

1. The meeting was resumed at 9:15 a.m. on 11.12.2014.
2. The following Members and the Secretary were present at the resumed meeting:

Mr Stanley Y.F. Wong Vice-chairman

Mr Roger K.H. Luk

Professor S.C. Wong

Professor Eddie C.M. Hui

Dr C.P. Lau

Ms Julia M.K. Lau

Mr Clarence W.C. Leung

Ms Bonnie J.Y. Chan

Professor K.C. Chau

Mr H.W. Cheung

Mr Lincoln L.H. Huang

Mr Stephen H.B. Yau

Mr David Y.T. Lui

Mr Peter K.T. Yuen

Assistant Director (2), Home Affairs Department

Mr Eric K.S. Hui

Director of Lands

Ms Bernadette H.H. Linn

Principal Environmental Protection Officer

Mr Ken Wong

Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport 3),

Transport and Housing Bureau

Miss Winnie Wong

Director of Planning

Mr K.K. Ling

Declaration of Interests

[Open Meeting]

3. The following Members had declared direct interests on the item:

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|---------------------|---|---|
| Mr Thomas T.M. Chow | - | his relative who lived in the Tai Po District had submitted a representation |
| Mr Dominic K.K. Lam |] | had business dealings with MTR Corporation |
| Ms Janice W.M. Lai |] | Limited (MTRCL) (R3) and Henderson Land |
| Mr Ivan C.S. Fu |] | Development Co. Ltd. (Henderson) which |
| Mr Patrick H.T. Lau |] | was the mother company of the Hong Kong and China Gas Company Limited (HKCGC) (R2) |
| Dr Eugene K.K. Chan | - | his spouse being an employee of a subsidiary company in the Henderson Land Group (<i>direct interest</i>) and being convenor of the Hong Kong Metropolitan Sports Event Association that had obtained sponsorship from Henderson (<i>indirect interest</i>) |
| Dr W.K. Yau | - | being an executive member of the Tai Po Rural Committee (TPRC) which had submitted representation (R1326); being a Member of the Tai Po District Council (TPDC) which had submitted representation (R1633) (<i>direct interests</i>); owning a house and land at Cheung Shue Tan and a flat and a shop at Kwong Fuk Road in Tai Po; being the Chairman of the Management Committee of the Fung Yuen Butterfly Reserve/Fung Yuen Nature and Culture Education Centre which |

was the subject of representation for R16 to R19; and being the director of a non-government organisation that had received private donation from a family member of the Chairman of HLD (*indirect interests*)

4. In addition, the following Members had declared remote or indirect interests on the item:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| Professor S.C. Wong | - | being the Director of the Institute of Transport Studies of the University of Hong Kong (HKU), which had received sponsor from MTRCL and being employees of HKU which received donation from a family member of the Chairman of Henderson |
| Mr. Clarence W.C. Leung | - | being the directors of a non-government organisation that had received private donation from a family member of the Chairman of Henderson |
| Mr Roger K.H. Luk |] | being a Member of Council (Mr Luk) or employees (Professor Ho and Professor Chau) of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) which received donation from a family member of the Chairman of Henderson |
| Professor P.P. Ho |] | |
| Professor K.C. Chau |] | |
| Dr Wilton W.T. Fok |] | being employees of HKU which received |
| Mr H.F. Leung |] | donation from a family member of the Chairman of Henderson |

- Ms Christina M. Lee - being Director of the Hong Kong Metropolitan Sports Event Association that had obtained sponsorship from Henderson
- Mr Stanley Y.F. Wong - owning a flat and car parking spaces at Deerhill Bay with his spouse
- Mr H.W. Cheung - owning a flat at Heung Sze Wui Street in Tai Po
- Mr Frankie W.C. Yeung - owning a flat in On Chee Road, Tai Po

5. The Members who had declared direct interests above had not been invited to the meeting. As the Chairman had declared direct interest on the consideration of representations/comments of Group 2, the Vice-chairman would take up chairmanship of the meeting. Those who had declared remote or indirect interests should be allowed to stay in the meeting and participate in the discussion. Members noted that Professor P P Ho, Dr Wilton W.T. Fok, Mr H.F Leung, Ms Christina M. Lee and Mr Frankie W.C. Yeung had tendered apology for not able to join the meeting.

Presentation and Question Session

6. The Vice-chairman said that the Group 1 representations were heard on 18.11.2014 and the meeting would continue to hear the Group 2 representations.

7. The following Government representatives, the representers and the representer's representative were invited to the meeting at this point:

- Mr C.K. Soh - District Planning Officer/Shau Tin, Tai Po and North, Planning Department (DPO/STN, PlanD)
- Mr C.T. Lau - Senior Town Planner/Tai Po (STP/TP), PlanD

- Mr Wong Kwok Leung - Engineer/Tai Po 1, Transport Department (E/TP1, TD)
- Mr Dennis Mok - Senior Nature Conservation Officer, Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (SNCO, AFCD)

R20 - Green Sense

R49 - 楊文友

R94/C34 - Chui King Hei

R107 - Sam Tsang

R226 - Leung Hok Man

R265 - 梁敘珊

R327 - 梁哲彬

R370 - 鄧遠德

R660 - Li Siu Lan

R672 - Jacky Ng

R770 - Ernest Wong

R919 - Chung Yui Wai

R1032 - Sun Keng Ting

R1139 - 馬景恒

R1171 - Michelle Kwok

C48 - Ray W

- Mr Tam Hoi Ping - Representers' representative

R1070 - Renee Kwong

- Ms Renee Kwong - Representer (*Attending only*)

R1133 - Lee Shuk Fun, Betty

- Ms Lee Shuk Fun, Betty - Representer (*Attending only*)

R1327 - Lau Chee Sing

R1635 - 余智榮

- Dr Lau Chee Sing - Representer and Representers' representative

R1329 – 葉偉才

Mr Lau Tak - Representers' representative

R1393 – Mak Kau Wo

Mr Mak Kau Wo - Representers

R1412 – Tse Wai Heung

Ms Tse Wai Heung - Representers

R1413 – Ip Chi Kang

Mr Ip Chi Kang - Representers (*Attending only*)

R1425 – Mak Bing Choi

Mr Mak Bing Choi - Representers

R1428 – Ip Pak Wah

Mr Ip Pak Wah - Representers (*Attending only*)

R1623 – Mak Kwong Sang

Mr Mak Kwong Sang - Representers

R1625 – Wong Kot Ki

Mr Wong Kot Ki - Representers

R1628 – Worldwide Fund Hong Kong (WWF)

Mr Tobi Lau - Representers' representative

R1678 – Francis Allan Hay

Mr Francis Allan Hay - Representers

R2772 – Samuel Wong

Mr Samuel Wong - Representers

R3171 – Wong Ping Lam

R4559 – Wong Hiu Mei

Ms Wong Hiu Mei - Representer and Representer's representative

R4205 – Patrick Mo

Mr Patrick Mo - Representer

R4327 – Kelly Chan Po King

Ms Kelly Chan Po King - Representer

C2 – Edith Ng

C3 – Ruby Wong

C32 - Ada Wong

C55 – Alice Liu

C56 – Ocena Wong

Ms Rudy Wong - Commenter and Comments' representative

C52 – Mak Chi Kit

Mr Mak Chi Kit - Commenter

C80 – Chan Siu Kuen

Mr Chan Siu Kuen - Commenter

C82 – Li Yee Ting

Ms Li Yee Ting - Commenter (*Attending only*)

C83 – Chan Yee Tak

Mr Chan Yee Tak - Commenter

C89 – Hobman Company Ltd

Ms Mabel Lam - Commenter's representative

8. The Vice-Chairman extended a welcome and informed that reasonable notice had been given to invite the representers and commenters to attend the hearing, but other than those present at the meeting, the rest had either indicated not to attend the hearing or made no reply. The Town Planning Board (the Board) should proceed with the hearing in their absence. He then explained the procedures and the special arrangements for hearing:

- (a) the representatives of PlanD would first be invited to make a presentation on the background to the representations;
- (b) after that, the representers/commenters or their representatives would be invited to make oral submissions according to the sequence as shown in the agenda;
- (c) in view of the large number of representations and comments in respect of the OZP, it was necessary to limit the time for making oral submissions. Each representer/commenter would be allocated a total of 10-minute speaking time;
- (d) if an authorised representative was appointed by more than one representer/commenter to represent them, that authorised representative might use the cumulative time allotted to all the persons he represented to make his oral submission;
- (e) there was a timer device to alert the representers and representer's representatives 2 minutes before the allotted time was to expire and when the allotted time limit was up;
- (f) the oral submission should be confined to the grounds of representation/comment in the written representations/comments already submitted to the Board during the exhibition period of the OZP/publication period of the representations;

- (g) representers/commenters should avoid reading out or repeating statements contained in the written representations/comments already submitted, as the written submissions had already been read by Members;
- (h) request for further time for the oral submission from a representer/commenter or his authorized representative would be considered by the Board which retained the discretion to grant further time upon sufficient cause shown and after taking into account all relevant circumstances;
- (i) after the oral submissions, there would be a question and answer (Q & A) session which Members could direct question(s) to any attendee(s) of the meeting, while the deliberation session would be held on another date;
- (j) lunch break would be at about 1:00 p.m. and there might be one short break each in the morning and in the afternoon, as needed; and
- (k) after the presentation by all the attendees, the Chairman should invite questions from Members. DPO/STN and the representers/commenters or their representatives would answer Members' questions.

9. The Vice-chairman continued to say that in view of the large number of representations and comments for Group 2, two meeting sessions were arranged on 11.12.2014 (today) and 18.12.2014. For those commenters who had attended today's session, they were allowed to choose whether to make their oral submission today or at the next session. Moreover, for other representers/commenters in Group 2 not attending today's session, they could observe the meeting at the Board's public viewing room at 1/F of the North Point Government Offices. The arrangement for the next meeting session on 18.12.2014 would be the same and the representers/commenters who had attended today's session were also welcomed to observe the meeting to hear the oral submissions made by other representers and commenters in Group 2. He then invited the representative of PlanD to brief Members on the background to the case.

[Mr Clarence W.C. Leung returned to join the meeting at this point.]

10. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Mr C.K. Soh, DPO/STN, PlanD made the following main points as detailed in the TPB Paper No. 9797:

Background

- (a) on 11.4.2014, the draft Tai Po Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/TP/25, mainly to rezone sites from “Green Belt” (“GB”) and “Government, Institution or Community” (“G/IC”) to residential uses for public and private housing development, was exhibited for public inspection under the Town Planning Ordinance (the Ordinance) for two months;
- (b) during the public inspection period, 6,322 valid representations and 439 valid comments were received. The representations and comments would be heard in two groups and those of Group 1 were already heard by the Board on 27.11.2014;
- (c) it was stated in the 2013 Policy Address that the Government would adopt a multi-pronged approach to increase land supply to meet the housing and other development needs of Hong Kong;
- (d) the 2014 Policy Address reaffirmed that the Government would continue to review various land uses and rezone sites as appropriate for residential use;

Two Stages Review of “GB”

- (e) “GB” zones mainly fell on slopes and hillsides near the fringe of urban or developed areas and varied in location and condition. Some were located on devegetated hillsides, while others on vegetated lands close to existing developed areas;

- (f) in the first stage of “GB” review completed in 2012, PlanD mainly identified and reviewed areas zoned “GB” that were devegetated, deserted or formed;
- (g) the 2013 Policy Address announced that PlanD was conducting the next stage of “GB” review, with the purpose of releasing more sites for housing development. The second stage of “GB” review considered those vegetated “GB” sites with a relatively lower buffer or conservation value and adjacent to existing transport and infrastructure facilities;
- (h) in reviewing the suitability of developing “GB” zones, relevant considerations were taken into account, including transport and infrastructure capacity; provision of community facilities and open space; appropriate development restrictions; local character and existing development intensity; potential environmental; and visual and air ventilation impacts;
- (i) concerned government departments would examine if the development would bring about significant adverse impacts on the surroundings and if necessary, technical assessments would be carried out to ascertain these impacts and devise mitigating measures to minimize the potential impacts;
- (j) to meet the housing need of the community and the Long Term Housing Strategy (LTHS) of providing a total of 470,000 public and private housing units in the coming ten years, six sites in Tai Po had been identified for rezoning from “GB” for private residential developments and three sites at Chung Nga Road and Tai Po Area 9 were identified for a comprehensive public housing development to provide about 10,525 flats;

Increase of Development Intensity

- (k) the 2014 Policy Address also announced that except for the north of Hong Kong Island and Kowloon Peninsula, which were more densely populated, the Government considered it feasible to generally increase the maximum domestic plot ratio (PR) currently permitted for the other “density zones” in the territory by around 20% as appropriate;
- (l) the maximum PR for most of Tai Po New Town fell within Density Zone 2 (i.e. PR of 5). Following the Policy Address, in general a PR of 6 for Tai Po was proposed for the high-density residential sites identified. For the low density zone with PR of less than 1, consideration could be given to increasing the PR by 100% subject to confirmation on traffic and infrastructural capacities and no adverse impact on local characteristics and the surrounding environment;

Local Consultation

- (m) prior to the submission of the proposed amendments to the OZP for consideration by the Rural and New Town Planning Committee (RNTPC) of the Board, the Environment, Housing and Works Committee (EHWC) of Tai Po District Council (TPDC) was consulted, among others, on the proposed rezoning for residential developments on 8.1.2014 and 13.2.2014;
- (n) for rezoning of the site at Lo Fai Road, PlanD met with a TPDC member and joint representatives from the Owners Incorporations of the five residential estates at Lo Fai Road on 4.3.2014 to explain the amendments to the OZP. The views expressed by the TPDC and the locals as well as PlanD’s responses were incorporated into the RNTPC Paper to facilitate RNTPC’s consideration of the rezoning proposal on 4.4.2014;
- (o) during the plan exhibition period, representatives of PlanD, TD, AFCD and the District Officer/Tai Po (DO/TP) attended a meeting with Owners

of Incorporations of the five residential estates at Lo Fai Road on 3.5.2014 to exchange views on the proposed residential development under Amendment Item E (i.e. Lo Fai Road Site) and the potential impacts. On 14.5.2014, EHWC of TPDC was further consulted on the gazetted amendments;

Representation Sites

- (p) the representations and comments of Group 2 were related to the following representation sites:

Amendment Item B: Site at Hong Chi Pinehill Village

- (i) the building height restriction (BRH) of the site was revised from 4 storeys to 8 storeys to facilitate the redevelopment of Hong Chi Pinehill Village operated by the Hong Chi Association;

Amendment Item C: West of Nethersole Hospital Site (Site C)

- (ii) the site (about 0.57 ha) was a piece of government land located at the junction of Chuen On Road and Chung Nga Road. The site previously formed part of a formation area which was reinstated and replanted thereafter. The eastern and western portion of the site was dominated by exotic tree species. According to the tree survey conducted, there were about 280 trees. The most abundant species were *Hibiscus tiliaceus* (黃槿), *Ficus hispida* (對葉榕) and *Acacia* (相思), and a large *Ficus Microcapa* (細葉榕) with a tree crown of about 30m was also found within the site;
- (iii) areas in the surrounding were mainly existing residential, educational/institutional developments and open space including a public housing estate, schools, the Nethersole Hospital and a rest garden. To the west across Chung Nga Road was a public transport terminus;

- (iv) the site was rezoned from “GB” to “Residential (Group A)” (“R(A)”) with a maximum domestic and non-domestic PR of 6 and 9.5 respectively and a BHR of 110mPD. It was estimated that the site would provide about 680 flats;

Amendment Items D1 and D2: Fung Yuen Site (Sites D1 and D2)

