

**Minutes of 842nd Meeting of the
Town Planning Board held on 2 September 2005**

Present

Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands
(Planning & Lands)
Mrs. Rita Lau

Chairperson

Mrs. Angelina P.L. Lee

Dr. Peter K.K. Wong

Mr. Michael K.C. Lai

Professor K.C. Ho

Mr. Alex C.W. Lui

Mr. Keith G. McKinnell

Mr. S.L. Ng

Dr. Greg C.Y. Wong

Mr. C.K. Wong

Ms. Carmen K.M. Chan

Professor Nora F.Y. Tam

Mr. Tony W.C. Tse

Mr. Nelson W.Y. Chan

Mr. Leslie H.C. Chen

Dr. Lily Chiang

Mr. Tony C.N. Kan

Mr. Edmund K.H. Leung

Professor N.K. Leung

Professor Bernard V.W.F. Lim

Dr. C.N. Ng

Mr. Daniel B.M. To

Mr. Stanley Y.F. Wong

Mr. Alfred Donald Yap

Ms. Sylvia S.F. Yau

Assistant Director (Environmental Assessment)
Environmental Protection Department
Mr. Elvis Au

Director of Planning
Mr. Bosco C.K. Fung

Deputy Director of Planning/District
Miss Ophelia Y.S. Wong

Secretary

Absent with Apologies

Hon. Patrick S.S. Lau

Vice-chairman

Dr. Alex S.K. Chan

Dr. Rebecca L.H. Chiu

Mr. Francis Y.T. Lui

Dr. Pamela R. Rogers

Mr. Erwin A. Hardy

Mr. David W.M. Chan

Professor David Dudgeon

Professor Peter R. Hills

Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport)
Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
Ms. Ava Chiu

Assistant Director (2), Home Affairs Department
Mr. Patrick Li

Director of Lands
Mr. Patrick L.C. Lau

In Attendance

Assistant Director of Planning/Board
Mr. P.Y. Tam

Chief Town Planner/Town Planning Board
Miss Fiona S.Y. Lung

Town Planner/Town Planning Board
Miss Helen S.H. Lau

1. The Chairperson extended a welcome to all Members.

Agenda Item 1

Confirmation of Minutes of the 841st Meeting

2. The minutes of the 841st meeting held on 19.8.2005 were confirmed without amendment.

[Mr. Michael K.C. Lai and Ms. Carmen K.M. Chan arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

Agenda Item 2

Matters Arising

Request for Amendments to the Approved Central District (Extension)

Outline Zoning Plan No. S/H24/6

(on Reduction of Reclamation Extent)

(TPB Paper No. 7363)

Request for Amendments to the Approved Central District (Extension)

Outline Zoning Plan No. S/H24/6

(on Reduction of Reclamation Extent with Immersed Tube Tunnel Proposal)

(TPB Paper No. 7364)

Request for Amendments to

the Approved Central District (Extension) Outline Zoning Plan No. S/H24/6 and the

Draft Wan Chai North Outline Zoning Plan No. S/H25/1

(on Retention of Existing Shoreline)

(TPB Paper No. 7365)

3. The Secretary reported that in response to the statement made by Mr. K.K. Lau, Deputy Commissioner of Transport, in paragraph 47(d) of the confirmed minutes of the 840th

meeting held on 5.8.2005, Professor Bill Barron of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology wrote to the Chairperson of the Board on 29.8.2005 alleging that Mr. K.K. Lau had misquoted his position on demand management approach in tackling traffic problems. Professor Barron requested that the minutes be amended by deleting the reference to him or inserting instead his views on the demand management measures. The Secretariat had contacted Mr. Lau who agreed to delete the reference to Professor Barron. The proposed amendment to the confirmed minutes was tabled at the meeting for Members' agreement.

4. Members agreed that the confirmed minutes should be amended by deleting the reference to Professor Barron in paragraph 47(d). Professor Barron, Mr. K.K. Lau and the proponents of the rezoning requests would be notified of the amendment accordingly.

[Professor Nora F.Y. Tam arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

Agenda Item 3

Landscape Character Mapping,
Value Assessment and Application of Landscape Database
(TPB Paper No. 7393)

[Open Meeting. The meeting was conducted in both English and Cantonese.]

5. The following representatives of the Study Team were invited to the meeting at this point:

Mr. Augustine Ng	Assistant Director/Territorial and Sub-Regional, Planning Department (PlanD)
Mr. Sandy Duggie	Consultant
Mr. David Morkel	Consultant
Miss Elaine Chan	Consultant

[Dr. C.N. Ng arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

Presentation Session

6. Mr. Augustine Ng gave a short introduction of the background. With the aid of

a powerpoint presentation, Mr. Sandy Duggie covered the following aspects as detailed in the Paper:

- (a) the methodology and process of the landscape classification and character mapping;
- (b) measures that had been adopted to minimize subjectivity in the landscape value assessment, including the selection of landscape evaluation criteria through an open engagement process, appraisals by qualified professionals, and a structured and transparent methodology;

[Mr. S.L. Ng arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

- (c) a description of the Landscape Geographical Information System (LGIS), which comprised data on natural and human landscape features as data layers; field survey and photo records for each landscape area; and hyperlinks to description reports on character and value assessments;
- (d) the application of the landscape data as the common bases for measuring landscape impacts of strategic development projects, as landscape indicators in the sustainability assessment for major planning and development proposals; in preparing town plans; and in processing development proposals; and

[Mr. Edmund K.H. Leung arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

- (e) the limitations of the landscape database including the time-specific baseline survey; the requirement of refining the landscape area boundaries to put the application site in the proper landscape context; and the level of details which were insufficient to cover the landscape characteristics of a development site.

