “V” zone with adjacent heavily polluted rivers/streams/ponds and might pose a threat to the preservation of village characteristics, and suggested that more buffer area should be provided near the existing villages to enhance the visual relief. In response, Mr K.W. Ng, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD made the following points with the aid of some PowerPoint slides:

- (a) the photomontages presented at the meeting were for illustrative purpose only. The I&T development adjoining the villages would be of lower BHs with gradual ascending BHs of 15mPD/35mPD/75mPD from the boundary of proposed SPS WCP towards the seven villages in San Tin area. The BH restrictions and provision of breezeways and visual corridors connecting the “V” zone covering the seven villages, the wetlands covering the proposed SPS WCP to the north, and the mountainous areas to the south could minimise the visual and air ventilation impacts on the seven villages. Also, NBAs had been designated in the northern part of the Area to further enhance air ventilation and visual connection. Disposition and massing of the building blocks in the “OU(I&T)” zone would be further examined in the detailed design stage. A more detailed Visual Impact Assessment might be considered to investigate the possible visual impact of the I&T development on the nearby villages at the detailed design stage;
- (b) some areas surrounding the “V” zone covering the seven villages were zoned “Other Specified Uses” annotated “Amenity Area” to enhance the amenity value by landscaping and tree planting and to serve as buffers between the existing villages and new developments. Besides, the revitalisation of the San Tin Western Main Drainage Channel (STWMDC) incorporating planned open space would provide leisure and recreational space for the villagers, and could also serve as visual relief between existing villages and proposed high-rise developments; and

- (c) the “V” zone in San Tin area, which was intended for development of Small Houses by indigenous villagers, was located to the immediate south of the “OU(I&T)” zone. Due regard would be given to the interface issues between the existing villages and the neighbouring I&T developments, including the potential impact of the proposed I&T developments on the rivers/streams/ponds in the “V” zone. Liaison with villagers would be maintained to help improve the village environment.

65. Some Members raised the following questions:

- (a) in view of some public sentiments on the excessive area of “V” zone, a Member asked about the site area of the “Village Type Development (1)” (“V(1)”) zone and whether the area of “V(1)” zone was proportionate to the area of existing villages;
- (b) the number of village houses/building lots to be affected by the development proposal of the Area; and
- (c) noting that the existing ponds within the “V” zone would serve as retention ponds under San Tin Village Flood Protection Scheme, whether it would no longer be required upon implementation of proposed drainage improvement works for discharging stormwater.

66. In response, Mr K.W. Ng, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD made the following points:

- (a) currently, the area in the northwestern part of the “V” zone covering the seven villages in San Tin was mainly ponds, and might still be available for Small House development, subject to relevant planning approvals for filling of pond for development. An area of about 0.6 ha was proposed to be zoned “V(1)”, which was intended to provide land for the reprovisioning of the affected village houses/building lots under the Village Removal Terms due to the implementation of the government projects;

- (b) the exact number of affected village houses/building lots would be subject to the future freezing survey to be conducted by the Lands Department; and
- (c) only some ponds at the northwestern part of the “V” zone would need to be maintained to serve as retention ponds. Any filling of pond and excavation of land within “V” zone would require planning permission from the Board, as stipulated in the Notes of the draft San Tin Technopole OZP.

67. Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM(N), CEDD supplemented that the river near Yan Sau Wai would be converted into a box culvert.

68. Some Members enquired about the possibility of development of multi-storey Small Houses in the seven villages as a pilot scheme for the sake of better utilisation of land resources. A Member suggested that there should be a stock-taking of the available government land in the seven villages that could be used for such purpose. In response, the Chairperson said that the issue was extensively discussed in the community from time to time, and should be considered separately. According to the prevailing government policy, Small Houses were restricted to three storeys. Development of multi-storey Small Houses would pose additional demand on infrastructure provision. Other factors including views from the villagers should also be taken into account and considered holistically.

69. As a means to facilitate urban-rural integration, a Member suggested that the villagers from the seven villages in San Tin area could consider taking up the employment opportunities at I&T land.

Land Use Planning and Development Intensity

70. Noting that there were two clusters for I&T development, with one located in the northwestern part of the Area covering extensive land formed by filling of fishponds and the other located at the southeastern fringe of the Area covering relatively smaller land parcels, two Members enquired about the possibility of consolidating all I&T land in the

eastern part of the Area along the hillsides of Ki Lun Shan and Ngau Tam Shan with higher development intensity while minimising the need/extent of pond filling for creating land for the I&T development in the northwest near the seven villages; the possibility of swapping the residential sites in the east with some of the I&T land in the northwest; and the rationales of creating two separate I&T clusters in the northwestern and southeastern parts of the Area respectively.

71. In response, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, Mr K.W. Ng, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD made the following main points:

- (a) taking into account the site context of being located at a transitional area between the low-lying ponds to the north/northwest and the hilly and mountainous area of Ngau Tam Shan and Ki Lun Shan to the south/southeast, the overall planning framework was to provide lower density developments in the north of San Tin Highway/Fanling Highway and higher density developments in the south of San Tin Highway/Fanling Highway. Besides, a stepped BH profile gradually ascending from the low-lying areas in the north and northwest to the hillside area in the south and southeast would be adopted. Hence, I&T development of a lower density was proposed in the north of the Area while residential development of a higher density was proposed in the south of the Area. Lower-density I&T development was also considered more compatible with the adjoining proposed SPS WCP;
- (b) the proposed I&T development in the northwest of the Area, together with the adjoining HSITP under construction at the Loop and the I&T zone in Shenzhen, could create synergy effect. The proposed I&T development would be served by two cross-boundary rail links, namely the existing LMC Spur Line with LMC Station, and the proposed NOL Spur Line connecting to the future new Huanggang Port, with two proposed railway stations near Chau Tau within the Area and at the HSITP at the Loop; and

- (c) the large “OU(I&T)” zone in the northwest of the Area was designed for campus-like I&T development of lower density. It would provide land parcels of different sizes and BH restrictions to meet the needs of I&T facilities and uses of varying scales and purposes. The “OU(I&T)” and the “Other Specified Uses” annotated “Logistics, Storage and Workshop (1)” (“OU(LSW(1))”) zones at the southeastern fringe of the Area were intended for accommodating advanced manufacturing industries supporting I&T development and for logistics, storage and workshop uses respectively since the concerned sites were less environmentally sensitive and would be connected to the future NM Highway.