- (v) the site (about 4.78 ha) was a piece of government land located at the eastern part of Fung Yuen Valley at the sub-urban fringe of Tai Po New Town. The southern portion of the site along Ting Kok Road (Site D1) was flat and being used by the Society of Horticulture (Hong Kong) Limited under a short term tenancy. The north-eastern portion was a gentle sloping area and largely a plantation woodland;
- (vi) to the west was an access road leading to Sha Lo Tung and Ha Hang Government Quarters was located to the east. To the south of the site was the Tai Po Industrial Estate, and to the north were hillslopes and a service reservoir;
- (vii) part of the site was previously formed due to public works and was replanted thereafter. According to the tree survey conducted, there were about 1,260 trees including both native and exotic species. There were a few trees including *Pyrenaria spectabilis* (石筆木), *Rhodoleia championii* (紅花荷) and *Aquilaria sinensis* (土沉香) within the site which were worthy of conservation but no Old and Valuable Tree (OVT) or Potentially Registrable OVTs were recorded in this survey;
- (viii) the site was rezoned from “GB” to “Residential (Group C)10” (“R(C)10”), with a maximum domestic gross floor area (GFA) of 43,500m² and a maximum building height (BH) of 7 storeys. It was estimated that the site could provide about 620 flats;

Amendment Item E: Lo Fai Road Site

- (ix) the site (about 4.13 ha) was a piece of government land located at Lo Fai Road. It was previously a borrow area which was reinstated and replanted thereafter. The site mainly comprised a knoll overlooking the Shuen Wan Landfill and Tolo Harbour to the south;
- (x) according to the tree survey conducted, there were about 2,500 trees within the site and about 64% were exotic species such as *Acacia mangium* (大葉相思) and the *Acacia spp.* (金合歡) and about 14% are *Eucalyptus spp.* (桉屬);
- (xi) the surrounding developments were mainly low-density residential developments of 3 to 5 storeys including Casa Marina I and II, Tycoon Place, Richwood Park and Forest. The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) was located about 500m to the further northwest;
- (xii) the site was rezoned from “GB” to “R(C)9”, with a maximum domestic GFA of 46,200m² and a maximum BH of 5 storeys. It was estimated that the site could provide about 660 flats;

Amendment Item F: Lai Chi Shan Site

- (xiii) the site (about 4.13 ha) was a piece of government land located to the south of Tolo Highway and to the east of Lai Chi Shan Village. The site previously formed part of a formation area which was reinstated and replanted thereafter;
- (xiv) the northern portion of the site was being used as temporary works areas by Highways Department (HyD) and Water Supplies Department (WSD) whilst its central and southern portions mainly comprised vegetated land. Areas near Tolo Highway had

been formed and hard paved;

- (xv) according to the tree survey conducted, there were about 1,100 trees with around half of the tree species recorded were exotic species. No OVT or Potentially Registrable OVTs were recorded in this survey;
- (xvi) there was a natural water course at the northern portion of the site. Avoidance of impact on this water course should be duly considered in the future development;
- (xvii) the surrounding areas were mixed with low and high-density residential developments, ranging from PR of 0.4 and BH of 4 storeys in the south to PR of 5 and BH of 110mPD in the north. A new access branching off Shan Tong Road would be required;
- (xviii) the site was rezoned from “GB” to “R(C)8”, with a maximum domestic GFA of 107,100m² and a maximum BH of 80mPD (southern portion) and 100mPD (northern portion). It was estimated that the site could provide about 1,785 flats;

Amendment Item G: Site near Yat Yiu Avenue

- (xix) the site (about 20.9 ha) was a piece of government land located near the junction of Tai Po Road and Yat Yiu Avenue;
- (xx) it was a wooded knoll located within a low-rise residential neighbourhood. To the immediate north was a helipad;
- (xxi) the site was rezoned from “R(C)” to “R(C)7”, with a maximum domestic GFA of 20,000m² and a maximum BH of 7 storeys. It was estimated that the site could provide about 280 flats;

Amendment Item H: Site at Kon Hang near Cheung Shu Tan

- (xxii) the site (about 2.54 ha) was surrounded by woodland zoned “Conservation Area” (“CA”) on the OZP. The surrounding area was predominantly rural in character with some village houses and temporary structures varying from 1 to 3 storeys;
- (xxiii) the site was rezoned from “GB” to “R(C)8”, with a maximum domestic PR of 1.5 and a maximum BH of 120mPD. Future development would be concentrated in the central portion of the site and it was estimated that about 150 flats would be provided;

Amendment Items J1 and J2: Site at Po Heung Street

- (xxiv) to facilitate the implementation of a youth hostel proposal, the site had been rezoned from “G/IC” to “G/IC(2)”, with a maximum domestic and non-domestic GFA of 2,412m² and 1,040m² respectively and a maximum BH of 80mPD;

Representations

Representations providing comments

- (q) one supporting representation (R1) and four representations (R2 to R5) providing views were received;
- (r) major comments of the representations were summarised as follow:
 - (i) HKCGC (R2) requested that the future developer of the housing site at Lai Chi Shan (Amendment Item F) should conduct a risk assessment on the high pressure pipeline in the vicinity;
 - (ii) MTRCL (R3) indicated that the youth hostel site at Po Heung Street (Amendment Item J1) might be subject to noise from the East Rail;

- (iii) a TPDC member (R4) and Village Representatives and villagers of Cheung Shue Tan and Tai Po Mei (R5) considered that the rezoning of a site at Kon Hang (Amendment Item H) would have ‘feng shui’ impact, the height of the development should not be too high; and requested to release more land near Cheung Shue Tan and Tai Po Mei Villages for village type developments;

- (s) PlanD’s responses to the above comments were:
 - (i) the support of R1 to the proposed zoning amendments was noted;

 - (ii) the future developer would be required under land sale conditions to conduct a risk assessment and provide mitigation measures to the satisfaction of the Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services (DEMS). The project proponent would be advised to maintain liaison/coordination with HKCGC at the land grant stage (R2);

 - (iii) the proponent would be required under lease conditions to conduct Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) and provide noise mitigation measures to the satisfaction of the Director of Environmental Protection (DEP) (R3);

 - (iv) the visual appraisal (VA) conducted by PlanD indicated that the proposed development would not have adverse visual impact on the surrounding area. Rezoning of the site from “GB” to “R(C)8” would not affect the existing access to the burial ground. Moreover, ‘feng shui’ was not a planning consideration of the Board (R4 and R5);

 - (v) as for the villagers’ request for more land around Cheung Shue Tan and Tai Po Mei Villages for Small House developments, the areas concerned were not the subject of amendments to the OZP.

Should the villagers wish to rezone the area for village development, they could submit planning application to the Board under the s.12A of the Ordinance. Each application would be considered by the Board on individual merits (R4 and R5);

Adverse Representations

- (t) 6,267 representations (R6(Part) to R1273(Part), R1324(Part), R1325, R1326(Part), R1327 to R1624, R1625(Part), R1626 to R6321, R6322(Part)) opposed either all (i.e. Amendment Items B to J), or one or more of the amendment item(s) under Group 2;

[Ms Julia M.K. Lau arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

- (u) the major general grounds of representations and PlanD's responses as summarised in paragraphs 4.4.1 and 6.3 of the Paper respectively were highlighted as follow:

Government policy and housing supply

- (i) the proposed rezoning sites were richly covered with vegetation and dense woodlands rather than "devegetated, deserted or formed" as advocated by the Government. The proposed rezoning proposals were not in line with the Government's Policy Address;
- (ii) the zoning amendments were contrary to public interest and public expectations that the wooded landscapes were to be protected and valued. These amendments would create a bad precedent and cause cumulative adverse impacts in future;
- (iii) the Government should develop the brownfield sites and consider redevelopment of under-utilized sites first;

- (iv) the proposed residential development for luxurious housing was not aimed at providing affordable housing to the general public and therefore unable to ease the prevailing pressure on housing supply. The proposed rezoning for private residential development could not solve the housing problem;

PlanD's responses

- (v) planning was an on-going process and the Government would continue to review zonings of different sites from time to time so as to provide land to meet the economic and development needs of Hong Kong;
- (vi) the Government had been carrying out various land use reviews, including reviews on "G/IC" sites, the government land currently vacant, under Short Term Tenancies or different short-term or government uses, as well as the review on "GB" sites, with a view to identifying suitable sites for residential use. Brownfield sites could also be considered if found suitable;
- (vii) various technical assessments/reviews including traffic, sewerage, drainage, water supply, environmental, air ventilation and visual impacts had been undertaken where necessary. It had been confirmed that the amendments would not cause insurmountable problems on traffic and other infrastructural capacity as well as on the environmental, air ventilation and visual aspects. Requirements for submission of tree preservation proposals and landscape proposals/landscape master plan, where appropriate, would be included in the lease conditions of the housing sites;
- (viii) the rezoning proposals would contribute to the Government's effort in meeting the pressing need for increase housing land

supply to both public and private sectors;

[Ms Bonnie J.Y. Chan arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

Preservation of the “GB” zone, tree felling and landscape impact

- (ix) the proposal would involve extensive clearance of vegetation. The cumulative impact had not been addressed;
- (x) the proposed rezoning “GB” sites played an important role in maintaining the public’s quality of life and serving as a vital buffer between the urban area and Country Parks. The proposed rezoning was against the planning intention of “GB”;
- (xi) there was fundamental failure to detail the ecological importance of the rezoning sites. Site visits and ecological survey done by green groups revealed findings very different from those of the Government;
- (xii) Hong Kong was a signatory to the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) but was not complying with its requirements;

PlanD’s responses

- (xiii) the proposed “GB” sites for rezoning were mostly adjacent to disturbed or developed areas at urban fringe. According to AFCD, no designated sites of conservation interest were located within or in close proximity to the sites. Trees found in these sites were largely trees of exotic or common species;
- (xiv) if tree felling and substantial clearance of vegetation were necessary at the “GB” sites to facilitate residential developments, the Government would carry out tree surveys to ascertain the

condition and strive to minimize the impacts on the environment by requiring the developer to carry out appropriate mitigation measures, including preservation or relocation of existing trees with conservation value, or compensatory planting in accordance with the existing guidelines and tree preservation mechanism;

- (xv) the identified sites, though vegetated, had relatively less buffering effect and low conservation value. Their location in proximity to existing urbanized development and infrastructure were considered suitable for residential development to meet the pressing needs for housing;
- (xvi) as advised by the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation (DAFC), Hong Kong's existing nature conservation policy and measures were generally in line with the objectives of CBD. The zoning amendments had duly taken into account the protection of important habitats and species of conservation importance. If appropriate mitigation measures were carried out in the development proposals, including preservation or transplanting of existing trees with conservation value, or compensatory planting in accordance with the existing guidelines and tree preservation mechanism, the objectives of CBD were considered not contravened. Besides, the requirement for adequate landscape area around the site periphery to serve as buffer would be included in the lease. Significant adverse impacts on biodiversity were not anticipated;

Lack of technical assessments and adverse impacts

- (xvii) insufficient technical assessments had been conducted. Various technical assessments including comprehensive ecological assessment and tree survey should be conducted prior to development;

- (xviii) some housing sites were distant from the town centre or railway station. Demand on public transport and transport infrastructure would have impacts on existing and future residents;
- (xix) there were not sufficient supporting community facilities such as medical services, education and other community services to serve the increased population. There were concerns over the carrying capacity of Tai Po New Town as the rezoning proposal would bring about an increase of some 29,500 residents with more demand for land for infrastructure, commercial and community facilities;
- (xx) construction works and developments would bring nuisance to the sensitive receivers;

PlanD's responses

- (xxi) technical reviews were conducted by TD, HyD, WSD, Drainage Services Department and the Environmental Protection Department to assess the feasibility of the new housing sites in Tai Po. Tree survey was also conducted by the Lands Department (LandsD);
- (xxii) with appropriate mitigation measures and improvement/upgrading of the transport infrastructures, the proposed amendments for housing developments would not have adverse cumulative impacts on the traffic capacity in the Tai Po New Town. The Commissioner for Transport (C for T) advised that even with this additional traffic, the existing roads would still be operated within their handling capacities;
- (xxiii) an Air Ventilation Assessment (Expert Evaluation) (AVA(EE))

was commissioned by PlanD to assess the likely impacts of the proposed housing sites under Amendment Items C (site to the west of Nethersole Hospital) and F (site near Lai Chi Shan). Based on the recommendations of AVA(E), non-building areas (NBAs) had been designated on the OZP for the two sites. Given the size of the sites (all over 1 ha) and their relatively open exposure to winds from all directions, there would be reasonable scope to accommodate good building design and layout disposition to avoid wall effect of buildings and enhance permeability;

(xxiv) according to the then Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau Technical Circular No. 1/06, AVA would only be required for government projects involving sites over a PR of 5 and exceeding a GFA of 100,000m². The remaining sites did not meet the criteria under which AVA would be required;

(xxv) PlanD had undertaken visual appraisal (VA) to assess the visual impact of the private housing sites. As illustrated in the photomontages prepared to illustrate possible visual impacts of the proposed residential developments, the proposed housing developments in Tai Po would not be incompatible with the surrounding developments and would not impose significant changes to the overall townscape and character;

(xxvi) Tai Po was a well planned and established New Town. The planned provision of major GIC facilities in the district was generally sufficient. There would also be a surplus provision of local open space and district open space in planning area of the Tai Po OZP;

(xxvii) as for education aspect, two new primary school sites had been reserved in the proposed comprehensive public housing

development zoned “R(A)9” at Chung Nga Road and Tai Po Area 9. Besides, social welfare facilities such as Day Care Centre for the Elderly, Child Care Centre and Early Education and Training Centre would also be provided within the comprehensive public housing development to serve the local community;

- (xxviii) regarding the construction impacts of the proposed housing developments, the proponent/future developer would be required to follow and implement the Recommended Pollution Control Measures for Construction Contract to minimize inconvenience and environmental nuisance to nearby residents and other sensitive receivers;

Public consultation and planning procedures

- (xxix) the Government had extensively rezoned “GB” sites all over Hong Kong, which was an important directional change in Hong Kong’s town planning policy. Nonetheless, no in-depth comprehensive consultation had been conducted;
- (xxx) there had been no prior public consultation and/or the consultation process with TPDC was improper/misleading. The Government should withdraw the amendments and carry out extensive public consultation afresh;
- (xxxi) the site at Lo Fai Road was already included in the Application List. The Board should refuse the zoning amendment to discourage the Government’s malpractice of putting land under the Application List before rezoning. This had totally disrespected the public opinion. The strong local objection to the rezoning of the “GB” site had not been properly reflected in the RNTPC paper;

PlanD's responses

- (xxxii) in processing the zoning amendments, PlanD had followed the established procedures. Details of the public consultations that had been carried out by PlanD were highlighted in paragraphs 9(m) to (o) above;
- (xxxiii) the statutory and administrative procedures in consulting the public on the proposed zoning amendments had been duly followed. The public and stakeholders had been given the opportunity to provide their views and counter-proposals to the proposed amendments. Besides, all representers/commenters had been invited to the meeting to present their views under section 6B(3) of the Ordinance;
- (xxxiv) sites included in the Application List were indication of future land supply. Availability of land for sale was subject to completion of planning procedures for OZP amendments;
- (v) the specific grounds of representations and PlanD's responses as summarised in paragraphs 4.4.2 to 4.4.7 and 6.4 to 6.9 of the Paper respectively were highlighted as follow:

Amendment Item C - West of Nethersole Hospital Site

- (i) the area was densely covered with trees and there was a big banyan tree in the middle of the site. The construction works would affect a lot of trees, endanger the banyan tree and ruin the green environment;
- (ii) the site was too close to the hospital and the proposed residential development would not be compatible with the

hospital use. Besides, it would seriously affect Fu Heng Estate's external traffic;