7. Mr. David Morkel gave a demonstration of the LGIS, using Cape D'Aguilar and Lan Kwai Fong as examples to show Members the structure and operation of the LGIS.

[Mr. Alex C.W. Lui arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

Discussion Session

8. Major questions and comments raised by Members were as follows:

Integration with Other GIS

- (a) the database was comprehensive and useful;
- (b) whether the qualitative and quantitative data could be integrated in the LGIS;
- (c) whether the LGIS would be integrated with other databases kept by other departments, e.g. the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department's (AFCD) database on the Country Parks and the Lands Department's Land Information System (LIS);

Public Access to the Database

- (d) whether a centralized database could be made accessible to the public, in particular for educational purpose;
- (e) whether it was possible to upload the database online to facilitate accessibility;

Updating

- (f) the recommendation of updating the landscape database at a 5-year interval was reasonable given that it was a strategic level assessment. However, more frequent updating might be necessary for the sensitive rural areas where filling of ponds/land could take place quickly;
- (g) more frequent updating might also be required for the Metro area, particularly areas with heritage sites (such as the Central Police Station and Victoria Prison) where more detailed analysis of the neighbourhood would be needed to keep abreast with the pace of development;

Methodology and Assessment

- (h) the adoption of a systematic approach to assess landscape value was

supported;

- (i) it was difficult to understand why Wu Kau Tan, being a popular hiking trail with high scenic value, had the same moderate ranking as the Central District. The haphazard land uses shown in the demonstration only represented a small portion of the Wu Kau Tan area. Clarification was sought on whether the assessment was made with reference to the whole area or just the part shown in panoramic photographs in the LGIS;

Appeal Mechanism

- (j) as the assessment of landscape value involved subjective judgement, there would inevitably be some disagreements on the assigned landscape value. Whether there was any appeal mechanism to address the disputes over the assessment of landscape value; and

Translation

- (k) the Chinese translation of the term “Landscape” as 「景觀」 appeared to have only considered the visual quality. The term 「地貌」 might be a more appropriate one.

9. In response, Messrs. Augustine Ng, Sandy Duggie and David Morkel made the following points:

Integration with Other GIS

- (a) the qualitative and quantitative landscape data had been integrated in the LGIS and the database would operate on a common GIS platform used by the Hong Kong Government. Relevant Government departments, including the AFCD and the Environmental Protection Department had been involved in the Study. Relevant information such as ecological, cultural and heritage elements had been incorporated in the database. The LGIS also included relevant data from the LIS of the Lands Department, where appropriate;
- (b) the Sustainable Development Unit was considering to incorporate significant landscape features identified in the Study as landscape

indicators in the sustainability assessment tool – CASET. Landscape would then become an integral part of the sustainability assessment for major planning and development proposals;

Public Access to the Database

- (c) the reports, executive summary and the landscape character map at suitable scale would be uploaded to the PlanD's Homepage. More detailed information would be made available to the public on request. Consideration would be given to integrating the LGIS as well as other databases kept by the PlanD by providing services similar to the e-statutory plan system online in future;

Updating

- (d) landscape character mapping could be carried out at different scales. As the Study was a strategic level exercise, six broad Landscape Character Types (LCTs) at the sub-regional level and 41 LCTs at the district level were used to classify the landscape areas of the entire Hong Kong. The overall landscape data would be updated every 5 years while the landscape character for areas with major changes or known development proposals could be reviewed at a shorter interval;
- (e) the current database could allow initial assessment of landscape impact for development proposals at the local level. Should resources permit and there was such a need, a more detailed and local level mapping exercise could be prepared to provide a basis for assessing the effects of development on the local landscape. It was initially estimated that there would be over 3,000 Landscape Character Areas at the local level;

Methodology and Assessment

- (f) Wu Kau Tan was assigned a 'moderate' ranking mainly due to its lack of visual coherence. Mixed landscape features such as deteriorating village houses, abandoned fields, car parking areas and containers were found in the area. The panoramic photographs were taken at the main village cluster for illustration purpose only but the assessment of the landscape value was based on the whole area. The same methodology had been applied consistently in assessing other areas. Members' comments would

be recorded for reference in the future updating; and

Disagreement over Landscape Value

- (g) the results of the landscape value were cross-referenced with local landscape literatures and researches. Consultation with the professionals and public was conducted to build the community's consensus. If there were disagreements over the landscape value, PlanD would review the landscape value but there was no guarantee that the views would be accepted. The comments would be recorded for further reference in future updating. Although the review of the landscape value might not necessarily lead to an amendment, the diverging views would also be presented to the relevant authority for consideration when the site concerned was involved in any development.

Administration Boundaries

10. Noting that the LCT boundaries did not tally with other administration boundaries of, for example, District Council, Hospital Authority and Census, a Member enquired whether the Government would consider unifying these various boundaries. In response, Mr. Augustine Ng said that as a matter of practice, the PlanD had tried to match the planning boundaries with the administration boundaries as far as possible. However, landscape areas were uniquely associated with landscape features which did not necessarily follow the administration boundaries. While acknowledging the benefit of having a common framework, the Chairperson said that the issue of unifying various administration boundaries was beyond the current discussion.

11. In summing up the discussion, the Chairperson remarked that the Study provided the first systematic classification of landscape in Hong Kong and the first common baseline condition of landscape resources for measuring landscape impact. The PlanD could make reference to the database to broadly assess the landscape impact in processing development proposals. She thanked the representatives of the Study Team for attending the meeting and they then left the meeting.

12. After deliberation, the Board noted the further information of the Study.