72. A Member said that high-rise development clusters with maximum BHs of 200mPD were proposed for the mixed-use developments near the two proposed railway stations in STTC and near Chau Tau in order to allow for the development of landmark buildings. Such BH was considered relatively conservative. Ki Lun Shan and Ngau Tam Shan were the major mountain backdrops of the Area with heights of more than 200 metres and 300 metres respectively. Taking into account the heights of the said mountains and with a view to maximising development potential of land parcels while minimising the need/extent of pond filling, due consideration should be given to increasing the BHs of some land parcels. In response, Mr K.W. Ng, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD said that Member’s comments on increasing BHs would be taken into account in the detailed design stage.

73. Some Members had the following comments and questions:

- (a) noting that a few residential sites were proposed in the east which would be physically segregated from the major residential cluster in the southwest, the rationales of creating two separate community neighbourhoods, the possibility of consolidating all residential sites in the southwest, and the connectivity between the two community neighbourhoods;
- (b) noting that an effluent polishing plant and food waste pre-treatment facilities were proposed to be located at the southern side of Shek Wu

Wai Road and San Tin Highway, the rationales of locating those back-of-house facilities in such a prime location and the possibility of swopping those facilities with the “OU(LSW(1))” site located at the southeastern fringe of the Area near the mountain slopes or the few residential sites located in the east of the Area; and

- (c) some land parcels were elongated and irregular in shape, making them functionally not viable. For example, the middle section of STWMDC seemed encroaching onto the adjoining “Residential (Group A)1” (“R(A)1”) zone and insufficient space was allowed on both sides of the drainage channel for the development of riverside public open space. Land parcels should be in appropriate sizes and configurations to achieve efficient use of the sites.

74. In response, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, Mr K.W. Ng, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD made the following main points:

- (a) the two community neighbourhoods were located in proximity to two proposed railway stations, i.e. the proposed San Tin Station of the NOL Main Line in the southwest and the proposed railway station near Chau Tau of the NOL Spur Line in the east. Encompassing the proposed San Tin Station, the community neighbourhood in the southwest was characterised by a mixed-use development, which was surrounded by private/public housing sites and GIC facilities, and the proposed developments would be knitted together by a network of open space. The community neighbourhood in the east was located along San Tin East Main Drainage Channel (STEMDC). It mainly comprised residential sites for private/public housing and GIC facilities. The STEMDC would be revitalised and integrated with open space/landscape deck leading to the proposed railway station near Chau Tau. Besides, a landmark cultural and community complex in the central part of the Area was proposed for accommodating a major performing arts venue, a major museum, a major library, a swimming pool complex and flexible public/event spaces, serving both community

neighbourhoods and the I&T clusters. The design of the cultural and community complex would be integrated with the planned open space, thereby enhancing connectivity between the two community neighbourhoods;

- (b) as regards the location of the effluent polishing plant, having considered that the Mai Po Lung Village Egretty was located within an “Open Space” (“O”) zone to its north across San Tin Highway, the areas surrounding the said egretty were planned with due care for passive uses to avoid causing excessive disturbance to the egretty. In that connection, a site for district cooling system zoned “Government, Institution or Community” (“G/IC”) was proposed to the immediate south of the “O” zone and the effluent polishing plant was proposed to further south across San Tin Highway. High-rise and high-density residential development was therefore considered not appropriate in that locality; and
- (c) in the planning of the Area, due regard had been given to demarcating different land use zones in various planning areas in appropriate sizes and configurations to achieve land use efficiency. It was clarified that the STWMDC was zoned “O” and the middle section of the drainage channel would be decked-over to form an integral part of the open space network. Sufficient space would be allowed on both sides of the drainage channel for the development of open space.

75. With regard to the location of the effluent polishing plant, Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM(N), CEDD supplemented that consideration had been given to locating the plant at the southeastern fringe of the Area near the mountain slopes. However, if the plant was located there, it was necessary to pump the sewage collected in the area uphill for further processing, which would not be energy-efficient from engineering perspective.

76. Given that a total maximum plot ratio (PR) of 6.8 and 6.5 was proposed for the “R(A)1” and the “Residential (Group A)2” (“R(A)2”) zones respectively, a Member asked whether flexibility would be allowed in terms of the maximum domestic PR for those

developments. In response, Mr K.W. Ng, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD said that a departmental ODP would be prepared to set out the planning and urban design requirements for each planning area, including those for the “R(A)1” and “R(A)2” sites. In order to provide flexibility over the control on these sites, the split of maximum domestic and non-domestic PR for each residential sites would be stated in the departmental ODP.

77. Noting that various areas were zoned “Other Specified Uses” (“OU”) on the OZPs, a Member asked whether the Notes of the OZP could set out clearly the specific uses or conservation purposes. In response, Mr K.W. Ng, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD said that in the concerned OZPs, annotations were marked for various “OU” zones, including WCP, I&T uses, cultural and community uses with supporting uses and facilities, railway facilities, etc. The Notes of the OZP also specified the permitted uses for the “OU” zones.

Smart, Green and Resilient Infrastructure

78. A Member asked how the Smart City concept would be adopted in the Area. In response, Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM, CEDD said that the Area would be a smart, green, resilient (SGR) exemplar and various SGR initiatives were proposed as follows:

- (a) as regards ‘smart’ initiatives, sufficient road space would be reserved to provide flexibility for placing necessary smart facilities in future to cope with any design changes;
- (b) with regard to ‘green’ initiatives, green transport modes and green fuel stations would be provided and blue-green network would also be created. The blue-green concept included river/drainage channel revitalisation, maximising greenery and optimising the use of land resources through “Single Site, Multiple Use”, etc. For example, for river/drainage channel revitalisation projects, in addition to upgrading drainage capacity, greening, water landscape and recreational elements would be incorporated into the projects with a view to creating attractive public leisure spaces for all ages and all walks of life; and

- (c) concerning 'resilient' initiatives, a sustainable urban drainage system to improve drainage management and enhance resilience to extreme climate and sea level rise would be provided. Two main drainage channels would be revitalised and flood retention facilities with the storage capacity of about 200,000 m³ would be provided. The existing drainage system in the rural areas could only withstand heavy rainstorm of up to 50 years return period while the proposed flood retention facilities in the Area would have sufficient capacity to withstand heavy rainstorm of up to 200 years return period. Reference had been made to 'Drainage Services Department Practice Note No. 2/2022: Guidelines on Application of Floodable Area and Drainage Facility Co-Use in Drainage Management' when designing the flood retention facilities.