PlanD's responses

- (iii) based on the land use review conducted and comments of relevant departments consulted, the site was identified as suitable for residential development;
- (iv) DAFC advised that the site was a disturbed habitat. According to the tree survey, the eastern part of the site was dominated by common native tree species and the western part was dominated by exotic tree species. The large *Ficus microcarpa* was recommended to be preserved. Appropriate mitigation measures to minimize the impacts on the environment, including preservation or relocation of existing trees with conservation value, or compensatory planting in accordance with the existing guidelines and tree preservation mechanism could be imposed in the lease;
- (v) the site was about 150m away from the Nethersole Hospital. Area to the west was Fu Heng Estate. The proposed development was considered compatible with the existing land uses in the surrounding areas;
- (vi) Tai Po was well served with public transport. To the immediate west of the site was a public transport terminus to serve the need of the local residents. TD would closely monitor the provision of the public transport and liaise with public transport service providers to provide the necessary new services as the development proceeded;
- (vii) the proposed development near Nethersole Hospital would be

connected to the existing Chung Nga Road, which was a local single two carriageway with 2-way capacity of 1400veh/h. The additional traffic generated from the proposed development would be about 50 vehicles at AM peak hour. Even with this additional traffic, the existing Chung Nga Road would still be operated within its handling capacity;

Amendment Items D1 and D2 – Fung Yuen Site

Adverse traffic, visual, landscape and ecological impacts

- (viii) the access to Sha Lo Tung would be shared by a proposed new columbarium development in Sha Lo Tung and the proposed residential development. The cumulative traffic impact of the projects should be considered and evaluated to prevent posing threat to these ecological hubs. A 10m-wide buffer should be reserved for road widening at Ting Kok Road;
- (ix) there was concern that the proposed development, if viewed from Cloudy Hill and Fung Yuen Road, would pose significant visual impacts on the area;
- (x) the site was covered by some secondary woodland patches comprising native tree species, together with abundant shrubs and understorey vegetation which had good potential to become mature woodland. Species of conservation interest were found in the site and an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) should be conducted in accordance with the EIA Ordinance;
- (xi) tree felling was required for the new access road hence it would have adverse environmental impact;
- (xii) the site should be rezoned to “CA”;

Impact on nearby hiking paths, 'feng shui' and other concerns

- (xiii) the site was located adjacent to a popular hiking route. The passive recreational value of "GB" zone and the public interest in the enjoyment of the countryside should not be ignored. The importance of Sha Lo Tung Road as a regionally important 'passive recreational amenity' had not been assessed;
- (xiv) the rezoning proposal would affect the shrine of Tai Wong Ye and endanger villagers' lives and health as well as the 'feng shui' and 'dragon veins' of Fung Yuen. It would also affect the existing buffer from the Hong Kong and China Gas Production Plant;
- (xv) two of the villages in Fung Yuen had no village office and the Site D1 should be used for GIC facilities such as a village office or a history museum to serve the local villagers;

PlanD's responses

Adverse traffic, visual, landscape and ecological impacts

- (xvi) the proposed development near Fung Yuen would be connected to the existing Fung Yuen Road and Ting Kok Road. Fung Yuen Road was a local single two carriageway with 2-way capacity of 1400veh/h while that section of Ting Kok Road was dual-two carriageway with 1-way capacity of 2800veh/h. The additional traffic generated from the proposed development would be about 280 vehicles at the morning peak hour. Ting Kok Road would still be operated within its handling capacity even with this additional traffic;
- (xvii) C for T advised that the volume/capacity ("v/c") ratio during peak hours of the section of Ting Kok Road from Tai Po Industrial Estate to Shuen Wan was currently about 0.5 to 0.6,

indicating that there was sufficient capacity to cope with the existing and anticipated traffic flow. In this regard, the proposal to reserve 10m-wide buffer for widening of Ting Kok Road was therefore not necessary;

- (xviii) a new access road connecting to Fung Yuen Road would be provided and a short section of the existing access road to Sha Lo Tung would be widened. The proposed road improvement works would be able to accommodate the traffic generated by the proposed development. The hiking route along Sha Lo Tung Road would not be affected and peripheral tree planting would be provided around the site to enhance amenity;
- (xix) based on the VA conducted, the proposed development was compatible with the surrounding developments including village houses at Ha Hang and industrial blocks along Ting Kok Road. Existing trees along the slopes and roadside and buffer planting around the site would reduce the visual prominence of the development and provide for the visual integration of the buildings within the existing context;
- (xx) although some trees of protected species were found near Fung Yuen, namely *Aquilaria sinensis* (土沉香), *Rhodoleia championii* (紅花荷) and *Pyrenaria spectabilis* (石筆木), the site was a mainly plantation dominated by exotic species, which had much lower plant diversity, simpler structure and lower fauna diversity. There was no strong justification for rezoning the site to “CA”. Tree preservation and Landscape Master Plan clauses would be included in the lease conditions;

Impact on nearby hiking paths and 'feng shui' and other concerns

- (xxi) the site was at a distance of about 600m away from the Gas Production Plant, which was a potential hazardous installation,

in Tai Po Industrial Estate. The developer was required to carry out hazard assessment (i.e. Quantitative Risk Assessment). Given that the proposed development at the site was a low-density residential development, there should be scope in the proposed site to incorporate appropriate mitigation measure to comply with the requirement of risk assessment. DEMS had no objection to the proposed amendment as far as gas safety was concerned;

- (xxii) according to the OZP, 'Village Office' use was always permitted in the nearby "Village Type Development" ("V") zones of Fung Yuen. There was land available within the "V" zone concerned for village office use. Site D1 was considered suitable for residential development and the Government had no plan for development of regional GIC facilities such as a history museum in the area;
- (xxiii) the zoning shown on the OZP was broad-brush and the shrine was not within the land sale site. As for 'feng shui' issue, it was not a planning consideration of the Board;

Amendment Item E - Lo Fai Road Site

Function of the "GB" zone and landscape impact

- (xxiv) the subject "GB" functioned as a buffer for the residential developments at Lo Fai Road to the surrounding obnoxious uses. Moreover, the dense vegetation at the site also helped to reduce urban heat island effect;
- (xxv) instead of using the site, the brownfield site at Tung Tsz near HKIEd under private ownership should be utilized for private residential development;

- (xxvi) the woodland at Lo Fai Road was one of the key green zones on the peripheral of the Country Park and the proposed rezoning would undermine the environment, air quality, temperature and ecology of Hong Kong;

Traffic impact

- (xxvii) traffic was already extremely busy at Lo Fai Road and Ting Kok Road. There were development projects along Ting Kok Road including Tsz Shan Monastery, spa hotel resort, columbarium, projects at Lung Mei Beach, Fung Yuen, etc. A holistic transport development plan was required;
- (xxviii) the proposed number of new housing units almost doubled the total number of households in the five estates around Lo Fai Road and would overload the nearby road network. The increase in traffic would also affect the junctions at Ting Kok Road, delay emergency services and cause great inconvenience and disruption to staff and students of the neighbouring HKIEd;
- (xxix) the only public parking at Lo Fai Road would be affected and the problem of shortage of parking space in the area was neglected;

Incompatible with surrounding environment and other adverse impacts

- (xxx) the BH of the proposed development and the overall built form was undesirable from urban design point of view as it contravened the urban design guidelines set out in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG) which promoted the preservation of ridgelines and peaks;
- (xxxi) the site was just 3m from the main entrance of the two nearby residential estates. The proposed development was in close proximity to existing developments and would cause adverse

impact in terms of light penetration, air ventilation and noise pollution;

- (xxxii) the existing green zone was the only open space enjoyed by residents living along the hillside of Lo Fai Road. Taking away an important community gathering place was unjust and would lead to legal action;

No significant contribution to housing supply

- (xxxiii) the planned number of flats (660 units) was unrealistic because it was unlikely that the developer would build housing estates with an average flat size of 70m² in this location with fantastic seaview. If the average flat size of the adjoining sea-facing developments was adopted, the number of flats would only be about 200;

- (xxxiv) the site could be reserved for the expansion of HKIED;

Consultation with TPDC

- (xxxv) there were fundamental flaws in the consultation with TPDC and DC members as they were misled by the information presented that the net PR for the proposed residential development at Lo Fai Road was about 1.1;

PlanD's responses

Function of the "GB" zone and landscape impact

- (xxxvi) the Lo Fai Road site was previously a borrow area which was reinstated and replanted thereafter. According to the tree survey conducted by LandsD, no OVTs were found within the site. DAFC advised that the site was a plantation woodland dominated by exotic tree species and had no strong view on the proposed rezoning from the nature conservation perspective;

- (xxxvii) to minimise the adverse landscape impacts on the site and surrounding environment, requirements on submission of a Landscape Master Plan with tree preservation proposal would be incorporated into the lease conditions as appropriate;
- (xxxviii) the site was about 500m away from the Tai Po Industrial Estate. Effluents generated from the industrial estate had to comply with the requirements of the relevant Ordinances. Environmental mitigation measures had also been implemented to address the pollutants or wastes including air, water and noise at source if necessary. In this regard, the surrounding areas would not be subject to the significant adverse environmental impact of the industrial estate. DEP had no objection to the proposed residential development;
- (xxxix) besides, a large piece of land with a width of about 150m between the site and Ting Kok Road was zoned “GB”. In this regard, the rezoning of the site from “GB” to “R(C)9” would not pose adverse environmental impact or undermine the environmental quality of its surrounding areas;
- (xl) regarding the proposal to develop an alternative “GB” site near HKIEd, it should be noted that the land was mostly private land subject to various development constraints such as lack of road and supporting infrastructures. The Government would continue to review zonings of different sites from time to time so as to provide land to meet the economic and development needs of Hong Kong. Moreover, the use of the suggested site for residential developments would not preclude the Lo Fai Road site from being used for residential development;

Traffic impact

- (xli) the proposed development at Lo Fai Road would be connected to the existing Lo Fai Road and Ting Kok Road. Lo Fai Road was a local single two carriageway with 2-way capacity of 1400veh/h while that section of Ting Kok Road was dual-two carriageway with 1-way capacity of 2800veh/h respectively. The additional traffic generated from the proposed development would be about 300 vehicles at AM peak hour;
- (xlii) C for T advised that the existing Lo Fai Road and Ting Kok Road would be operated within their handling capacity and able to accommodate the additional traffic generated from the proposed development subject to traffic improvement measures, if necessary, to cater for the additional traffic on Lo Fai Road;
- (xliii) TD would keep monitoring the traffic situations and implement appropriate traffic improvement measures as the proposed development proceeded. The public car park at Lo Fai Road affected by the proposed amendment would be reprovisioned;

Incompatible with surrounding environment and other adverse impacts

- (xliv) the development parameters of the proposed development at Lo Fai Road were comparable to adjacent developments with PRs ranging from 0.8 to 1.8 and BHs from 3 to 5 storeys. According to the VA undertaken by PlanD, the proposed development of 5 storeys would not create adverse visual impact on the surrounding areas;
- (xlv) given the size of the site (over 4 ha) and the low development intensity, there would be reasonable scope to accommodate good building design and layout disposition to avoid wall effect of buildings and enhance permeability. The proposed development was of low-rise and low-density in nature and within a suburban environment surrounded with vegetation, thus

urban heat island effect was not anticipated;

- (xlvi) the residential developments at Lo Fai Road had their own open space and recreational facilities. There was also a general surplus of land for open space use (about 45 ha) in Tai Po district according to the HKPSG requirements. In addition, there were three country parks including Pat Sin Leng Country Park, Plover Cove Country Park and Tai Mo Shan Country Park in the vicinity of Tai Po New Town. As such, there were ample spaces for residents in Tai Po to enjoy the natural environment;

No significant contribution to housing supply

- (xlvii) the proposed residential zones would contribute to the Government's effort in meeting the pressing need for increase housing land supply to both public and private sectors. For a residential development, a range of flat size would be provided by the developer taking into account the character and adjacent developments and their impact. The assumed average flat size of 70m² was for estimating the number of potential flat supply;
- (xlviii) for the proposal to reserve the site for the expansion of HKIEd, suitable site would be identified for tertiary education purpose should such a need arise;

Consultation with TPDC

- (xlix) it was clearly stated in the paper presented to the EHWC of TPDC that the site at Lo Fai Road to be zoned "R(C)9" would be subject to a maximum domestic GFA of 46,200m². Given that the site area was about 4.13 ha, the development intensity of the site was equivalent to a PR of about 1.1. The information provided to TPDC was correct;

Amendment Item F - Lai Chi Shan Site

- (l) the site was well vegetated and covered with woodland. A water course at the northern part of the site might be affected;

PlanD's response

- (li) according to the tree survey conducted, the site was a disturbed and fragmented habitat generally covered with exotic trees. No OVT or Potentially Registrable OVTs were recorded in the tree survey;
- (lii) the requirement for tree preservation and Landscape Master Plan would be imposed in the lease. Avoidance of impact to natural streams/rivers was recognized. The requirement for protection of natural stream would be subject to relevant technical circular and could be incorporated into the lease conditions as appropriate;

Amendment Item G - Site near Yat Yiu Avenue

- (liii) the site was well vegetated and ecologically connected to adjacent woodland habitats. A detailed and comprehensive ecological assessment, including a tree survey, should be conducted prior to any development in the area to avoid loss of woodland habitat with ecological value;

PlanD's responses

- (liv) the site was previously zoned "R(C)" and already reserved for residential development. The proposed amendment was for up-zoning to a higher development intensity to optimize the development potential of the site;

- (lv) DAFC had no comment on the proposed amendment from the nature conservation point of view. The developer would be required to follow the existing guidelines and tree preservation mechanism to carry out appropriate mitigation measures, including preservation or relocation of existing trees with conservation value, or compensatory planting; and tree preservation clause and submission of Landscape Master Plan would be imposed under the lease;

Amendment Item H - Site at Kon Hang near Cheung Shu Tan

- (lvi) the site was in close proximity to “CA” zone covered by woodland and had a natural stream course flowing through the northern portion. The woodland and the natural stream course flowing through the northern portion should be excluded;
- (lvii) to compensate for the loss of “GB” due to the rezoning, other wooded areas along Tai Po Road beyond Tai Po Mei Waterfall should be rezoned to “CA”;

PlanD’s responses

- (lviii) the site consisted mainly of village houses, temporary structures, and a plant nursery interspersed with some common amenity or exotic tree species. It was largely surrounded by woodland in the adjoining “CA” zone and a natural stream course was flowing through its northern portion;
- (lix) according to DAFC, the stream was not an Ecologically Important Stream. The technical circular on protection of natural stream would be followed. About 1.12 ha of the site was Government land and was intended for sale for private residential development. A tree preservation clause would be

imposed in the lease, the details of which should be subject to the pre-land sale tree survey to be conducted by LandsD;

- (lx) the wooded areas along Tai Po Road beyond Tai Po Mei Waterfall were not covered by any amendment items under the current rezoning exercise. There was no strong justification for rezoning the wooded areas which were mainly zoned “GB” to “CA”;

Representers’ Proposals

- (w) representers’ specific proposals and PlanD’s responses as set out in paragraphs 4.5 and 6.10 of the Paper respectively were highlighted below:

Amendment Items C, D2, E, F and H

- (i) objected to rezoning of “GB” sites and proposed to include them into Country Park;

PlanD’s responses

- (ii) DAFC advised that any proposal to include areas into Country Park should be assessed against the established principles and criteria, which included conservation value, landscape and aesthetic value, recreational potential, size, proximity to existing country parks, land status and land use compatibility, as well as other relevant considerations. Designation of Country Park was under the jurisdiction of the Country and Marine Parks Authority governed by the Country Parks Ordinance (Cap. 208) which was outside the purview of the Board;

Amendment Item H

- (iii) to maintain the “GB” zone so as to serve as a buffer for the adjacent “CA” zone and for the biologically rich natural habitats within the Tai Po Kau Nature Reserve;
- (iv) to rezone the site to “CA”;

PlanD’s responses

- (v) although the site was not far from the Tai Po Kau Nature Reserve to the west, its western portion was mainly a developed area comprising village houses with building entitlement. The proposal to retain the “GB” zoning was considered inappropriate;
- (vi) as regards the proposal to rezone the site to “CA”, “CA” zone was normally designated to conserve areas of high conservation value. However, according to DAFC, the area was not of particular high ecological value which warranted designation of a “CA” zoning;

Comments on representations

- (x) there were 439 comments on the representations. They supported the representations against the rezoning of “GB” sites for residential developments (C1 – C80) and Amendment Item E concerning a proposed residential site at Lo Fai Road (C81 – C439);
- (y) the grounds raised by comments on representations as summarised in paragraph 5 of the Paper were similar to those of the representations and PlanD’s responses to the respective representations above were relevant;

PlanD’s Views

- (z) R1’s supporting views on the zoning amendments were noted;

- (aa) R2's view on Amendment Item F, R3's view on Amendment Item J1, and R4 and R5's concerns on Amendment Item H as detailed in paragraph 9(r) above were noted; and
- (bb) PlanD did not support representations No. R6(Part) to R1273(Part), R1324(Part), R1325, R1326(Part), R1327 to R1624, R1625(Part), R1626 to R6321 and R6322(Part) and considered that the Plan should not be amended to meet these representations.