79. Regarding the '15-minute neighborhood' concept, a Member proposed that abundant bicycle parking facilities should be provided near major destinations of cyclists, including open space. With reference to the provision of such facilities in a commercial development in Kai Tak, the Member was of the view that such facilities were not common in private developments and enquired about the means to facilitate the provision of bicycle parking facilities in private developments. Mr Tony Cheung, PM(N), CEDD said that a well-planned cycling track would be provided within the Area with bicycle parking spaces in various locations adjoining the cycling tracks. Requirements for provision of bicycling parking spaces would be incorporated in the future land grants in order to promote such provision in private developments.

80. In response to a Member's question on whether the use of electric mobility devices (EMD) would be allowed in the Area, Mr K.W. Ng, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD said that the Transport Department had been conducting studies on EMD, including a recent pilot trial at the section of cycle paths adjoining the Hong Kong Science Park. In the Area, adequate space had been reserved in the planned cycle tracks to cater for the potential use of EMD in the future, subject to relevant regulatory requirements and detailed design.

81. By quoting successful examples in the Europe and the GBA, a Member proposed that a centralised, district-wide underground waste recycling facility could be provided

although it might have cost implication and hinge on outcomes of other studies. Such facility could better utilise underground space, avoid piecemeal provision of waste recycling facilities in various locations and release sites reserved for at-grade refuse collection points to other uses.

82. A Member considered that district cooling system and district waste management should be adopted in the development proposal of the Area. While facilities for waste management would be provided at dedicated sites, the Member suggested that such facilities should be widely available at building-level rather than district-level.

83. In response, Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM(N), CEDD made the following main points:

- (a) a site of 3 ha had been reserved for refuse transfer station and resource recovery facilities in the Area to the south of Fanling Highway while various sites in the Area had been reserved for refuse collection points;
- (b) six sites had been earmarked for district cooling systems; and
- (c) the possibility of underground facilities and district waste management facilities could be explored at the detailed design stage.

Provision of GIC Facilities

84. A Member considered that in view of the shortfall of provision of GIC facilities in the existing urban area, the scale of the proposed developments, the anticipated aging population and increasing population, sufficient GIC facilities should be planned in the proposed developments in accordance with the planned population and relevant requirements of Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG), in particular for health-care related facilities, and relevant B/Ds should take a proactive role to ensure sufficient provision of GIC facilities. Noting that a balanced, vibrant and liveable community was one of the major planning themes/objectives for the Technopole and a '15-minute neighbourhood' concept would be adopted to achieve such objective, a Member envisaged that GIC facilities, in particular kindergartens, child care and elderly facilities,

should be located within 15-minute walking/travelling distance from the home places of children/elderly, and particular attention would be drawn to the design of barrier-free and pedestrian-friendly routes to/from those GIC facilities. Population characteristics should be duly taken into account in the planning of GIC and other facilities, for example, the families living in the proposed about 6,400 talent accommodation units might demand for international kindergarten/school places rather than local kindergarten/school places. With a view to attracting talents to Hong Kong, special needs for those families on educational and other facilities should not be neglected.

85. Two Members had the following questions:

- (a) the total population of the Area;
- (b) the reason of reliance on surplus in other districts to make up for the shortfall of some facilities (e.g. how the deficits in kindergarten/nursery for the Area would be met by the surplus provision in Yuen Long District, and details of the provision of kindergartens in the Area); and
- (c) the concept of '15-minute neighbourhood'.

86. In response, Mr K.W. Ng, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD made the following main points:

- (a) the existing population in the seven villages in San Tin area and Shek Wu Wai was about 5,200. The total planned population of the draft San Tin Technopole OZP was 165,600;
- (b) B/Ds had been consulted on the proposed use(s) for each "G/IC" site in the course of designating any "G/IC" site during the stage of planning study. While there would be slight shortfall in provision of some GIC facilities, there were eight government reserve sites within the draft San Tin Technopole OZP, which could be used for provision of GIC facilities, especially those with shortfall, subject to B/Ds' requirement and confirmation at a later stage. In addition, about 5% of domestic GFA of future public housing developments in the Area would be set aside for

provision of social welfare facilities in accordance with prevailing policy and practice. As for the provision of hospital beds, the Health Bureau adopted a wider spatial context/cluster in the assessment of provision, which differed from the assessment based on HKPSG. As for the provision of kindergarten/nursery, based on the planned population of about 165,600 and the HKPSG requirement, there would be a demand for 90 classrooms and the planned provision (including the existing provision) would be about 86 classrooms. Generally speaking, kindergartens in Hong Kong were privately-run and they varied a lot in their scale of operation and the number of classrooms. Some were premises-based like those in shopping centres and public/private housing developments and some were integrated with primary/secondary schools. Member's comments on the need of taking into account population characteristics (such as the special needs of expat families) in the planning of GIC and other facilities were noted; and

- (c) under the '15-minute neighbourhood' concept, it was anticipated that the future population could reach their daily necessities from their home places within 15 minutes by walking or cycling. To realise the concept, the siting of GIC and commercial/retail facilities, open space and transport facilities had taken due consideration to the locations of the residential developments and population clusters. Besides, barrier-free, pedestrian-friendly and bicycle-friendly street environment would be created in the Area.

Traffic and Transport

87. A Member had the following questions and comments:

- (a) having noted that San Tin Interchange to/from Huanggang Port had already been congested, whether existing and planned traffic capacity of major junctions/road links had been assessed and whether there was sufficient reserve capacity for major junctions/road links; and

- (b) details of the traffic planning for the Area.

88. In response, with the aid of a PowerPoint slide, Mr K.W. Ng, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD made the following main points:

- (a) San Tin Interchange would be improved to increase its traffic capacity; and
- (b) internal and cross-boundary traffic would be conveyed on different roads with sufficient planned capacities. For example, the at-grade section of San Sam Road would convey internal traffic in the Area while an elevated section of San Sam Road would mainly serve the cross-boundary traffic from/to the new Huanggang Port in Shenzhen after redevelopment.

89. With the aid of a PowerPoint slide, Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM(N), CEDD and Mr Martin M.T. Law, the consultant's representative, supplemented the following main points:

- (a) a Traffic and Transport Impact Assessment (TTIA) had been conducted to assess the traffic condition of the Area taking into account the assumed development parameters of population and employment, the capacity of the existing and planned transport infrastructure, etc. The results of the TTIA indicated that, with the implementation of planned transport infrastructure and improvement to some existing junctions/roads, there would be no insurmountable traffic problem arising from the development of the Area;
- (b) San Tin Interchange and Shek Wu Wai Interchange were two key interchanges at the east and west of the Area respectively. While existing slip roads for San Tin Interchange would be improved, new slip roads for Shek Wu Wai Interchange were proposed to link with San Tin Highway. It was anticipated that the two interchanges could perform

traffic diversion at the east and west of the Area. In addition, with the implementation of NM Highway, a new interchange near Pang Loon Tei which was located in the southeast of the Area would be provided to further enhance the connection with other parts of the New Territories North;

- (c) as mentioned by DPO/FSYLE, PlanD, an elevated section of San Sham Road was proposed to convey cross-boundary traffic directly from San Tin Interchange to Shenzhen via Huanggang Port while the Road D6 underneath the elevated San Sham Road would be aligned to help convey local traffic in the Area. Regarding cross-boundary traffic, with the future implementation of the “East-in East-out, West-in West-out” cross-boundary strategy, it was anticipated that cross-boundary traffic would mainly use Liantang Port/Heung Yuen Wai Control Point and Shenzhen Bay Port while Lok Ma Chau Boundary Control Point/new Huanggang Port would carry much less cross-boundary goods vehicles traffic; and
- (d) according to the findings of the TTIA, with the implementation of planned transport infrastructure and road improvement measures and having taken into account the full population and employment intake in 2039, it was estimated that major junctions generally had a reserve capacity of about 15% or design flow over capacity of about 0.85 in the year of post-2046.

Relocation of Existing Brownfield Operations

90. Noting that multi-storey buildings (MSBs) would be provided for logistics use, a Member asked for the details of existing brownfield operations. In response, Mr K.W. Ng, DPO/FSYLE, PlanD made the following main points:

- (a) existing brownfield operations mainly included logistics uses, port back-up uses, vehicle-repair workshops and vehicle parking spaces. A total of 126 ha of existing brownfield sites were estimated to be affected by the

development proposal of the Area, with 72 ha of land to be resumed under Phase 1 while 54 ha under Phase 2. Existing brownfield operators were consulted under the STLMC Study, who generally supported the relocation to MSBs. Details on the existing brownfield operations and their willingness of relocation to MSB would be further investigated during land resumption stage; and

- (b) a total of 16 ha of land was zoned “OU(LSW)”, subject to PR restrictions of 2 and 5 at different planning areas accordingly. Part of the reserved land might be used for open-air uses instead of development of MSBs.

TPB PG-No. 12C

91. A Member expressed a dire concern on the loss of wetlands in the Deep Bay Area due to the development over the past few decades, which would cause a significant impact on birds relying on these habitats for breeding, feeding and resting, and enquired about the trend of the number of migratory birds over the past 20 years. In response, Mr Simon K.F. Chan, AD(C), AFCD said that in the past 30 years, the area of intertidal mudflat decreased due to expansion of mangroves. The area of fishponds outside the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site was once dwindled during 1980s and 2000s, and then became more or less stable. The number of overwintering waterbirds fluctuated from year to year as there were various reasons affecting the number of birds but no noticeable trend of decrease was noted.

92. In response to a Member’s enquiry on the estimation of the total loss of wetlands including those as demarcated under the TPB PG-No. 12C due to the proposed development (including those initiated by private project proponents) of the Area and NM, the Chairperson explained that according to the NMDS and NMAA, the development proposals in NM mainly covered four major zones from west to east including ‘High-end Professional Services and Logistics Hub’, ‘I&T Zone’, ‘Boundary Commerce and Industry Zone’ and ‘Blue and Green Recreation, Tourism and Conservation Zone’. Amongst those zones, apart from the Technopole under the ‘I&T Zone’, only portion of the Tsim Bei Tsui which was included in the ‘High-end Professional Services and Logistic Hub’ according to the NMAA, would fall within the Wetland Conservation Area (WCA) under the TPB PG-No. 12C.

However, that particular area at Tsim Bei Tsui within the WCA would not be affected and would remain intact.

93. Regarding the proposed consequential amendment to the TPB PG-No. 12C (i.e. excising 247 ha of area from the WCA and the wetland buffer area (WBA)), a Member asked whether the implementation of development proposal of the Area would be affected if the decision from the Board regarding proposed amendment to the TPB PG-No.12C would not be made at the meeting. In response, the Chairperson explained that the prime consideration for the Board was whether the draft San Tin Technopole OZP and the proposed amendments to the approved Ngau Tam Mei OZP and approved Mai Po and Fairview Park OZP, which were supported by various technical assessments including an EIA, could be agreed and were suitable for exhibition for public consultation; and the amendment to the TPB PG-No. 12C was only consequential changes to reflect the revised WBA/WCA boundary as a result of the formulation of the draft San Tin Technopole OZP.

94. Noting that the green groups had raised concerns on the proposed consequential amendment to the TPB PG-No. 12C, a Member asked if there was any chance to listen to views of green groups before making a decision on the said guidelines. The Chairperson said that Members could express views and decide the way forward at this meeting.

[The question and answer (Q&A) session was adjourned for a short break from 11:00 a.m. to 11:20 a.m., lunch break from 1:00 p.m. to 2:15 p.m., and a short break and consideration of Agenda Item 6 from 5:25 p.m. to 6 p.m.]

[Professor Roger C.K. Chan, Dr Conrad T.C. Wong, Dr Venus Y.H. Lun, Messrs Wilson Y.W. Fung, K.W. Leung, Stephen L.H. Liu and Ricky W.Y. Yu left the meeting, Messrs Lincoln L.H. Huang, Andrew C.W. Lai and Paul Y.K. Au left the meeting temporarily and rejoined the meeting, and Mrs Vivian K.F. Cheung joined and left the meeting during the Q&A session.]

Deliberation Session

95. As Members had no further question to raise, the Chairperson said that the Board

would proceed to the deliberation which would continue to be conducted at an open meeting. She summarised the major views expressed by Members in the Q&A session as follows:

- (a) in general, reservation of land in the Area for I&T development of significant scale was supported;
- (b) the planning concept/layout with I&T development in the north and STTC in the south was generally considered acceptable;
- (c) while efforts had been made to minimise the impacts on fishponds, some fishponds would unavoidably be affected in order to achieve certain scale of I&T development;
- (d) there was no in-principle objection to the proposed SPS WCP and wetland compensation. Noting that AFCD was still undertaking the WCPs Study, Members were concerned about the Government's explanation to the public on the details of the proposed SPS WCP, including how the future operation of the proposed SPS WCP could achieve the no-net-loss of the wetland functions and how the proposed SPS WCP would be properly monitored. In addition, it might be a challenge to implement the proposed SPS WCP on the private land under PPP. Should the EIA Report of the STLMC Study be approved, it was strongly recommended that relevant conditions be imposed, requiring CEDD as the project proponent to seek Director of Environmental Protection (DEP)'s endorsement of the details of the proposal, e.g. the detailed measures for the wetland enhancement, management and monitoring for the proposed SPS WCP;
- (e) the planning along STWMDC should be improved to achieve better urban-rural integration; and
- (f) other suggestions on such aspects as smart city and urban design (including creation of landmark) in the Area, were well noted and would be further

examined during the detailed design stage.