11. The Vice-chairman then invited the representers and their representative to elaborate on their representations. He reminded them that the presentation should be concise and related to the subject of amendments which mainly involved the rezoning of six sites for residential developments and two sites for GIC uses.

R20 – Green Sense

R49 - 楊文友

R94/C34 - Chui King Hei

R107 - Sam Tsang

R226 - Leung Hok Man

R265 - 梁紓珊

R327 - 梁哲彬

R370 - 鄧遠德

R660 - Li Siu Lan

R672 - Jacky Ng

R770 - Ernest Wong

R919 - Chung Yui Wai

R1032 – Sun Keng Ting

R1139 - 馬景恒

R1171 - Michelle Kwok

C48 - Ray W

12. The Vice-chairman informed Mr Tam Hoi Pong that his cumulative

presentation time, resulting from the authorisations given by a number of representers and commenters to Green Sense, was 90 minutes.

13. Mr Tam Hoi Pong expressed his disagreement to the meeting arrangement in that a maximum presentation time of 10 minutes for each representer/commenter was imposed and additional presentation time would only be allowed through authorisations from other representers or commenters. He said that while he had requested a total presentation time of 2 hours, he was only allowed a cumulative presentation time of 90 minutes as Green Sense was authorised by other representers/commenter to speak on their behalf. Most of those representers/commenters who had authorised Green Sense as representative were not known to him. He also considered that it was unfair to request all the representers/commenters to register in the early morning when some of them had to wait for a prolonged period before their turn of making oral submission. While he appreciated Members' dedication to attend the long meeting, he suggested the Secretariat to improve the meeting arrangement for future hearings by inviting the representers/commenters to attend at different scheduled time slots.

14. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Mr Tam Hoi Pong made the following main points:

- (a) Green Sense objected to large-scale rezoning of "G/IC" and "GB" sites for development of luxury housing. As revealed in DPO/STN's presentation, the sites identified for rezoning in Tai Po were mostly located in the vicinity of low-rise housing developments, hence the sites would likely be developed into luxury housing but not affordable housing to address the acute housing problem;

Planning Policy on Rezoning "GB"

- (b) the Government was proposing large-scale rezoning of "GB" sites in Hong Kong which was a major policy change in town planning. As admitted by the Secretary for Development (SDEV), over 70 "GB" sites needed to be rezoned. Such a rezoning exercise had already affected

the Tuen Mun, Tai Po, Kwai Tsing, Sham Shui Po and South districts. However, the environmental groups and the general public were not consulted on the policy change. PlanD only consulted individual District Councils on the proposals. The public consultation conducted in such a way was not genuine and was against procedural fairness;

- (c) citing other government studies as examples, such as Planning and Engineering Study on the Remaining Development in Tung Chung and Study on Reclamation outside Victoria Harbour, the Government had followed proper procedure to consult the general public at different stages of the study before the finalization of proposal and made refinements to the proposals in response to the public views to some extent;
- (d) in the current large-scale “GB” rezoning exercise which was under the directive of the Chief Executive (CE), the Government had not consulted the public on the policy itself. The “GB” rezoning was not agreed and supported by the public. The some 70 “GB” sites identified for rezoning were only based on internal technical studies and assessments by the Government, the results of which had never been made public. The locals were only consulted at a late stage when the proposals had been decided and they could only voice out their views when the amendments to the OZP were published after the rezoning proposals were agreed by the Board. The local views were totally neglected in the process;
- (e) for proper public consultation, the Government should consult the public on the changes in policy first to build consensus on the direction and principles. The sites identified for rezoning should be based on the results of ecological impact assessment and the mitigation proposals. Local consultation on the rezoning proposals should then be carried out prior to submitting the proposal to the Board for consideration. Otherwise, the rezoning might be subject to judicial review;

- (f) Green Sense generally had no objection to the sites identified for rezoning in the first stage of the “GB” rezoning exercise which mainly covered sites that had been devegetated, deserted or formed. However, most of the “GB” sites identified for rezoning in the second stage of the review including the five sites in Tai Po to be rezoned in the current exercise were densely vegetated and some were even with nearly 100% green coverage. Tree felling might be accepted if the proposed developments were of overriding public interest. However, the development of luxury housing was not considered a justifiable ground;
- (g) a proper EIA to assess the cumulative adverse impact of the rezoning proposals on a district basis should be conducted. While no tree survey information and assessment results could be obtained from the Government, it was estimated that more than 100,000 trees would be felled as a result of the current rezoning of “GB” sites;
- (h) the designation of “GB” zones on the OZP was not based on the ecological value of the concerned areas, but to serve as buffers between the built-up areas and the vegetated areas such as country parks. The rezoning of “GB” sites was against the original planning intention of the zone. Detailed assessment on the effectiveness of the “GB” sites functioning as buffers should be conducted by concerned government departments prior to rezoning;
- (i) LandsD’s Land Administration Office Practice Note No. 7/2007 on “Tree Preservation and Tree Removal Application for Building Development in Private Projects” (PN 7/2007) which aimed at preservation of trees in-situ was not able to protect the trees on those “GB” sites densely covered with vegetation;
- (j) the current shortage of housing units in Hong Kong was attributable to many reasons, e.g. some residential flats in the urban area were allowed

to be converted to hotel use for serving Mainland visitors, many of the sale sites located in the residential cluster of low-rise, low-density housing would likely be developed into luxury housing, and the Government did not have a population policy to control the admission of new immigrants to Hong Kong. If the Government could review its policy and accord higher priority to develop those brownfield sites and barrack sites, the rezoning of “GB” sites for residential development was not necessary;

Objection to the OZP

- (k) the rezoning of those “GB” sites identified in the second stage of review was totally unacceptable, in particular when these sites would be used for luxury housing. The adverse impacts on the existing greenery of the sites were irreversible and the general public as well as the local residents were widely aggrieved by the proposals;
- (l) for the proposed public housing site near Tai Po Hospital which was partly zoned “G/IC” and “GB” on the previous OZP, Green Sense would not have raised objection to the rezoning if proper public consultation on using the “GB” site had been carried out before the decision was made, noting that the “G/IC” portion of the site was originally planned for private hospital development;

Shortcoming of PN 7/2007

- (m) in rezoning the “GB” sites, PlanD relied on PN 7/2007 in that any trees affected would be governed by tree preservation and compensatory planting proposals and that the requirements for submission of tree preservation proposals and landscaping proposals/landscape master plan, where appropriate, would be included in the lease conditions. However, PN 7/2007 was ineffective in protecting the trees within private housing sites which were densely vegetated as revealed from his case study of a

housing development at Sheung Shing Street, Ho Man Tin;

- (n) there were originally about 450 trees within the Sheung Shing Street site, but eventually all trees were felled with only three trees preserved. During the negotiation between the Tree Unit of LandsD and the team of tree experts employed by the developer, the developer's tree experts were able to justify that nearly all trees within the site could be felled. As a general rule, those trees growing on slopes, the exotic species and the common native species would be felled;

- (o) as revealed by a former staff of the Tree Unit of LandsD, whether any trees could be preserved was determined at the planning stage, and once the site was sold to the developer, the development right of the developer would override any public aspiration for preserving trees. Developers were unwilling to sacrifice their entitled site coverage and the development layout for the sake of tree preservation. Due to the limited staff resources, the Tree Unit of LandsD always found it difficult to negotiate for tree preservation with the tree experts of the developers who were much more resourceful. If PN 7/2007 could not be effectively applied to the Sheung Shing Street site which was only half covered with vegetation, he doubted how it could be effectively applied to the housing sites rezoned from "GB" in Tuen Mun East and Tai Po which had a much higher coverage of vegetation;

[Ms Julia M.K. Lau left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

Amendment Item A – Site adjacent to Tai Po Hospital

- (p) Green Sense had no objection to use that portion of the site originally zoned "G/IC" for public housing development but objected to use the original "GB" portion because the public was not properly consulted on the directional change in the planning policy concerning the "GB" sites;

- (q) the northern portion of the site previously zoned “GB” was well vegetated and a stream running in the northeast-southwest direction was found in the central portion of the site;
- (r) according to the current development layout proposed by the Housing Department (HD), the proposed public housing development on the site comprised several housing blocks and two primary schools;
- (s) due to the decreased number of cross-boundary students in future, a surplus provision of primary schools in Tai Po district was anticipated. Moreover, there were many existing primary schools in the area, which were within 10-minute travelling distance from the site, to serve the local population. Hence, there was no strong justification to construct two primary schools in the site;
- (t) Green Sense considered that the northern portion of the site would not be required for public housing development if only one primary school was built. HD’s current development layout could be suitably revised by relocating two housing blocks in the north-eastern part of the site to the area originally reserved for a primary school;
- (u) to preserve the stream and some trees within the site, the planned access road connecting the northern and southern portion of the public housing development should also be realigned to its southeast by 20m;

Amendment Item C – west of Nethersole Hospital site

- (v) as previously reported in Ming Pao and mentioned in DPO/STN’s presentation, a large and mature *Ficus microcarpa* was found within the site. As quoted in the newspaper article, Professor C.Y. Jim of the University of Hong Kong, who was a tree expert, said that the tree was more than 100 years of age. This was contradictory to PlanD’s argument that the site was a disturbed habitat. Moreover, the wooded

area within the site was considered relatively more mature and of high landscape value;

- (w) the *Ficus microcarpa* was located in the midst of the woodland surrounded by several native species. As Professor Jim was not able to attend the meeting, his views that 'the tree was a large specimen with rather complete (not degraded) tree structure. In terms of size, age and tree form, it deserved to be designated as an OVT, and therefore should be protected from development or other harms' was conveyed to Members;
- (x) the site was separated into two portions by a NBA. The presence of the mature *Ficus microcarpa* in the northern portion had rendered the site impossible for building development while the southern portion was occupied by some exotic tree species of relatively lower landscape value. For this reason, HD decided not to further pursue the proposal of using the site for public housing development;
- (y) unlike other sites, PlanD had not mentioned in the Paper that there was no OVT or potentially registrable OVT within the site;
- (z) Green Sense objected to the amendment for the reasons that there was a tree within the site which deserved to be designated as an OVT, no tree survey was conducted, and the tree which was located on sloping ground could not be transplanted, hence the site was not feasible for housing development;
- (aa) two alternative replacement sites were identified as more suitable for residential development. The first one was the taxi stand at Fu Heng Estate opposite the site, which was of similar size as the subject site and had less than 20 trees of common species along its periphery. The second one was a piece of formed flat land next to Tai Po Hospital which was readily available for development and did not require any felling of

trees;

Amendment Item D – Fung Yuen site

- (bb) a video clip was played to show the aerial view of the site;
- (cc) it was mentioned in the Paper that according to the tree survey conducted, there were about 1,260 trees within the site. While the methodology of tree survey was not known, given the vast area of the site (about 4.85 ha) and its mature and rich vegetation cover as shown in the video and the site visit, it was considered that the total number of trees within the site was largely under-estimated as many small trees were excluded in the tree survey conducted by LandsD. The methodology of excluding those small trees with a breadth of less than 9.5 cm from the total tree count was also not desirable as the breadth of many mature trees remained very small. Moreover, no evidence could be found on-site to demonstrate that a tree survey had been conducted as the trees were not properly surveyed and recorded, the exact figure of 1,260 trees within the site, as provided in the Paper, was dubious;
- (dd) it was not justified for PlanD to recommend felling of the existing trees within the site merely on consideration that the site was mainly plantation with simpler structure and lower fauna diversity and only a few protected species were found. Moreover, AFCD's advice on the rezoning of the site was unprofessional and biased. Besides, as illustrated by the photomontage at Plan H-4d of the Paper, the proposed development on the site was massive and would create adverse visual impact on the surrounding area;
- (ee) the proposed residential development on the site, which was on hill slope, would require extensive site formation works to be carried out. The large amount of waste generated would pose additional pressure on the carrying capacity of the existing landfills;

Amendment Item E - Lo Fai Road site

- (ff) a video was played to show the aerial view of the site which was extensive in area and richly grown with mature vegetation;
- (gg) although the site was previously a borrow area which was reinstated and replanted thereafter, it had become a mature woodland after natural progression for decades. While the trees within the existing woodland were mainly of exotic species, the trees were mature and richly grown in different layers, hence the existing woodland was worthy of preservation;
- (hh) it was noted from the site visit that the existing trees within the site were surveyed. As compared with the number of trees for the Fung Yuen site as mentioned in the Paper, PlanD's information on the number of existing trees within the site was more realistic though the small trees were again excluded;
- (ii) as the site was located within a low-rise residential neighbourhood, the site would likely be used for luxury housing. Based on the prevailing BHR as specified on the OZP, the future residential development on the site located near the hilltop would command a scenic seaview of Tolo Harbour. The provision of luxury housing could not help to address the acute demand of the general public for affordable housing;

[Professor S.C. Wong left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

- (jj) moreover, as the site had served as an important green buffer for the residential developments nearby and there was no compensatory proposal for the loss of "GB" site due to the rezoning, the subject amendment was strongly objected to and would likely be subject to judicial review;

[Mr H.W. Cheung arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

- (kk) another video was presented to show the existing condition of an alternative housing site to the southeast of HKIEd as proposed by the local residents of Lo Fai Road. The alternative housing site, which was privately owned, was zoned “GB” on the OZP and currently occupied by various open storage and workshop activities. As the developer had adopted the ‘destroy first and develop later’ approach, appropriate enforcement action should be taken by relevant authority requiring the owner to reinstate the site to tally with the planning intention of the “GB” zone;
- (ll) it was considered reasonable to use this alternative housing site, which was already a brownfield site, for housing development instead of using the site which was richly vegetated. The Government should explore the possibility of using this brownfield site by negotiating with the concerned land owner to develop more affordable housing on this site or to resume it for public housing development;

Amendment Item F – Shan Tong/Lai Chi Shan Site

- (mm) a video was played to show the existing condition of the site. The site, which was originally zoned “GB”, mainly comprised vegetated land, and the northern portion of the site was currently used as a temporary works area for the road project on the widening of Tolo Harbour. Low-density residential development such as The Paramount was located in the vicinity;
- (nn) the Government had also adopted a ‘destroy first and develop later’ approach in using the site and had the responsibility to reinstate the site to a green area after completion of works;

- (oo) Green Sense raised objection to the rezoning for the reasons that the ‘destroy first and develop later’ approach adopted by the Government should not be tolerated, the site was largely vegetated, and the site which would likely be developed into luxury housing could not meet the acute housing demand of the general public;

Amendment Item G – Site near Yat Yiu Avenue

- (pp) although the site was not zoned “GB”, it was an existing woodland with a variety of native and exotic species as revealed in a site visit;
- (qq) the rezoning was also objected to as any future development on the site would inevitably involve large-scale tree felling and PN 7/2007 which PlanD relied on to preserve the trees within private development site, as explained earlier, was unable to provide the necessary protection for the existing trees within the site;

Amendment Item H – Site at Kon Hang near Cheung Shu Tan

- (rr) the site, which was identified for rezoning in the first stage of “GB” review, was relatively more acceptable for housing development than other sites identified in the second stage review as the site was already devegetated and largely occupied by squatter structures. However, the rezoning was still objected to as no prior public consultation was carried out and the existing tenants of the temporary/squatter structures had taken a ‘destroy first and develop later’ approach which was unacceptable;

Conclusion

- (ss) taking into account various considerations including the findings of the site inspections, the videos showing the existing condition of various sites, detailed analysis and expert evaluation, there were no strong

reasons to rezone the “GB” sites in Tai Po for residential development. The Board was urged to exercise its own judgment based on the concrete evidence provided in this presentation and to reject these rezonings. Otherwise, the confrontation between the Government and the general public would be further worsened; and

- (tt) so far, PlanD and LandsD had not provided the total number of trees to be felled as a result of the rezoning of these “GB” sites. Given that PN 7/2007 was ineffective to protect the existing trees within private development sites, the consultation previously conducted by PlanD was piecemeal and misleading, and the adverse impact on the existing “GB” sites was irreversible, Green Sense sincerely hoped that the Board should not agree to the rezoning so as to preserve a better environment for Tai Po district and Hong Kong as a whole.