96. The Chairperson then invited views from Members.

97. The Secretary reported that some Members who left the meeting had requested him to relay their support to the broad directions and proposals of the OZPs as well as the exhibition of the OZPs for public consultation in accordance with the Ordinance. Their major views were as follows:

- (a) the proposal to reserve extensive land for I&T development at the Area was supported;
- (b) the consultancy team had provided in-depth assessments and clarifications to support the development proposal of the Area. That said, further proposed amendments to the OZPs, if considered necessary, could be made after consideration of the representations on the OZPs;
- (c) it might be premature to amend the TPB PG-No. 12C at this juncture as more consultation should be conducted to gauge views from the green groups; and
- (d) as a general issue, better utilisation of land within the villages should be further studied when opportunity arose.

98. Two Members expressed their objections to the exhibition of the OZPs mainly for the following reasons:

Impacts on Fishponds

- (a) fishponds should not be filled lightly at the age of climate change. It was not acceptable for Hong Kong as a world metropolitan city to fill up the concerned area of fishponds;
- (b) the Government's information and explanations on how to achieve the no-

net-loss of ecological function of the wetlands concerned were inadequate at the current stage;

Resources and Management of Proposed SPS WCP

- (c) while achieving no-net-loss of the ecological function of the Area was technically feasible based on some assumptions and calculation, the availability of resources to support the future operation was crucial to the success of wetland compensation. The amount of resources required for the proposed SPS WCP could be estimated based on the operation data of LMC EEA, but there was no estimation so far. Noting that many AFCD projects and operations were underfunded, a loss of about 90 ha of wetlands in exchange for the proposed SPS WCP without sufficient information on the amount of resources to be committed was not acceptable. In that regard, the Government should commit the necessary funding and long-term resources for the compensation measures;
- (d) the Government should clearly explain how the proposed SPS WCP would be managed to achieve the no-net-loss of the ecological function in the long term. Reference might be made to the LMC EEA to set up a management committee for the proposed SPS WCP with the composition of members from the project proponent, consultants, green groups, academics, etc. The Government should commit itself to establishing such management and monitoring mechanism at an early stage to address the concerns of the public and green groups; and

Public Views

- (e) while there was urgency to implement the development proposal of the Area, it would be disappointing if public views were not heeded and no amendment was made to the OZPs. That would not be conducive to promoting a harmonious society in Hong Kong.

99. A Member asked whether the OZPs could be amended after the exhibition for

public inspection. In response, the Secretary said that the Board could propose amendments to the OZPs under section 6B(8) of the Ordinance after considering the representations in respect of the OZPs. The Member then confirmed his support to the exhibition of the OZPs but added that the current OZPs under consideration should not be taken as final and further amendments to the OZPs, if deemed necessary after consideration of representations, could be proceeded with at a later stage.

100. The Vice-chairperson and other Members expressed their support to the exhibition of the OZPs and had the following observations/suggestions:

I&T Development

- (a) I&T development in the Area was generally supported and there was an imminent need for its implementation having considered the national development and the Hong Kong's economy;
- (b) while the land in the Area was not planned for mass industrial manufacturing and production at this stage, more information about justifications for the considerable size of I&T land and floor space to meet the demand from the I&T uses should be provided;
- (c) I&T development was not necessarily campus-like, especially in Hong Kong where the land resources were scarce and high-rise developments were common. If the higher PR of the I&T sites and taller buildings to accommodate the I&T uses were allowed, it might be possible to reduce the land reserved for I&T development and thus the impacts on the existing fishponds and villagers in the Technopole could be minimised;

Urban-rural Integration

- (d) given that the existing seven villages in the San Tin area would be surrounded by the future development as planned in the draft San Tin Technopole OZP, more effort should be made to achieve better urban-rural integration;

- (e) due respect should be given to the local and historical context of the Area in the course of preparing the OZPs so as to showcase Hong Kong's edge being the precious cultural resources of the Area, e.g. Tai Fu Tai;

Ecological Considerations

- (f) more information should be provided on the ecological value of the fishponds to be filled in the Area;
- (g) more concrete and convincing information should be provided to demonstrate no-net-loss of the ecological functions of the Area;
- (h) the Government should explain clearly how much resources would be committed for the implementation and maintenance of the proposed SPS WCP and details on the management of the proposed SPS WCP;

Others

- (i) there was room to improve the development proposals for the Area and the OZPs. To prepare for the representation hearing at the next stage, the Government should be ready to provide more information and proposals in respect of the land requirement for I&T uses, spatial planning, reducing the impacts on the fishponds and villages, details of the active conservation measures to achieve no-net-loss of the ecological function and capacity, resources commitment for the proposed SPS WCP and its management, monitoring etc. Such information would help strike a better balance between conservation and development and also demonstrate to the public that the Government had made its best efforts to achieve a balanced development;
- (j) prior to the representation hearing, the Government should provide more elaboration with the support of illustrations, plans or figures on the proposals of the OZPs to the public and green groups to enhance their

understanding of the project. This would help alleviate the public concerns and thus obviate the submission of representations objecting to the OZPs; and

- (k) separately, noting that a certain amount of private land, including fishponds, in the New Territories, was owned by developers, it should be more cautious for the Board to consider planning applications for private developments involving filling of fishponds of high ecological value with argument of adopting of similar approach to compensate for the loss of habitats.

101. Taking note of Members' views, the Chairperson concluded that while two Members objected to the OZPs, the majority of Members indicated their support. She had the following responses:

- (a) the development proposal for the Area and the OZPs were prepared based on the findings of the STLMC Study and the WCP Study. Careful considerations had been given to minimising the impacts on the fishponds and wetlands while meeting the need to provide more I&T land for the future development of Hong Kong. According to the STLMC Study and having regard to the requirements of ITIB, it might be difficult to further reduce the land reserved for I&T uses; and
- (b) clear and detailed elaboration on the implementation of proposed SPS WCP, including its management and a monitoring mechanism to achieve no-net-loss in ecological function, should be provided to the public. If possible, the implementation details of the proposed SPS WCP should be formulated at an early stage to address the public concerns with a view to facilitating a smooth implementation of the Technopole.