[Actual speaking time : about 61 minutes]

15. In response to Mr Tam Hoi Pong’s opening remarks in his presentation relating to the issues on the time limit of the presentation and authorisations obtained by Green Sense as well as the meeting arrangement, the Vice-chairman made the following clarifications:

- (a) the concerned authorization document from those representers/commenters who had authorized Green Sense to attend the meeting on their behalf were duly received by the Secretariat. It was noted that some of these authorizations were also copied to Green Sense. All the authorizations received by the Secretariat were duly verified;
- (b) prior to the meeting, the Secretariat had liaised with a Ms Ho of Green Sense and it was agreed that the group would have a total presentation time of 60 and 90 minutes at the hearing of Group 1 and Group 2 representations respectively;

- (c) regarding the views on the meeting arrangement, the purpose of the representation hearing was to facilitate the representers and commenters to have the opportunity to listen to the views of other representers of the same group. Hence, they were invited to attend the same meeting and take turn to make oral submission; and
- (d) hearing of Group 1 representations which was mainly related to the public housing site under Amendment Item A had been completed. Although today's session was to hear the Group 2 representations, the views related to the public housing site as expressed by Mr Tam in today's presentation would be recorded and duly taken into account by the Board in its deliberation of the Group 1 representations.

16. Regarding the agreement on total speaking time and the meeting arrangement for Green Sense as mentioned by the Vice-chairman above, Mr Tam claimed that no consensus as such was reached between Green Sense and the Secretariat. He said that Ms Ho Ka Po of Green Sense had made an earlier request to the Secretariat that the group would like to make an oral submission for its representations for a total of 2 hours at the hearing session for Group 2 representations in order to avoid repeating some general points in both the hearing sessions for Group 1 and Group 2 representations. However, the request was not acceded to apparently due to different staff in the Secretariat were handling the telephone enquiry and issuing a written reply.

17. The Vice-chairman said that Mr Tam's clarification would be recorded. Notwithstanding that it was originally set out in the relevant documents that Green Sense would attend and make oral submission at both the hearing sessions for Group 1 and Group 2 representations, Green Sense had only attended the Group 2 hearing and made an oral submission in one go. Its views concerning the public housing site under Amendment Item A would be duly recorded and conveyed to the Board for consideration during the deliberation of the Group 1 representations.

18. The meeting was adjourned for a short break of 10 minutes.

[Professor Eddie C.M. Hui, Mr David Y.T. Lui and Mr Eric Hui left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

R1327 – Lau Chee Sing

R1635 – Yu Chi Wing 余智榮

19. Dr Lau Chee Sing said that he was invited to attend this session to make oral submission of the representation related to the site near Fung Yuen (Amendment Item C). However, he had submitted another representation (R2925) relating to the Lo Fai Road site which was scheduled to be heard by the Board on 18.12.2014. As he was also the authorized representative of R1635 submitted by Mr Yu Chi Wing, another TPDC member, and the subject of that representation was also related to the Lo Fai Road site, he therefore requested to make a joint presentation for the two representations related to the Lo Fai Road site (i.e. R1635 and R2925) at the next hearing session on 18.12.2014. The Vice-chairman acceded to the request and informed Dr Lau that he had a presentation time of 10 minutes in the capacity of a representer at this session.

20. With the aid of the visualiser, Dr Lau made the following main points:

- (a) he was a elected TPDC member whose constituency was Shuen Wan which stretched all the way from Lo Fai Road to Tai Mei Tuk where Ting Kok Road was the major access road serving this area. He objected to the rezoning of the “GB” site near Fung Yuen;
- (b) the Working Group on Traffic Affairs of Ting Kok Road and Lam Kam Highway of TPDC had discussed various proposals for improving the traffic of Ting Kok Road. One of the major issues of concern was the possibility of carrying out road improvement works along the section of Ting Kok Road between its junctions with Fung Yuen Road and Dai Fat Street by widening the existing carriageway from dual 2-lane to dual 3-lane in order to relieve the traffic congestion at this bottleneck section, especially during weekends. It was considered feasible to implement such road widening works by using a piece of government land along

Ting Kok Road which was currently occupied by the Society of Horticulture (Hong Kong) under short term tenancy;

- (c) in early January 2001, TPDC was consulted on the proposed rezoning of eight sites for residential developments including the one near Fung Yuen. Subsequently, he wrote to DPO/STN on 30.1.2014 and 12.2.2014 expressing his concern that a strip of 10m-wide government land along Ting Kok Road within the proposed sale site near Fung Yuen should be reserved for future road widening. The proposal, however, was not supported by TD as its assessment on carrying capacity of the roads was conducted on the basis of the existing traffic data;
- (d) over the past 20 years, the Board had approved a number of development projects along Ting Kok Road such as the completed Tsz Shan Temple, Lung Mei beach, spa hotel, golf course and columbarium, etc.. The cumulative traffic impact generated from these developments had caused traffic congestion. It was therefore necessary to reserve a strip of land along Ting Kok Road to cater for future road widening works in the long run;
- (e) the proposed reserved area of about 1,500m² at Site D1, which only accounted for about 3% of the total area of the sale site (about 4.85 ha), would not have any adverse impact on the development potential of the site and would not affect the attractiveness of the land sale for future residential development;
- (f) similar to the case of Tsz Shan Temple where the developer was required to construct and maintain its access road as well as to carry out other associated road improvement works along Tung Tsz Road, the Government should consider to incorporate into the future lease condition of the land sale site requiring the developer to carry out the necessary road improvement works using the reserved area to alleviate the traffic congestion of the area; and

- (g) the Board was urged to reserve a 10-m wide buffer within the site for future widening of Ting Kok Road so as to improve the traffic condition of the area.

[Actual speaking time of R1327 : about 8 minutes]

R1393 – Mak Kau Wo

21. Mr Mak Kau Wo said that Fung Yuen Tusen was a historic village which had been in existence since the Ching Dynasty. He objected to using the site near Fung Yuen for housing development as it would destroy the existing ‘feng shui’ trees thereby affecting the ‘feng shui’ of the village and posing threat to the safety of the local villagers.

[Actual speaking time of R1327 : about 1 minute]

R1412 – Tse Wai Heung

22. Ms Tse Wai Heung informed the meeting that she decided not to make any oral submission in respect of her representation.

R1425 – Mak Bing Choi

23. Mr Mak Bing Choi made the following main points:

- (a) he was a local villager of Fung Yuen Tsuen. The proposed housing development at the site near Fung Yuen, which would affect the shrine of Tai Wong Ye, was unacceptable;
- (b) the mature trees had existed within the site for more than 100 years. During the period of Japanese occupation, over 1,000 local villagers jointly stopped the Government from carrying out any tree felling activities in this area so as to preserve the ‘feng shui’ of the village;

- (c) the existing trees within the site should not be felled in order to preserve the 'feng shui' and to protect the lives and health of the local villagers; and
- (d) the Government had not proposed any compensatory/mitigation proposal to ensure that the lives and health of the local villagers would not be endangered by the proposed felling of trees. In this regard, the local villagers raised strong objection to the proposed development on the site which would involve felling of trees.

[Actual speaking time R1425 : about 2 minutes]

R1329 – Yip Wai Choi

24. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Mr Lau Tak made the following main points:

- (a) he was appointed by the Village Office (VO) of Fung Yuen Village to express its comments relating to the rezoning of the Fung Yuen site from "G/IC" to "R(C)10" for housing development under Amendment Item D1. Noting that the shrine of Tai Wong Ye was included in the housing site, the local villagers counter-proposed to extend the boundary of the existing "GB" zone southwestward to include the shrine, its small incinerator and 11 existing trees in the vicinity to avoid future housing development in the vicinity of the shrine;
- (b) all along the local villagers had considered the small area currently occupied by the Tai Wong Ye shrine and the 'feng shui' trees as a piece of holy land for the village which needed to be preserved in-situ. Moreover, the 'dragon vein' along Sha Lo Tung Road to the north of the site was equally important to the local villagers;

- (c) in the past, ‘feng shui’ trees were planted and a Tai Wong Ye shrine was constructed by the local villagers to bring good fortune to them. During the 1930s, more than 10 young villagers died after the shrine was relocated. In this regard, both the shrine and the feng shiu trees could not be relocated/felled to avoid endangering the lives and health of the local villagers;
- (d) according to paragraphs 6.5.7 and 8.5 of the Paper, the zoning shown on the OZP was broad-brush and the shrine was not within the land sale site. In this regard, the area surrounding the shrine should be rezoned to “GB” to clearly reflect the planning intention and to relieve the worry of the local villagers;
- (e) although ‘feng shui’ was not a planning consideration of the Board, the traditional wisdom and belief of the local villagers should be respected; and
- (f) to conclude, VO proposed to rezone the area currently occupied by the shrine and those trees in its vicinity to “GB” to avoid any disturbance to the Tai Wong Ye shrine and ‘feng shiu’ trees. The area could also serve as an open space for the enjoyment of general public.

[Actual speaking time of R1329 : about 10 minutes]

[Ms Bonnie J.Y. Chan left the meeting at this point.]

R1623 – Mak Kwong Sang

25. Mr Mak Kwong Sang made the following main points:

- (a) he was the indigenous inhabitant representative of Fung Yuen Village;
- (b) while he had no comment on the rezoning proposal under Amendment

D2, he objected to the rezoning of a piece of land near the entrance of Fung Yuen Village for housing development under Amendment Item D1 as the site would obstruct the entrance of the village and block the views of the village;

- (c) he recalled that the Cheung Kong Holdings Ltd. had previously proposed a residential development project at a site which was also close to the entrance of the village. As a result of strong objection from the villagers, the concerned residential development, now known as Mont Vert, was developed at another nearby location which did not obstruct the entrance of the village. The Government should follow suit and drop the proposal of rezoning the site for housing development;
- (d) the site was small and could only provide a few number of flats. Its contribution towards the provision of housing land to address the acute housing demand of the territory was insignificant;
- (e) there was currently insufficient provision of recreational and community facilities to serve the local residents. Moreover, the existing transport infrastructure and public transport facilities in the area were also inadequate, in particular when there was increasing number of Small House developments in Tai Mei Tuk and the private residential development, Mont Vert, would have its population intake in June 2015. The proposed housing development on the site would pose additional pressure on the provision for community and recreational facilities and further aggravate the existing traffic conditions. However, no technical assessment was conducted to demonstrate the sustainability of the proposed housing development on this site; and
- (f) for the above reasons, the local villagers strongly objected to rezone the site near the entrance of the village for residential development under Amendment Item D1 of the OZP.

[Actual speaking time of R1623 – about 3 minutes]

R1625 – Wong Kot Ki

26. With the aid of the visualiser, Mr Wong Kot Ki made the following main points:

- (a) he was an indigenous villager of Fung Yuen Village;
- (b) according to paragraph 6.1.9(a) of the Paper, the planning intention of the “GB” zone was primarily for defining the limits of urban and sub-urban development areas by natural features and to contain urban sprawl as well as to provide passive recreational outlets. Site D2, which had provided a natural buffer between Fung Yuen Village and the Tai Po Industrial Estate/urban area, was in line with the planning intention of the “GB” zone;
- (c) application No. A/TP/459 for Small House development within a “GB” zone was rejected by the Board about three years ago for the reasons that the development was not in line with the planning intention of the “GB” zone, and approval of the application would set an undesirable precedent for similar development within the “GB” zone and the cumulative effect of approving such application would result in a general degradation of the natural environment. In this regard, the Board’s credibility to reject future similar Small House applications in “GB” zone would be undermined if the Board approved the rezoning of “GB” sites as currently proposed by the Government;
- (d) the information as set out in paragraph 6.1.2(a) of the Paper that no OVT or potentially registrable OVTs were recorded in the tree survey conducted for the site was misleading. With reference to a plan showing the location of 20 existing old trees of more than 60 years of age within Site D1, he considered that at least six of these old trees could

be registered as OVT. Moreover, judging from the outlook of the trunk, branches and leaves of the trees, three of these 20 old trees could be ranked amongst the first 10 most beautiful trees in Hong Kong if such a competition was held;

- (e) amongst the 20 existing old trees within the site, he introduced the following three trees for Members' information:
 - (i) 石櫨子 – an old and very large tree with diameter of about 0.93m and circumference of about 2.8m. It bore fruits in winter and provided forage for those winter migratory birds;
 - (ii) 白翼子 - another old and very large tree with diameter of about 0.85m and circumference of about 2.5m. The tree grew very slowly and the tree ring only grew by 8mm to 10mm every year in the first 60 years of its life;
 - (iii) an unknown species – the leaves of the tree which only grew on the top portion were very big and thick, and the tree was rarely seen in Hong Kong;
- (f) Sites D1 and D2, which would only provide about 620 flats, could not relieve the acute housing problem but would cause significant adverse impacts on the surrounding area. Consideration should be given to using another vacant site to the southwest of Site D1 between Yue Kok Village and the Tai Po Industrial Estate, currently zoned “G/IC” and “Other Specified Uses” annotated “Bus Depot”, for housing development;
- (g) according to paragraph 6.3.8(b) of the Paper, it was estimated that the additional traffic generated from the proposed development would be about 280 vehicles at the morning peak hour. However, based on the car ownership ratio of two-third and one-fifth of the total number of flats

for the proposed private (about 4,175) and public housing developments (about 10,565) respectively, together with the vehicles generated from Mont Vert, the total number of additional vehicles to be generated from these housing developments would be about 6,000. Assuming only 50% of the additional vehicles would travel during the morning peak hour, the additional traffic generated would be about 3,000 vehicles. Besides, based on assessment conducted by the applicant of Mont Vert under application No. A/TP/333 many years ago, the estimated traffic for the section of Ting Kok Road during the morning peak from 7:30 am to 8:30 am was about 62 vehicles/minute at that time. The Government's estimation on the additional traffic to be generated from the proposed development was not accurate;

- (h) in view of the above, he and the villagers of Fung Yuen Village considered that Sites D1 and D2 should not be used for any development. The alternative site to the east of Yue Kok Village should be developed into a comprehensive development comprising both public and private housing; and

[Mr Clarence W.C. Leung left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

- (i) it was understood that the proposed development under Amendment Items A1 and A2 comprised two primary schools. If possible, Site D1, which was a piece of land previously donated by the villagers of the three villages for the development of a former primary school (Ming Lun School) and was adjacent to the existing playground, should be used for a primary school. This could help to preserve the existing mature and 'feng shui' trees within the site, brought back the collective memory of the villagers and would not cause any adverse impact on the environment.