TPB PG-No. 12C

102. In response to a Member's enquiry on whether it was necessary to amend TPB PG-No. 12C if the OZPs were approved, the Chairperson said that the amendments would help avoid ambiguity as the development sites of the Area would overlap with the WCA and

WBA. The proposed consequential amendment to the TPB PG-No.12C would not cause any unacceptable environmental impacts because an EIA report had already been prepared for the development proposal of the Area with various mitigation measures proposed based on the no-net-loss principle in terms of ecological function and capacity. If the EIA Report of the STLMC Study was approved by the DEP, the environmental impact of the proposed development should have already been properly dealt with (e.g. implementation of proposed SPS WCP) and there would be no-net-loss of ecological function and capacity. There might be some misunderstanding that the consequential amendment was to pave way for the development proposal of the Area to breach the no-net-loss principle stipulated in the TPB PG-No. 12C. In that regard, the Government would be willing to provide more information to the green groups for addressing their concerns.

103. After taking into account Members' views, the Chairperson concluded that it was not appropriate to consider the consequential amendment to the TPB PG-No. 12C in this meeting for the following reasons:

- (a) given the complexity of and concerns on the matters, it would be prudent for the Board not to handle the consequential amendment to the TPB PG-No. 12C in the meeting;
- (b) as revealed in the letter of the green groups tabled by the Secretariat, those green groups had misunderstandings of the Government's intention in proposing the consequential amendment. Further liaison with the green groups, as suggested by Members, aimed at elucidating the Government's considerations would be carried out before proceeding with the proposed amendment; and
- (c) it was considered more prudent to consider the proposed amendment to the TPB PG-No 12C upon completion of the statutory procedures for the concerned OZPs, which would not have implication on the implementation programme of the development proposal of the Area. On the contrary, it would allow more time for the Government to explain to the green groups the rationale behind the proposed amendment.

104. After deliberation, the Town Planning Board (the Board) decided to:

Agenda Item 3 – San Tin Technopole Outline Zoning Plan

- (a) agree that the draft San Tin Technopole Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/STT/C at Appendix A of TPB Paper No. 10954 (to be renumbered as S/STT/1 upon exhibition) and its Notes at Appendix B of TPB Paper No. 10954 were suitable for exhibition for public inspection under section 5 of the Town Planning Ordinance (the Ordinance);
- (b) adopt the Explanatory Statement (ES) for the draft San Tin Technopole OZP No. S/STT/C at Appendix C of TPB Paper No. 10954 (to be renumbered as S/STT/1 upon exhibition) as an expression of the planning intentions and objectives of the Board for various land use zonings on the OZP; and agree that the ES was suitable for exhibition for public inspection together with the draft OZP and issued under the name of the Board;

Agenda Item 4 – Ngau Tam Mei Outline Zoning Plan and Mai Po and Fairview Park Outline Zoning Plan

- (c) agree to the proposed amendments to the approved Ngau Tam Mei OZP and that the draft Ngau Tam Mei OZP No. S/YL-NTM/12A at Attachment III of TPB Paper No. 10955 (to be renumbered as S/YL-NTM/13 upon exhibition) and its Notes at Attachment V of TPB Paper No. 10955, as well as the proposed amendments to the approved Mai Po and Fairview Park OZP and that the draft Mai Po and Fairview Park OZP No. S/YL-MP/6A at Attachment IV of TPB Paper No. 10955 (to be renumbered as S/YL-MP/7 upon exhibition) and its Notes at Attachment VII of TPB Paper No. 10955, were suitable for exhibition for public inspection under section 5 of the Ordinance; and

- (d) adopt the revised ES for the draft Ngau Tam Mei OZP No. S/YL-NTM/12A at Attachment VI of TPB Paper No. 10955 (to be renumbered as S/YL-NTM/13 upon exhibition) and that for the draft Mai Po and Fairview Park OZP No. S/YL-MP/6A at Attachment VIII of TPB Paper No. 10955 (to be renumbered as S/YL-MP/7 upon exhibition) as an expression of the planning intentions and objectives of the Board for various land use zones on the OZPs; and agree that the revised ESs were suitable for exhibition for public inspection together with the OZPs.

105. Members noted that, as a general practice, the Secretariat of the Board would undertake detailed checking and refinement of the draft OZPs including the Notes and ES, if appropriate, before their publication under the Ordinance. Any major revision would be submitted for the Board's consideration.

106. The Board also agreed to defer the consideration of the proposed consequential amendment to the TPB Guidelines No.12C as mentioned in paragraph 14 of TPB Paper No. 10954 pending completion of the statutory planning procedures of the concerned OZPs.

107. The Chairperson suggested and Members agreed that a press release to inform the public of the Board's decisions and major considerations would be issued after the meeting.

108. As the consideration of the OZPs was completed, the Chairperson thanked the government representatives and the consultants' representatives for attending the meeting. They left the meeting at this point.

[Dr C.H. Hau, Ms Sandy H.Y. Wong, Ms Lilian S.K. Law, Messrs Lincoln L.H. Huang, Franklin Yu, Timothy K.W. Ma, Paul Y.K. Au and Andrew C.W. Lai left the meeting during deliberation.]

[Post-meeting Note: An amendment to paragraph (11)(b) of the covering Notes of the proposed draft Mai Po and Fairview Park OZP regarding retaining the prohibition of temporary uses for open storage and port back-up purposes in the "OU(WCP)" zone (shaded in grey) at **Annex** was agreed by Members on 4.3.2024 by circulation.]

109. The following Members and the Secretary were present for Agenda Item 6:

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 Franklin Yu

Mr Daniel K.S. Lau

Ms Lilian S.K. Law

Professor John C.Y. Ng

Professor Jonathan W.C. Wong

Mrs Vivian K.F. Cheung

Mr Vincent K.Y. Ho

Mr Timothy K.W. Ma

Professor Bernadette W.S. Tsui

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

Chief Traffic Engineer/New Territories West
Transport Department
Ms Carrie K.Y. Leung

Chief Engineer (Works)
Home Affairs Department
Mr Paul Y.K. Au

Director of Lands
Mr Andrew C.W. Lai

Director of Planning
Mr Ivan M.K. Chung

Sai Kung and Islands

Agenda Item 6

[Open Meeting (Presentation and Question Sessions only)]

Review of Application No. A/SK-PK/282

Proposed House (New Territories Exempted House – Small House) in “Recreation” Zone,
Lot 307 in D.D. 221, Sha Kok Mei, Sai Kung

(TPB Paper No. 10958)

[The item was conducted in Cantonese.]