[Actual speaking time of R1625 : about 15 minutes]

27. In response to a Member's question on the location of the existing trees as mentioned in the presentation, Mr Wong clarified that those trees were within Site D1. A copy of the information about the existing trees within the site was passed to the Secretariat for record.

R1628 – WWF

28. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Mr Tobi Lau made the following main points:

- (a) WWF objected to rezoning of the “GB” site near Fung Yuen for residential development under Amendment Item D;
- (b) according to 2014 Policy Address, the Government would rezone those “GB” sites which were devegetated, deserted or formed for residential use. Site inspection carried out in May 2014 revealed that the site was richly vegetated and undisturbed. The rezoning was not in line with the site selection criteria for rezoning of “GB” sites as set out in the Policy Address;
- (c) apart from serving its intended function to define the limits of urban and sub-urban development areas, the site also provided a natural buffer to the ‘Site of Special Scientific Interest’ (‘SSSI’) to its north-west. Approval of the rezoning of the “GB” site for residential development would set an undesirable precedent for other similar applications submitted by other private developers in future, the cumulative impact of which would lead to the degradation of the green environment of the area. Besides, as illustrated by the photomontages prepared by PlanD, the proposed development on the site, which was out-of-context with the adjacent developments, would create adverse visual impact on the surrounding area;
- (d) according to the site visit, signs of natural succession were established

with under-storey vegetation found within the site. WWF considered that the site had become a secondary woodland with trees of 20 to 30 years of age rather than a plantation woodland as described by DAFC in RNTPC Paper No. 6/14;

- (e) it was also noted from the same RNTPC paper that as advised by DAFC, some native species like *Alangium chinense* (八角楓) and *Schima superba* (木荷) were found, the woodland was dominated by some exotic trees such as *Acacia confusa* (相思) and *Eucalyptus sp.* (桉樹). However, based on the information provided by the Conservancy Association (CA) and site inspection, a protected species *Rhodoleia championii* (吊鐘王) was also found within the site but such information was not provided in the RNTPC Paper. Moreover, there was a great discrepancy on the total number of trees within the site as estimated by CA, Green Sense and the Government, with the former two estimated that at least 3,000 and about 2,000 mature trees would be affected by the proposed residential development on the site while it was mentioned in the Paper that there was only 1,260 mature trees within the site. It was therefore doubtful whether the number and species of trees on the site had been verified by concerned government departments. In this regard, the tree survey, if conducted in a broad-brush manner, might prevent the Board from making an informed decision;
- (f) while the Government would require the prospective developer to carry out a tree survey after the sites were rezoned, it was considered more appropriate that a reliable tree survey should be conducted prior to the rezoning proposal was approved;
- (g) citing the rezoning of a “GB” site in Tai Wo Ping, Shek Kip Mei as an example, some objective information on the number and age of trees within the subject site were provided in the relevant Paper. Site inspection to the Tai Wo Ping site also revealed that the trees within the site had been properly recorded and numbered. However, during a visit

to the site near Fung Yuen, no concrete evidence could be found to demonstrate that the trees had been properly surveyed and recorded. Clarification from concerned departments on how the specific number of 1,260 trees within the site was derived should be provided; and

- (h) in view of the above, the Board was urged to reject the rezoning proposal.

[Actual speaking time of R1628 : about 8 minutes]

R1678 – Francis Allan Hay

29. Mr Francis Allan Hay made the following main points:

- (a) PlanD had given more weight to the directive relating to rezoning of “GB” sites as set out in the 2013 Policy Address than the 2014 Policy Address in the subject rezoning exercise. The 2014 Policy Address, which stated the present position of the Government, had clearly set out that only “GB” sites which were devegetated, deserted and disturbed would be considered for rezoning for residential use. PlanD had twisted the Policy Address with a view to achieve desired results;
- (b) he believed that there was a misunderstanding that some representers had suggested to use the Lo Fai Road site as an alternative site for HKIED expansion as all objections against rezoning the site aimed at preserving its status quo instead of developing it for other uses. Instead, the alternative site proposed by the representer for HKIED’s expansion should be the brownfield site in the valley underneath the HKIED;
- (c) as pointed out by another representer, it had been the Government’s intention to protect the green area by designating land as “GB” which served as a buffer between urban and rural area and there was a presumption against development within the “GB” zone. “GB” was not

a land bank to be used by the Government for development when necessary. Even if there was any development within the “GB” zone, no removal of vegetation should be allowed;

- (d) he considered that the word ‘vegetated’ frequently used by DPO/STN in his presentation should refer to shrubland and low bushes instead of woodland. Although the Lo Fai Road site was previously a borrow area with plantation thereafter, the site was now a woodland with trees of 30 years old and it had become a mature natural habitat. The fact that the site was an ex-borrow area did not justify any development on the site;
- (e) the rezoning of the site had contravened CBD. The Government was formulating a strategic action plan to implement CBD and he was a member of the focus group which aimed at drawing up methods to protect the natural habitats and identifying the threats to the natural habitats. The Government’s proposal to develop the subject “GB” site was posing the biggest threat to the natural habitat. Although PlanD said that the site had no ecological value, it was still a natural habitat with tremendous environmental value which should be protected;
- (f) PlanD also used the word ‘degraded’ to justify the rezoning of “GB” sites for housing development. Based on the presentation of Green Sense which showed the current situation of the Lo Fai Road site and the site near Fung Yuen, these richly vegetated sites should never ever be considered for development. The Director of Lands should have rejected the rezoning of the two sites at its outright;
- (g) the Government should focus on developing the brownfield sites such as the one in the valley underneath HKIEd. That privately-owned site, which was zoned “GB”, was huge in area and totally degraded. Although time would be required for the Government to liaise with the private land owner for housing development on that brownfield site, the Government should not contemplate to destroy the “GB” sites merely for

the sake of expediency as these “GB” sites could be developed quickly with minimum consultation. Planning should be done on a professional basis, not on a bureaucratic game of number;

- (h) Members were strongly advised to visit the sites at Lo Fai Road, Fung Yuen and the access road to Sha Lo Tung, if they had not done so, to have a better understanding on why the public raised strong objections to the development on these sites;
- (i) development of the brownfield site underneath HKIEd would achieve the best use of the site in that more flats would be provided than the combined total of the “GB” sites, the problem of inadequate traffic infrastructure could be resolved by requiring the future developer to carry out the construction of access road and other necessary road improvement works, and the existing incompatible activities within the site, which were subject to local complaints for years, could be removed;
- (j) given that illegal structures had been constructed within that brownfield site which was in breach of the lease conditions, LandsD might consider taking appropriate enforcement action by re-entering the site in accordance with the provision of the lease. Alternatively, the best approach was to negotiate with the land owner and to upzone the “GB” site for development;
- (k) all rezoning of “GB” sites in other parts of the territory, be it in Shek Kip Mei, Sham Shui Po and Tai Po, where woodland was involved, should not be considered for development and non-official members were encouraged to visit these sites;
- (l) the Government had taken a wrong approach to include some “GB” sites into the Application List before going through the necessary statutory planning procedure. In so doing, there was a presumption that the Government could force through these rezoning proposals and that

the non-official members of the Board would comply in order to achieve the housing target; and

- (m) the Board should plan for the benefit of the community but not to destroy the environment for the community.

[Actual speaking time of R1678 : about 10 minutes]

R3171 - Wong Ping Lam

R4559 - Wong Hiu Mei

30. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Dr Melissa Wong Hiu Mei made the following main points:

- (a) she was a resident of Lo Fai Road and was also a psychiatrist of the Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital. She had been serving the Tai Po district for 15 years. She together with other medical staff of the hospital would like to bring to the public's attention the impact of "GB" sites, as a recreation facility/open space, on the health of the local residents;
- (b) according to the definition of World Health Organisation, 'health' was a state of complete physical, mental and social well beings. It was not merely the absence of disease or injury. A mentally healthy person was aware of and could realize his own potential and was resilience, while a socially healthy people was able to build up a harmonious relationship with others;
- (c) green space could perform the health functions of promoting physical activities; promoting community participation; enhancing the well beings of those who had contact (by presence or visual) per se; and mitigating traffic, air and noise pollution brought about by the industrial operations;

Promoting physical activities

- (d) a number of overseas researches discovered that green areas could stimulate residents to undertake healthy physical activities such as walking or cycling. An Australian research revealed that access to large, attractive public open space was associated with higher level of walking;
- (e) doing exercise was so important in that it could reduce heart disease, strokes, diabetes, hypertension, obesity and cancer, etc., and reduce mood disorders, stress response, enhanced cognitive functions in various mental illness and dementia, etc. In addition, physical exercise in green spaces had greater psychological and physiological benefits. The synergistic effects of green exercise were supported by findings of a number of overseas researches. An experimental study conducted in the United Kingdom (UK) was cited to illustrate this finding;
- (f) green space itself had 'restorative' effects both physiologically and psychologically. A number of studies had shown that contact (by presence or visual) with green spaces might promote faster healing in patients after surgery. One research also shown that views of nature could improve feelings of neighbourhood safety and even reduce aggression and crime rates;
- (g) amongst the 10 leading causes of death for Hong Kong people, the death rate of the top five of them (i.e. cancer, pneumonia, heart diseases, cerebrovascular diseases and chronic lower respiratory diseases (in order of ranking)) could be improved by doing more exercises. In this regard, if more green spaces were easily accessible by the general public, the death rate of the people in Hong Kong might be improved;

Enhancing the well beings of those who had contact

- (h) about 20% of the people in Hong Kong suffered from emotional

problems to a certain extent. The total number of patients with mental illness increased from 165,300 in 2009-10 to 205,000 in 2013-14, and the trend was expected to continue. The Government's investment on mental health had also increased from \$3.75 billion in 2009-10 to over \$5 billion in 2013-14. If Hong Kong's living environment was provided with more green spaces for physical exercise and mental relief, the Government expenditure in mental health could be reduced;

- (i) Mr Paul Farmer, the Chief Executive of Central Health Charity Mind in UK, said that even a short period of green exercise could provide a low cost and drug free therapy to help improve the mental well being of those patients with mild mental problem;

Promoting community participation

- (j) attractive green areas in the neighbourhood might serve as a focal point of coordination for social interaction thereby promoting social cohesion;

Mitigating traffic, air and noise pollution

- (k) green spaces attenuated noise pollution in that plants and vegetation could absorb sound waves and visually pleasing landscapes could make noise more tolerable;
- (l) air pollution had significant health impacts as it would cause lung disease, cardiovascular diseases and cancer, etc.. A recent research suggested that the respiratory suspended particulates might affect the normal development and growth of the lungs in children and adolescent;
- (m) green spaces could improve air quality by removing the pollutants from the air;

Overseas studies and researches

- (n) according to a Dutch study on the relationship between green space within 3km radius and the health state of people conducted in 1989, it was found that people living in a greener environment reported fewer health complaints, had better perceived general and mental health, and the result was more pronounced among elderly and lower socio-economic groups;
- (o) another Japanese study conducted in 2002 also revealed that the higher ratio of accessible green areas, the higher the five year survival rate of the senior citizens; and

Conclusion

- (p) to conclude, the Lo Fai Road site, which was the only accessible outdoor green area to provide a recreational outlet/open space for 10,000 local residents and 10,000 staff/students of HKIED in this area, should not be taken away. The rezoning of the site for residential development would adversely affect the health of the local residents as well as the staff/students of HKIED.

[Actual speaking time of R3171 and R4559 : about 15 minutes]

R4205 – Patrick Mo

31. Mr Patrick Mo made the following main points:

- (a) he was a resident of Fu Heng Estate and would like to raise objection to the rezoning under Amendment Items B and C;
- (b) the subject rezoning made by the Board was a ‘black box’ decision. Although the local villagers and TPDC had been consulted on the rezoning, other residents of Fu Heng Estate close to the sites were not

aware of such rezoning. No site notice was found on the lobby of the residential blocks of the estate and DO(TP) did not inform nor consult the local residents about the subject rezoning proposals. He only learned about the proposed amendments from the newspaper articles;

- (c) the “GB” site next to the Nethersole Hospital, which was previously planned for a private hospital development, was now planned for public housing development to meet the housing target. The affected residents in the vicinity of the site, particularly those of Fu Heng Estate and Chung Nga Court, were not consulted on such change in land use. The Government should conduct a proper public consultation with the local residents before the rezoning was made;
- (d) the external public transport link between Fu Heng Estate and the MTR Tai Po Station as well as other parts of the territory was already overloaded and the public transport services were inadequate to serve the existing population, in particular during morning peak hour. The addition of more than 20,000 people near Fu Heng Estate would further aggravate the existing traffic congestion and the lack of public transport services. However, there was no information on whether the Government would provide additional infrastructure or other public transport services to improve the current situation;
- (e) the rezoning of the site would cause significant adverse landscape and visual impacts on the residents of the public housing nearby;
- (f) nowadays, the top-down planning approach was no longer applicable as the public and local residents were well aware of their rights to express opinion or raise objections through statutory procedures and proper channels including the lodging of judicial review. Increased social confrontation would be the result if the Government decided to force through the rezoning proposals without proper consultation; and

- (g) as regards the provision of two additional primary schools in another site, as presented by Mr Tam Hoi Pong, he pointed out that there were currently about 18 to 20 primary schools in Tai Po. Among these, 8 to 10 primary schools were not able to intake sufficient primary one students. Should more primary schools be developed in the district, some existing primary schools might be forced to close down in future. The Government was urged to take into account this consideration in future planning.

[Actual speaking time of R4205 : about 8 minutes]

R4327 – Kelly Chan Po King

32. Ms Kelly Chan Po King made the following main points:

- (a) being a Hong Kong citizen, she would like to raise objection to rezoning the Lo Fai Road site from “GB” to “R(C)” as there was no need for such rezoning;
- (b) Hong Kong had about 800 ha of brownfield sites. The Government should first utilize these brownfield sites rather than exploiting the “GB” sites. The impact of destroying the “GB” site was irreversible;
- (c) approval of the rezoning would set an undesirable precedent which would affect the “GB” of other areas. According to past records, there were six rezoning applications involving the “GB” sites which were rejected by the Board. If the Board approved the subject rezoning, other private land owners would be encouraged to submit the rezoning applications again and it would be difficult for the Board to reject these future applications;
- (d) the “GB” sites played an important role in providing a buffer between the urban and rural areas. The rezoning of “GB” sites would destroy

the existing buffers and was not supported;

- (e) in view of the above, the proposal to rezone the site for residential development should be withdrawn, and the Government should review the use of brownfield sites to meet the demand for more housing land.

[Actual speaking time of R4327 : about 2 minutes]

33. As Mr Francis Allan Hay (R1678) had indicated his intention to supplement his representation, the Vice-chairman invited Mr Hay to do so.

34. Mr Hay said that the health benefits of the “GB” sites, as mentioned by Dr Melissa Wong in her presentation, was very applicable to the Lo Fai Road site which was extremely well-planned and fully accessible to all local residents and students of HKIEd. The site was widely used for doing exercises and walking dogs, etc., and hence was beneficial to the health of the local residents and students. Moreover, the same situation also applied to the road leading to Sha Lo Tung which was peaceful with a tranquil environment.

35. As all the representers and the representer’s representative attending the session had completed their presentations, the Vice-chairman said that the session would be adjourned for lunch at this point. The Vice-chairman thanked the representers, the representers’ representatives and the Government representatives for attending the hearing. They all left the meeting at this point.