Presentation and Question Sessions

110. The following representatives of the Planning Department (PlanD), the applicant and the applicant’s representatives were invited to the meeting at this point:

PlanD

Mr Walter W.N. Kwong	- District Planning Officer/Sai Kung and Islands (DPO/SKIs)
Ms Vicky L.K. Ma	- Town Planner/Sai Kung and Islands (TP/SKIs)

Applicant and his representatives

Mr Wong Sing Chun, Andy	- Applicant
Mr Wong Yat Keung]
Mr Lok Wai Man]
Mr Yip Chak Yu] Applicant’s Representatives
Mr Lam Tsz Kwai]

Ms Lok King Ha

]

111. The Chairperson extended a welcome and tendered an apology for the overrun in the meeting schedule and that the applicant and his representatives had to wait for a long time. The Chairperson then explained the procedures of the review hearing and invited PlanD's representatives to brief Members on the review application.

112. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Ms Vicky L.K. Ma, TP/SKIs, PlanD briefed Members on the background of the review application, including the application site (the Site) and the surrounding areas, the applicant's proposal and justifications, the consideration of the application by the Rural and New Town Planning Committee (RNTPC) of the Town Planning Board (the Board), departmental and public comments, and the planning considerations and assessments as detailed in TPB Paper No. 10958 (the Paper). PlanD maintained its previous view of not supporting the application.

113. The Chairperson invited the applicant and his representatives to elaborate on the review application.

114. Mr Wong Yat Keung, the applicant's representative, made the following main points:

- (a) he was the father of the applicant, Mr Wong Sing Chun, who was mildly intellectually disabled; and
- (b) he and his wife were in old ages and they would like to assist his son to apply for planning permission to build a Small House (SH) at the Site. The proposed SH would allow his son to have a stable and comfortable place for living in future.

115. With the aid of a visualiser, Mr Lok Wai Man, the applicant's representative, made the following main points:

- (a) he had been the Indigenous Inhabitant Representative (IIR) of Sha Kok Mei since 2003/2004;

- (b) the 10-year forecast (i.e. from 2009 to 2018) for SH application (i.e. 260) as per the Lands Department (LandsD)'s record was provided by him in 2008;
- (c) Sha Kok Mei was the largest indigenous inhabitant village in Sai Kung. Unlike the indigenous villages in Yuen Long, Sheung Shui and San Tin mainly with a single clan (i.e. the Tang clan in Kam Tin, the Liu clan in Sheung Shui and the Man clan in San Tin), Sha Kok Mei was a village comprising 14 clans. About 60% to 70% of the population in Sha Kok Mei were the Tse, Lau, Chu and Wai clans and most of the land in Sha Kok Mei was owned by tso/tong of those clans. Unanimous consent from all clan members was required if the tso/tong land was to be sold, which meant that it was difficult to acquire tso/tong land for SH development;
- (d) PlanD's estimation on land availability within the "Village Type Development" ("V") zone of Sha Kok Mei for SH development was doubted. It was roughly estimated that about one-third of the available land as claimed by PlanD could not be used for SH developments due to site constraints, such as tso/tong land, existing/proposed passageways (e.g. some land at the southwestern portion of the "V" zone had been acquired by a company to form a passageway leading to the "Comprehensive Development Area" site nearby), land occupied by private gardens/graves and narrow strips of land which could not accommodate a SH with sufficient space for access/circulation;
- (e) with the increase in population in Shek Kok Mei, the latest 10-year forecast for SH application would be more than 300;
- (f) as regards the newly developed outdoor garden venue and padel tennis courts nearby, to his understanding, the former was constructed by a developer who had acquired numerous lots owned by different parties some years ago whereas the latter was constructed by a company which owned the concerned lots. The Site was located to the immediate

southwest of the outdoor garden venue across a local track. When the developer acquired land for the development of the outdoor garden venue, the developer did not acquire any land on the other side of the local track (including the Site). This might imply that there was no party intended to use the Site for recreational purposes;

- (g) the Site fell within the village ‘environs’ (‘VE’) of Sha Kok Mei. It was surrounded by village houses and there were some previous planning applications for SH development within the same “Recreation” (“REC”) zone approved by the Board. Being located in the village proper of Sha Kok Mei, the Site was considered suitable for SH development; and
- (h) he was the cousin of the applicant. He hoped that the proposed SH would allow the applicant to secure a place to live and to sustain his living. By living closer to his parents/relatives/villagers, continued care and support could be given to the applicant. The applicant’s situation warranted sympathetic consideration by the Board.

[Mr Andrew C.W. Lai rejoined the meeting during Mr Lok’s presentation.]

116. As the presentations of PlanD’s representative, the applicant’s representatives had been completed, the Chairperson invited questions from Members.

117. Some Members raised the following questions to the applicant’s representatives:

- (a) the location of the applicant’s current living place and the person(s) responsible for taking care of the applicant;
- (b) noting that the applicant needed care and support in his daily life, how the applicant could live independently in the proposed SH in future;
- (c) having noted that the proposed SH was not in line with the planning intention of the “REC” zone and did not meet the relevant assessment criteria for developing SH given there was still land available within the

“V” zone of Sha Kok Mei (even after deducting the said one-third of the land as mentioned by the IIR), whether there was any possibility to identify a piece of land within the “V” zone for the proposed SH development; and

- (d) noting from Plan R-2a of the Paper that the proposed SH would mainly occupy the eastern part of the Site and some areas in the western part would be left vacant, what the considerations for such building layout were.

118. In response, Mr Wong Yat Keung, the applicant’s father, said that the applicant was living with him and his wife in a place near the Site and they were responsible for taking care of the applicant’s daily life. Messrs Lam Tsz Kwai and Lok Wai Man, the applicant’s representatives, continued to make the following points:

- (a) relevant government departments had no objection to or adverse comment on the application, except PlanD. PlanD did not support the application mainly on the ground that land was still available within the “V” zone of Sha Kok Mei for the proposed SH development. However, it was extremely difficult to identify and acquire a piece of land within the “V” zone as most of the land was owned by tso/tong, which was unlikely to be sold to third parties. There was no tso/tong for the Wong’s clan (i.e. the applicant’s family). While the Site might not be a very good choice, it was the only site within the ‘VE’ of Sha Kok Mei that the applicant’s parents had paid much effort and managed to identify for the proposed SH development;
- (b) the applicant had considered that as his parents were in old ages and might not be able to take care of him for a long time, he needed to secure a place to live and to sustain his living in future. Therefore, either the house where the applicant and his parents were currently living or the proposed SH might need to be sold to make money for sustaining his living in future; and
- (c) the proposed building layout had taken into account the need for the provision of drainage and other infrastructural facilities. It was noted that

Sha Kok Mei villagers generally supported the application while some had raised concern on whether the proposed SH would encroach onto the existing access road used by the villagers. The building layout could be revised to avoid encroaching onto the access road should the application be approved.