36. The meeting adjourned for a lunch break at 1:05 p.m.

37. The meeting was resumed at 2:30 p.m.

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

Mr Stanley Y.F. Wong

Vice-chairman

Mr Roger K.H. Luk

Dr C.P. Lau

Professor K.C. Chau

Mr H.W. Cheung

Mr Lincoln L.H. Huang

Mr Peter K.T. Yuen

Principal Environmental Protection Officer
(Metro Assessment),
Environmental Protection Department
Mr Ken Y.K. Wong

Deputy Director of Lands
Mr Jeff Y.T. Lam

Director of Planning
Mr K.K. Ling

Sha Tin, Tai Po and North District

Agenda Item 2 (cont'd)

[Open Meeting (Presentation and Question Sessions)]

Consideration of Representations and Comments in respect of the
Draft Tai Po Outline Zoning Plan No. S/TP/25
(TPB Paper No. 9797)

[The meeting was conducted in Cantonese and English]

Group 2

**Representations No. R1 to R5, R6(Part) to R1273(Part), R1324(Part), R1325,
R1326(Part), R1327 to R1624, R1625(Part), R1626 to R6321 and R6322(Part)
Comments No. C1, C2(Part) to C79(Part) and C80 to C439**

Presentation and Question Session

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

- | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Mr C.K. Soh | – | District Planning Officer/Shu Tin, Tai Po and North (DPO/STN), Planning Department (PlanD) |
| Mr C.T. Lau | – | Senior Town Planner/Shu Tin, Tai Po and North (STP/STN), PlanD |
| Mr Dennis K.K. Mok | – | Senior Nature Conservation Officer (Central) (SNCO(C)), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) |
| Mr K.L. Wong | – | Engineer/Tai Po 1, Transport Department (TD) |

R1070 – Renee Kwong

Ms Renee Kwong – Representor

R1133 – 李淑芬

Ms Lee Shuk Fun, Betty – Representor

R1678 – Francis Allan Hay

Mr Francis Allan Hay – Representor

R4205 – Patrick Mo

Mr Patrick Mo – Representor

C2 – Edith Ng

C3 – Ruby Wong

C32 – Ady Wong

C55 – Alice Lu

C56 – Ocean Wong

Ms Ruby Wong – Commentor and
Commenters' Representative

C82 – Li Yee Ting

Ms Li Yee Ting – Commentor

C83 – Chan Yee Tak

Mr Chan Yee Tak – Commentor

C89 – Hobman Company Limited

Ms Mabel Lam – Commentor's Representative

40. The Vice-chairman extended a welcome and explained the procedures of the hearing. He said that the current session was for the commentors and their representatives to make their oral submissions. Due to the re-shuffling of the hearing sessions of the

representations, the final group of representers would be heard by the Board at the next session to be held on 18.12.2014. In this regard, the commenters and their representatives might opt to make their oral submissions on 18.12.2014 after the final group of representers had presented to the Board, instead of speaking at the current session. The Vice-chairman then invited the commenters and their representatives to elaborate on their comments.

C2 – Edith Ng

C3 – Ruby Wong

C32 – Ady Wong

C55 – Alice Lu

C56 – Ocean Wong

41. Ms Ruby Wong, commenter and the commenters' representative, raised the following questions: (1) why the Chairman of the Board was absent from the current session; (2) why the Vice-chairman, being a member of the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HKHA) and the chairman of the Subsidised Housing Committee of HKHA, did not refrain from attending the meeting, the discussion item of which involved public housing sites; and (3) why each representer or commenter was subject to a time limit of 10 minutes.

[Mr H.W. Cheung arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

42. The Vice-chairman said that the session of 11.12.2014 was for the collective hearing of the representations and the related comments under Group 2, which was mainly related to the rezoning of six sites for private residential developments and two "G/IC" sites. Since the Chairman's relative who lived in the Lo Fai Road area had submitted a representation and the Group 2 hearing involved Amendment Item E in relation to the rezoning of a site at Lo Fai Road, the Chairman therefore had declared an interest and refrained from attending the Group 2 hearing. Due to the large number of representations and comments received in respect of the OZP, a time limit of 10 minutes was set for each representer and commenter to make his oral submission. If an authorised representative was appointed by one or more representers or commenters, the authorised representative could use the cumulative time allotted to the persons he represented to make his oral

submission. As Ms Wong was a commenter herself and was authorised by four other commenters to speak on their behalf, she would be allotted a total speaking time of 50 minutes.

43. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Ms Ruby Wong made the following main points:

- (a) she was a resident of Fu Heng Estate and objected to Amendment Items A1 to A5 and C which involved rezoning the “Green Belt” (“GB”) and “Government, Institution or Community” (“G/IC”) sites at Tai Po Area 9 and Chung Ngan Road and the “GB” site to the west of the Nethersole Hospital for residential developments;
- (b) while the need to address the acute housing demand of the general public was recognised, the Government should not blindly pursue housing developments at the expense of the local residents’ interest but should regulate the demand through a population policy;
- (c) the Government had implemented the “GB” rezoning exercise without first consulting the public. As regards the proposed public housing development at Tai Po Area 9, the largest stakeholders, i.e. the residents of Fu Heng Estate, were not consulted in the first place. They only read about the development proposal from the newspapers after the OZP was amended. The consultation conducted by the Housing Department (HD) was done silently, and the questionnaires sent out by the District Council members and the owners’ corporation to solicit local residents’ views received only very low response rates. The Tai Po District Council (TPDC) had only consulted the Tai Po Hospital and Hong Chi Association of Pinehill, but not the residents of Fu Heng Estate. The residents’ views were totally neglected. In a survey conducted in a social networking website, over 78% of the respondents opposed residential developments at Tai Po Area 9, and 61% of which opposed the development of public housing;

- (d) according to the Town Planning Board Guidelines on Application for Development within “GB” Zone under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance (the Ordinance) (TPB PG-No. 10), the main purposes of the “GB” zone were to conserve existing landscape features, areas of scenic value and areas of recognised “fung shui” importance; define the outer limits of urbanised districts and serve as a buffer between and within urban areas; and provide additional outlets for passive recreational uses. The vegetations on the original “GB” zones adjacent to Fu Heng Estate had existed for over 20 years and become mature. They were not those devegetated, deserted or formed areas the Government’s “GB” rezoning exercise should focus. Those vegetated areas were serving as passive recreational outlets for the nearby residents. If they were developed, the daily lives and health of the Fu Heng residents would be seriously affected and the buffer between country park and the urbanised areas would lose. It should be noted that the development of Mont Vert at Fung Yuen nearby had already spoiled the habitat of butterflies;
- (e) there was an old and significant banyan tree at the proposed housing site to the west of the Nethersole Hospital under Amendment Item C. The tree should be registered as an Old and Valuable Tree (OVT) and preserved together with its adjacent vegetations;
- (f) the value of trees in general should not be under-estimated. The removal of trees was against the Government’s advocacies for peoples’ harmony with trees, blue sky action and carbon emission reduction;
- (g) nearly 60% of the respondents in a survey conducted by the Chinese University of Hong Kong opposed the sacrifice of “GB” sites for increasing housing land supply despite the acute housing shortage;
- (h) there was specific planning intention for each site, e.g. “GB” sites were

intended to serve as buffers between built-up areas and country parks and “G/IC” sites were intended to reserve land for provision of government, institution or community (GIC) facilities serving the neighbourhood. According to the Town Planning Board Guidelines on Application for Development/Redevelopment within “G/IC” Zone for Uses other than GIC Uses under Section 16 of the Ordinance (TPB PG-No. 16), the low-rise and low-density GIC developments also served as “breathing space” within high-rise and high-density environment. In view of the aging population of the district, the original “G/IC” sites in Tai Po Area 9 should be reserved for GIC uses to meet the needs of the neighbourhood but not rezoned for high-density residential development. As the Board had rejected a number of private development proposals within the “GB” and “G/IC” zones in the past for reasons of environmental impacts and being not in line with planning intentions, it should not use a different standard to assess the rezoning proposals for housing developments;

- (i) Tai Po had been planned as a new town for accommodating a population of about 300,000 since 1980 and was intended to create a minimum level of disturbance to the natural environment throughout its development. The new town development had been completed and the current population should have exceeded 300,000. Any further developments in Tai Po would overload the existing community facilities and road infrastructure;
- (j) the population of Tai Po was mostly residing in areas to the north of the Tai Po Market Station. There were six major public housing estates and other village settlements in Tai Po, which heavily relied on Nam Wan Road and Ting Kok Road to access to the Tai Po Market Station. Most local residents had to spend 10 to 15 minutes to go the station from their homes. People who commuted by private cars relied on Tolo Highway to go to the urban areas, which was always very congested during the rush hours. Tai Po Area 9 was far away from the

station. The future developments in the area would need to rely on feeder transport to go to the station, which would overload the existing road capacity and affect the current road users;

- (k) the traffic impact assessments (TIA) conducted for the housing proposals only focused on the traffic conditions of specific local areas but not assessing Tai Po new town as a whole. Notwithstanding that the TIA might conclude that the new housing proposals would not generate significant traffic impacts, the local residents, who were mostly working outside Tai Po, were fully aware of the current transport problems of the district, including the saturation of road capacity and bus services;
- (l) while the population in Tai Po continued to increase, there were no provision of additional community facilities. With the aging population and more and more people moving to the adjoining North District, the demand for medical services in the Nethersole Hospital would increase. There was a need to expand the Nethersole Hospital as soon as possible;
- (m) a senior official of PlanD had advised TPDC in 2009 that Tai Po Area 9 was technically not suitable for high-density and high-rise public housing development as it was situated on a high topography, remote from the town centre, close to hospital and could not sustain its own transport services and community facilities. The current public housing proposals in Tai Po Area 9 contradicted PlanD's previous stance;
- (n) as suggested by the Conservancy Association, the original "GB" zone in Tai Po Area 9 under Amendment Item A1, which was still well covered by vegetation, should be retained;
- (o) as Tai Po Area 9 was originally intended for private hospital use, it

could now be changed for the development of public hospital, which would create less traffic impact and could meet the aspirations of the public;

- (p) the views of the Fu Heng Estate residents should be the most important. However, over 80% of the Fu Heng Estate residents were not aware of the rezoning proposals. The green belts around Fu Heng Estate, in particular the site under Amendment Item C, provided recreational grounds for the residents. If the site was used for high-density residential development, the scenic views of the area and the ridgeline would be impaired;
- (q) the Fu Heng Estate residents were most concerned about the traffic issue. Public transport services were all along insufficient for Fu Heng Estate, with no feeder bus and only one bus route to go to the Tai Po Market Station and another bus route to go to Tsim Sha Tsui. The daily lives of the residents relied mainly on the services provided at the nearby Tai Yuen Estate and Tai Po Plaza. As the new housing developments could not be self-sustained in terms of transport services and community facilities, it would overload the existing services and facilities at Fu Heng Estate; and
- (r) in conclusion, the Board was urged to withdraw the rezoning proposals for residential developments in Tai Po Area 9 as the developments would impose pressure on the existing transport services and community facilities of Fu Heng Estate. The rezoning of “GB” sites to increase housing land supply was inappropriate and not sustainable. The original “GB” zones should be maintained for preserving the well vegetated areas, and the original “G/IC” zones should be used for the expansion of the Nethersole Hospital or development of elderly homes. Other brownfield sites in Tai Po could be considered for housing development, e.g. the valley at Tung Tsz near the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd), the abandoned farmland at Kau Lung Hang, the

government land at Yue Kok and the flat land at Lam Tsuen near Lam Kam Road Interchange.

[Actual speaking time of C2, C3, C32, C55 and C56: 21 minutes]

44. The Vice-chairman noted that the oral submission of Ms Ruby Wong was mainly related to Amendment Items A1 to A5 in relation to the proposed public housing sites which were the subject of the Group 1 hearing. He said that the comments of Ms Wong would be recorded and conveyed to Members for considering the representations on Amendment Items A1 to A5 under Group 1. The Vice-chairman further explained that as he and several Members had connection with HKHA, they had declared interests and refrained from attending the Group 1 hearing. They also would not be involved in the deliberation of the representations on Amendment Items A1 to A5.

C83 – Chan Yee Tak

45. Mr Chan Yee Tak opined that the Government should adopt a holistic approach to review and rezone “GB” sites for residential developments, rather than rezoning the sites in a piecemeal manner. Moreover, priority should be given to converting the brownfield sites in the rural New Territories for housing development instead of rezoning the vegetated “GB” sites.

[Actual speaking time of C83: 1 minute]

C89 – Hobman Company Limited

46. Ms Mabel Lam, the commenter’s representative, said that many representers, including Lo Fai Road Green Belt Concern Group (R1638), TPDC member Ms Wong Pik Kiu (R1636), and Legislative Council members Hon. Cheung Chiu Hung Fernando (R1629) and Hon. Tong Ka Wah Ronny (R1631), had suggested that the brownfield site at Tung Tsz near HKIEd could be utilised for private residential development in lieu of the densely vegetated site at Lo Fai Road under Amendment Item E. Hobman Company Limited (C89) was the owner of part of the said brownfield site at Tung Tsz. The

company was willing to cooperate and facilitate any Government initiatives of developing that site for housing use. With a site area of about 9 hectares, it was estimated that the Tung Tsz site could provide some 2,000 to 3,000 flats if developed with a plot ratio of 1, which could greatly address the current housing shortage.

[Actual speaking time of C89: 2 minutes]

47. As the presentations of the commenters and their representatives had been completed, the meeting proceeded to the Question Session.

48. The Vice-chairman said that many representers and commenters were of the view that public consultation of the rezoning proposals was inadequate in that most of the affected residents were not aware of the proposals. He asked DPO/STN to brief the Board on how the consultation had been carried out. He also asked DPO/STN to explain the differences between the first and second stages of the “GB” review exercise, in particular the site selection criteria. The Vice-chairman also requested the representative of AFCD to explain to the Board the general procedure of conducting tree surveys and whether a comprehensive tree survey had been conducted for each amendment site in the current rezoning exercise.

[Dr C.P. Lau left the meeting at this point.]

49. In response to the question on public consultation, Mr C.K. Soh, DPO/STN, said that before the rezoning proposals were submitted to the Board for consideration in April 2014, PlanD had consulted the Environment, Housing and Works Committee (EHWC) of TPDC twice on 8.1.2014 and 13.2.2014. The proposed development parameters and estimated number of flats for each site were presented to EHWC. Various views were received from the TPDC members during the two consultations. The TPDC members representing the constituencies of the affected areas had conveyed the proposals to the concerned residents and gathered their views. For instance, the TPDC member representing the Lo Fai Road area had organised the owners’ corporations of five housing estates at Lo Fai Road to meet with PlanD on 4.3.2014 to explain to them the rezoning proposals. The local views received from the TPDC members and residents

during those consultations had been incorporated into RNTPC Paper No. 6/14 in relation to the proposed amendments to the OZP which was submitted to the Board for consideration on 4.4.2014. During the two-month exhibition period of the draft Tai Po OZP incorporating the proposed amendments, representatives of PlanD, AFCD, TD and the Tai Po District Office attended another meeting with the owners' corporations of the housing estates at Lo Fai Road on 3.5.2014 to exchange views on the proposed residential development under Amendment Item E and the potential impacts. EHWC of TPDC was also further consulted on the amendments to the OZP at its meeting on 14.5.2014.

50. As regards the "GB" review exercise, Mr C.K. Soh said that town planning was an on-going process responding to the development needs of the community. The "GB" review exercise was one of the means to accomplish the latest policy of the Government on increasing housing land supply to meet the acute housing demand. The first stage of the "GB" review, which focused on "GB" sites that were devegetated, deserted or formed, was completed in 2012, with 13 "GB" sites involving a total area of about 57 hectares proposed to be rezoned for housing use. The results of the first stage of the "GB" review were announced in the 2013 Policy Address, which also stated that PlanD would be conducting the second stage of the "GB" review with a view to releasing more sites for housing development in light of the target of providing 470,000 flats in ten years. The second stage of the review considered those vegetated "GB" sites which had a relatively low buffer or conservation value and were adjacent to existing transport and infrastructural facilities. In reviewing the suitability of developing "GB" zones, relevant considerations would be taken into account, including transport and infrastructural capacity, provision of community facilities and open space, appropriate development restrictions, local character and existing development intensity, and potential environmental, visual and air ventilation impacts. The location of the sites being close to existing transport and infrastructural facilities was of particular importance as these sites would be more readily available for development for meeting the housing need in the short and medium terms. The second stage of the review identified about 70 potential "GB" sites with a total area of about 150 hectares for housing development, which amounted to about 1% of the total 15,200 hectares of land being zoned "GB" on the statutory plans in Hong Kong. In terms of the Tai Po OZP which covered about 2,400 hectares of land, 19 hectares of "GB" zone were identified for housing development in the current rezoning exercise, which amounted

to about 1.5% of the total 1,260 hectares of land zoned “GB” in Tai Po. It was expected that about 10,500 flats could be provided in these new housing sites, of which some 6,000 flats would be for public housing and 4,000 flats would be for private housing.

51. On the issue of tree survey, Mr Dennis K.K. Mok, SNCO(C), AFCD, said that tree surveys for the purpose of rezoning “GB” sites for housing development would be conducted by the proponent department, and AFCD would provide comments on the tree surveys conducted. For the “GB” sites identified for private housing development in the current rezoning exercise, LandsD had engaged registered landscape architects to conduct tree surveys for each site and the tree survey reports had been submitted to AFCD and PlanD for vetting. AFCD considered that the information recorded in those tree survey reports were generally accurate.

52. In response to the Vice-chairman’s follow-up question on how the tree surveys for the private housing sites were carried out, Mr Jeff Y.T. Lam, Deputy Director of Lands, said that LandsD would engage outside professional persons to conduct the tree surveys for the potential sale sites according to the contractual terms. The tree survey reports compiled by the contractors would be submitted to LandsD for which would approach AFCD to vet the reports. However, he did not have information in hand regarding how the tree surveys were actually carried out. Mr C.K. Soh supplemented that some guidelines on conducting tree survey and tree assessment had been set out in the Development Bureau’s Technical Circular (Works) No. 10/2013 on Tree Preservation. It was defined in the circular that a plant would be considered as a tree if its trunk diameter measured 95mm or more at a height of 1.3m above the ground. It also required that information on species, height, trunk diameter, crown spread, amenity value, form, health and structural conditions, suitability for transplanting, conservation status and recommendations for retaining/transplanting/felling, etc., should be provided for each tree surveyed.

53. A Member noted that unlike the sites identified at the first stage of the “GB” review, which were devegetated, deserted or formed, the sites identified at the second stage would inevitably be vegetated. This Member asked DPO to further explain the selection criteria for the “GB” sites at the second stage. In response, Mr C.K. Soh said that at the

second stage of the “GB” review, areas of difficult topography would first be excluded. PlanD and AFCD would then have a preliminary assessment on the ecological value of the remaining vegetated areas. Areas of high scenic, landscape or ecological value would also be excluded. For the shortlisted sites, tree surveys would be conducted to identify if there were any significant trees worthy for preservation. If trees were considered worthy of preservation, the remaining areas of the sites would be assessed to see if they were feasible to allow development. In the proposed housing site to the west of the Nethersole Hospital under Amendment Item C, for instance, both PlanD and AFCD considered that the old and valuable banyan tree within the site should be preserved. The relevant tree preservation requirements would be stipulated in the lease of that sale site. For trees within the sites which were not of significant value, they might be allowed to be felled subject to the requirements on greening and compensatory tree planting under the prevailing control mechanism on tree preservation and landscaping.

54. A Member said that while PlanD had provided information on the number of trees on the proposed housing sites, including the Fung Yuen site under Amendment Items D1 and D2, some representers alleged that there should be many more trees on the sites. This Member questioned if the information provided by PlanD or the representers was more accurate. In response, Mr Tobi Lau, representative of World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong (WWF) (R1628), said that WWF had not conducted any tree survey on the Fung Yuen site. When staff of WWF and other green groups, including the Conservancy Association (CA), jointly inspected the site, CA estimated that there were about 3,000 mature trees on the site, which differed from the number of about 1,260 trees provided by the Government. Mr Lau noted that Mr Roy Tam of Green Sense (R20) had also said in the morning session that there were about 2,000 trees within the Fung Yuen site. However, he could not judge if the information from CA, Green Sense or the Government was more accurate.

55. Showing the tree survey plan of the Fung Yuen site extracted from the tree survey report on the visualiser, Mr C.K. Soh said that every tree on the site was surveyed and recorded by LandsD’s contractor by marking its location with a circle and assigning it a number on the survey plan. The information and assessment for every such tree surveyed, including its species, measurements, conditions and recommendation for

retaining/transplanting/felling, would be listed out in a tree assessment schedule. Although some representers might have a different view on the number of trees within the various rezoning sites, all information presented by PlanD were supported by tree surveys that were conducted by experts and vetted by AFCD and PlanD.

56. Mr Tobi Lau said that during their visit to the Fung Yuen site, they could not find any rings putting on the trees, which were usually taken as evidence of tree survey. In this regard, they queried how the trees were surveyed and how the number of about 1,260 trees was derived.

57. The Vice-chairman noted that the information provided by the Government was backed by tree surveys, while the number of trees indicated by the representers might be based on their estimations.

58. In response to the same Member's question on why he considered that the Fung Yuen site had environmental value, Mr Francis Allan Hay (R1678) said that the Fung Yuen site was a woodland which was easily accessible and providing a tranquil environment to the nearby residents. The environmental value of the site was the contribution of the thousands of trees made to the environment and the benefits they brought to the residents. It was wrong to blindly destroy the woodland because it was assessed to be of no ecological value. There were wildlife habitats in the woodland with many different animal species. The woodland which had existed for over 30 years had already formed part of the natural environment. If the Government considered that there were no OVTs in the woodland or the trees were common and exotic species, then over 90% of woodland in Hong Kong could be removed for development. The tree preservation and landscaping requirements under lease, as proposed by the Government, could not compensate for the loss of the natural environment and contributed nothing to a decent living environment.

59. The same Member sought clarification from DPO if conservation value of vegetation was a consideration in designating "GB" zone, and whether the second stage of the "GB" review, which emphasised that conservation value would be taken into account, had deviated from the planning intention of "GB" zone. This Member said that when

asking the same question on the planning intention of “GB” zone during the consideration of the proposed amendments to the OZP, the representative of PlanD had advised that “GB” zone was mainly for serving as green corridor and providing ventilation and landscape features, and conservation value was not a consideration in the designation of “GB” zone.

60. In response, Mr C.K. Soh said that the planning intention of the “GB” zone was primarily for defining the limits of urban development areas by natural features and serving as a buffer between urban and natural environment. It should be noted that most of the “GB” zones were covered with vegetation, which did have some conservation or ecological value in addition to their intrinsic landscape and buffering values. As such, in the “GB” review, priority was given to identify those vegetated “GB” zones with lower conservation and ecological value for rezoning. If the conservation or ecological value of the “GB” zones was neglected, there should be many more sites that could be identified for housing use and not just 1% out of the total 15,200 hectares of “GB” zones in Hong Kong.

61. Mr Soh continued to say that according to the tree surveys conducted, there were about 5,000 existing trees within the four proposed housing sites under Amendment Items C to F, which might need to be felled. On the other hand, the Government had planted about 13,700,000 new trees over the territory in the past ten years, and about 700,000 trees were planted in 2013-14. The Government’s initiatives on greening had never stopped. While some trees had to be felled for housing development, it might be considered as a compromise in view of the current acute housing shortage in Hong Kong.

62. The Vice-chairman asked the representative of AFCD if he could respond to the comment of Mr Tobi Lau that there were no rings being put on the trees at the Fung Yuen site for tree survey. In response, Mr Dennis K.K. Mok said that AFCD received the tree survey reports for the proposed housing sites from LandsD in March/April 2014 and vetted the contents of the reports. On-site cross-checking had been done by the staff of AFCD. Every tree surveyed was accompanied by a photo of the tree and recorded in the submitted report. AFCD had verified that the information presented in the tree survey reports were generally in order and accurate.

63. In response to a Member's question on whether the second stage of the "GB" review had deviated from the presumption against development under the planning intention of "GB" zone, Mr C.K. Soh replied that unlike considering an application for residential development in "GB" zone under section 16 of the Ordinance, the rezoning of the "GB" sites to residential zone represented a complete change of the planning intention of the sites. Upon rezoning of the "GB" sites to residential use, any future developments on the sites would be assessed based on the planning intention of the residential zone but not that of the "GB" zone.

64. A Member asked if LandsD would have any response to the views of Mr Roy Tam of Green Sense (R20) in the morning session that LandsD's LAO Practice Note No. 7/2007 on "Tree Preservation and Tree Removal Application for Building Development in Private Projects" was not effective in protecting the trees on those "GB" sites which were densely covered with vegetation as the Tree Unit of LandsD was not as resourceful as the developers' tree experts, and it would ultimately give way to the developers' development right and allow felling of trees. In response, Mr Jeff Y.T. Lam said that in general, there was a tree preservation clause in the modern lease of housing site. LandsD would take lease enforcement action if the developer was in breach of the tree preservation clause, e.g. felling trees within the site prior to LandsD's approval. There were cases in the past where lease enforcement action had been taken by charging the developers heavy penalty sums. Enforcement action under tree preservation clause was an effective means to discourage unauthorised removal of trees on private land.

65. A Member said that some representers from TPDC and Fung Yuen who had presented their views on Amendment Items D1 and D2 in the morning session were particularly concerned that the site would be connected to the busy road junction of Ting Kok Road and Dai Fat Street which was the main access to Tai Po Industrial Estate and proposed that part of the site should be reserved for road widening. This Member asked DPO about the traffic conditions of that area. In response, Mr C.K. Soh said that the road junction of Ting Kok Road and Dai Fat Street served as access to both Tai Po Industrial Estate and the proposed housing development at the Fung Yuen site, and the worry of Dr Lau Chee Sing (R1327), TPDC member, on the adverse traffic impact on that road junction was understandable. In this regard, in the rezoning proposal, Amendment Item

D1 was included to allow space for the provision of a proper access to the housing site and possible improvement of the existing road layout so that the capacity of Ting Kok Road would not be undermined. Various design options for the site entrance had been explored by TD, LandsD and PlanD. While Dr Lau's proposal of allowing a 10m-wide road setback could be one of the options, there could be other design options which could achieve the same level of traffic improvement.

66. The same Member asked whether there were any significant trees within the Fung Yuen site under Amendment Items D1 and D2 as a representer from the Fung Yuen area had pointed out that there should be several significant trees within the site, although it was mentioned in the Paper that there were no OVTs or Potentially Registrable OVTs recorded in the tree survey. This Member further asked if there were indeed significant trees within the Fung Yuen site, how would those trees and also the significant banyan tree within the site to the west of the Nethersole Hospital under Amendment Item C be preserved. In response, Mr C.K. Soh said that the area covered by Amendment Item D2 was previously formed due to public works and replanting was carried out thereafter. The trees within the area had existed for over 20 years. As for the area covered by Amendment Item D1, the trees therein were much older although it was not certain if they had existed for over a hundred years. This area would be designed as the future entrance to the housing site and the existing trees would be preserved as far as possible. With an existing playground next to the area, it was expected that the amenity value of this roadside area could be improved through appropriate greening and landscape design. As regards the old banyan tree, *Ficus Microcarpa*, within the site under Amendment Item C, it had a large crown spread of about 30m with a very good tree form, and was recommended to be preserved. With an area of about 0.57 hectare, it had been assessed that even though the old banyan tree had to be preserved and with a 15m-wide non-building area in the middle of the site, the northern portion of the site could still accommodate one residential block and the southern portion two blocks adopting a domestic plot ratio of 6 and a maximum building height of 110mPD.

67. The same Member said that according to Ms Ruby Wong (C3) who had quoted the minutes of a TPDC meeting held in 2009, PlanD had advised TPDC that the site in Tai Po Area 9 was not suitable for high-density public housing development. This Member

asked if there was any change in circumstances which warranted that the site in Tai Po Area 9 was now considered suitable for housing development. In response, Mr C.K. Soh said that the proposal considered in 2009 only covered the then vacant “G/IC” site to the immediate northeast of Tai Po Hospital, the development on which faced certain constraints including the shared use of an access road with Tai Po Hospital. In the current rezoning proposal, the areas to the east and west of Chung Nga Road had been included in the proposed public housing site, in addition to the original “G/IC” site. This had allowed greater flexibility on the provision vehicular and pedestrian accesses, school and other community facilities in the development. In view of the current keen demand for public housing, sites with greater constraints would also be explored. The Housing Department and PlanD had worked together to resolve various technical problems and worked out a feasible public housing development proposal for the site.

68. In response to a Member’s enquiry on the status of a brownfield site at Tung Tsz which was zoned “GB”, Mr C.K. Soh said that the site was located to the southeast of HKIEd. From the aerial photos taken in different years, it was noted that the site was originally covered with dense vegetation. However, vegetation clearance and land filling activities were carried out on the site, which was later converted for open storage use until the current moment. Although the current use on the site was undesirable in land use terms, no planning enforcement action under the Ordinance could be taken as the area was not previously covered by a Development Permission Area Plan. As the site was held under the Block Government Lease demised for Agricultural Use, LandsD also had difficulty in taking any action against the open storage use. As regards whether this brownfield site could be used for housing development as suggested by some representers and commenters, the possibility would not be ruled out, but the development constraints in terms of water supply, drainage, infrastructure and traffic had not yet been resolved. As such, the Government’s imminent effort was to focus on identifying suitable “GB” sites for housing development with a view to realising the housing supply in the short and medium terms.

69. Mr Francis Allan Hay supplemented that the concerned brownfield site had received many complaints from the nearby residents since it was degraded and turned to open storage use. Over time, a number of temporary structures had been erected on the

site. He considered that LandsD could take action against those erected structures which were not permitted under the Block Government Lease for those Old Schedule Agricultural Lots. It appeared that the Government only focused on reviewing the “GB” sites on government land which could be made use of expediently. However, if the owner of the brownfield site was also keen to develop their land, the Government should start negotiation with the owner and explore the possibility of turning the site for housing use although it might take a longer time for the proposal to materialise.

70. In response to the same Member’s views that, apart from high-density housing, there was also a need to increase the provision of low-density housing in Hong Kong for a balanced housing market and that the Lo Fai Road site under Amendment Item E could be a suitable site for such type of housing, Mr Patrick Mo (R4205) said that he would query if the general public could afford the high property price. Based on his observation, those residential developments along Lo Fai Road generally had a high vacancy rate. He considered that if the intention of the “GB” review was to provide more housing for Hong Kong people, those sites identified for low-density development could not address the current housing problem of Hong Kong.

71. Mr Tobi Lau said that a function of the “GB” zone was the provision of passive recreational outlets to the public. He considered that the Lo Fai Road site could provide a decent leisure ground for the nearby residents and students of HKIEd and should be retained as “GB”.

72. As Members had no further questions to raise, the Vice-chairman thanked the representers, the commenters, the commenters’ representatives and the government representatives for attending the hearing. He reminded them that they were welcome to view the hearing session of the final group of representations scheduled for 18.12.2014 in the public viewing room of the Board. They left the meeting at this point.

73. The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.