119. As Members had no further question to raise, the Chairperson said that the hearing procedures for the review application had been completed. The Board would further deliberate on the review application in the absence of the applicant and his representatives and would inform the applicant of the Board's decision in due course. The Chairperson thanked PlanD's representatives, the applicant and his representatives for attending the meeting. They left the meeting at this point.

Deliberation Session

120. The Chairperson invited views from the Members. Members generally agreed with the decision of RNTPC to reject the application. The Vice-chairperson and some Members had the following views/observations:

- (a) while expressing sympathy with the applicant's situation, and noting that the applicant might sell either the proposed SH or the house where the applicant and his parents were currently living to make money for sustaining his living in future, it should be pointed out that personal hardship was not a relevant planning consideration in assessing planning applications;
- (b) it was concurred with PlanD's assessments that the application could not be supported since the proposed SH development was not in line with the planning intention of the "REC" zone, which was primarily for recreational developments for the use of the general public, and land was still available within the "V" zone of Sha Kok Mei for SH development;
- (c) although the Site fell within the 'VE' of Sha Kok Mei, with the existing/approved SHs located mainly to its north, west and south and an

outdoor garden venue to its further northeast, the Site was not fully enclosed by existing village houses and this could not meet the interpretation of infill site for sympathetic consideration by the Committee. It was considered more appropriate to concentrate the proposed SH development within the “V” zone;

- (d) Hong Kong’s welfare policy had all along been providing a variety of welfare services/assistance to people with disabilities, e.g. medical and residential care services. The applicant/the applicant’s parents might wish to seek assistance from the Social Welfare Department if needed;
- (e) the current application might reflect a loophole in the current SH policy and there was a need for a comprehensive review of the SH Policy; and
- (f) while acknowledging the applicant’s situation, it was crucial to emphasise that the Committee should adopt a fair and consistent approach in considering each application, without being affected by personal circumstances of the applicant and/or other emotional factors.

121. After deliberation, the Board decided to reject the application for the following reasons:

- “(a) the proposed development is not in line with the planning intention of the “Recreation” zone which is primarily for recreational developments for the use of the general public. There is no strong justification in the submission for a departure from the planning intention; and
- (b) land is still available within the “Village Type Development” (“V”) zone of Sha Kok Mei for Small House development. It is considered more appropriate to concentrate the proposed Small House development within the “V” zone for more orderly development pattern, efficient use of land and provision of infrastructures and services.”

122. The Chairperson, Mr Daniel K.S. Lau, Professor John C.Y. Ng, Professor Jonathan W.C. Wong, Mr Vincent K.Y. Ho, Professor Bernadette W.S. Tsui, Mr Terence S.W. Tsang, Ms Carrie K.Y. Leung, Mr Ivan M.K. Chung and the Secretary were present for Agenda Items 5 and 7 to 9.

Fanling, Sheung Shui and Yuen Long East

Agenda Item 5

[Open Meeting]

Review of Application No. A/YL-ST/616

Temporary Container Vehicle Park and Open Storage of Construction Materials with Ancillary Tyre Repair Area, Site Office and Storage Uses for a Period of 2 Years in “Other Specified Uses” annotated “Comprehensive Development to include Wetland Restoration Area” Zone, Lot 769 RP (Part) in D.D. 99, San Tin, Yuen Long
(TPB Paper No. 10956)

[The item was conducted in Cantonese.]

123. The Secretary reported that the application was withdrawn by the applicant.

Sha Tin, Tai Po and North

Agenda Item 7

[Open Meeting]

Review of Application No. A/NE-MUP/188

Filling of Land for an Emergency/Vehicular Access in “Agriculture Zone, Lot 57 (Part) in D.D. 46, Tai Tong Wu, Sha Tau Kok
(TPB Paper No. 10957)

[The item was conducted in Cantonese.]

124. The Secretary reported that the application was withdrawn by the applicant.

General

Agenda Item 8

[Open Meeting]

Proposed Amendments to the Master Schedule of Notes to Statutory Plans and Definitions of Terms Used in Statutory Plans

(TPB Paper No. 10959)

[The meeting was conducted in Cantonese]

125. In view of the overrun in the meeting schedule, Members agreed the consideration of the item be deferred to a later date.

Agenda Item 9

[Open Meeting]

Any Other Business

[The meeting was conducted in Cantonese.]

126. There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 7:30 p.m.

- (a) the following uses or developments are always permitted:
- (i) maintenance or repair of plant nursery, amenity planting, sitting out area, rain shelter, refreshment kiosk, road, watercourse, nullah, public utility pipeline, electricity mast, lamp pole, telephone booth, shrine and grave;
 - (ii) geotechnical works, local public works, road works, sewerage works, drainage works, environmental improvement works, marine related facilities, waterworks (excluding works on service reservoir) and such other public works co-ordinated or implemented by Government; and
 - (iii) provision of amenity planting by Government; and

- (b) the following uses or developments require permission from the Town Planning Board:

provision of plant nursery, amenity planting (other than by Government), sitting out area, rain shelter, refreshment kiosk, footpath, public utility pipeline, electricity mast, lamp pole, telephone booth and shrine.

- (10) In any area shown as 'Road', all uses or developments except those specified in paragraphs (8)(a) to (8)(d) and (8)(g) above and those specified below require permission from the Town Planning Board:

road, toll plaza, on-street vehicle park, railway station and railway track.

- (11) (a) Except in areas zoned "Site of Special Scientific Interest" or "Site of Special Scientific Interest (1)" or "Conservation Area" or "Other Specified Uses" annotated "Comprehensive Development and Wetland Protection Area", temporary use or development of any land or building not exceeding a period of two months is always permitted provided that no site formation (filling or excavation) is carried out and that the use or development is a use or development specified below:

structures for carnivals, fairs, film shooting on locations, festival celebrations, religious functions or sports events.

- (b) Except as otherwise provided in paragraph (11)(a) *above*, and subject to temporary uses for open storage and port back-up purposes which are prohibited in areas zoned "Site of Special Scientific Interest" or "Site of Special Scientific Interest (1)" or "Conservation Area" or "Other Specified Uses" annotated "Comprehensive Development and Wetland Protection Area" **or "Other Specified Uses" annotated "Wetland Conservation Park"**, temporary use or development of any land or building not exceeding a period of three years requires permission from the Town Planning Board. Notwithstanding that the use or development is not provided for in terms of the Plan, the Town Planning Board may grant permission, with or without conditions, for a maximum period of three years, or refuse to grant permission.