

1. The meeting was resumed at 9:10 a.m. on 18.12.2014.
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 Anita W.T. Ma

Ms Bonnie J.Y. Chan

Mr H.W. Cheung

Mr Lincoln L.H. Huang

Mr Stephen H.B. Yau

Mr F.C. Chan

Mr Frankie W.C. Yeung

Deputy Director of Lands (General)

Mr Jeff Y.T. Lam

Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Strategic Assessment),  
Environmental Protection Department

Mr Victor W.T. Yeung

Chief Engineer (Works), Home Affairs Department

Mr Frankie W.P. Chou

Director of Planning

Mr K.K. Ling

Presentation and Question Session  
[Open Meeting]

3. The Secretary recapitulated the declared interests of Members as recorded in paragraphs 3 and 4 of the minutes of 11.12.2014. As the Chairman had declared an interest on the consideration of representations/comments of Group 2, the Vice-Chairman would take up the chairmanship of the meeting.

4. The Vice-chairman said that the Group 1 representations were heard on 27.11.2014, the first session of Group 2 representations were heard on 11.12.2014 and the meeting would continue to hear the rest of the Group 2 representations.

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

Mr C.K. Soh - District Planning Officer/Shan Tin, Tai Po & North, Planning Department (DPO/STN, PlanD)

Mr C.T. Lau - Senior Town Planner/Tai Po (STP/TP), PlanD

Mr K.L. Wong - Engineer/Tai Po 1, Transport Department (Engr/TP1, TD)

Mr K.T. Chan - Nature Conservation Officer (Tai Po), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (NC/TP, AFCD)

R5 – Li Wing Keung

Mr Li Wing Keung - Representer

R13 – Ruy Barretto

Mr Ruy Barretto - Representer

R17 – The Conservancy Association

Mr Ng Hei Man, Roy - Representers' representative

R18 – Kadoorie Farm & Botanic Garden

Mr Tony Nip ] Representers' representatives

Ms Woo Ming Chuan ]

R26 - Yiu Chung Yim

R1629 – Fernando Chiu Hung Cheung Legislative Councillor's Office

R1681 – Suen Palmer, Helen

R1687 - Chong Yiu Kwong

R2778 – Yvonne Lui

R4642 - Erna Zint

R5245 - 黎慎初

R5909 - Yvonne Lui

C91 - 「反對露輝路綠化地改建住宅」關注組

C437 – B.Y. Lam

Ms Yvonne Lui - Representers, and Representers' and  
Commenters' representative

R29 – Dr Ng Tse Choi

Mrs Doris Chow - Representers' representative

R47 – Yvonne Lui Yan Yan

R2779 – Yu Hiu Tung, Helen

R2890 – P Liu

Mr Steve Sau - Representers' representative

R191 - 陳秀霞

R3290 – Jennifer Yip

Ms Jennifer Yip - Representers and Representers' representative

R1166 – Hui Sin Hang

R1655 – So Mo Ching, Crystal

R2742 – 丘家寶

Ms Hui Sin Hang - Representers and Representatives' representative

R1262 – Wong Ka Sing

Mr Wong Ka Sing - Representers

R1327 – 大埔區議員劉志成博士

R1636 – Wong Pik Kiu, Tai Po District Councillor

R2925 - 劉志成

R3432 – Clement Woo Kin Man

Dr Lau Chee Shing - Representers and Representatives' representative

R1638 – Lo Fai Road Green Belt Concern Group & Incorporated Owners of Forest Hill, Richwood Park, Casa Marina 1 & 2 and Tycoon Place

R3044 – Wong Chi Kin, Kelvin

R4287 – 梁靜宜

Ms Betty Ho ] Representers' representatives

Mr Ken Cheng ]

R1641 – The Incorporated Owners of Tycoon Place

R2799 – Lin Pik Fun

Ms Lin Pik Fun - Representers and Representatives' representative

R1642 – The Incorporated Owners of Richwood Park

R2581 – Mak Chi Keung

R4556 – George Mak

Mr Mak Chi Keung - Representers and Representatives' representative

R1643 – The Incorporated Owners of Casa Marina I

R1868 – Ho Mo Kuen

R3867 – Amy Chu

Mrs Amy Chu - Representer and Representers' representative

Mr Chan Mui Chung - Representers' representative

R1645 – Chan Wai Ki, Ricky

Mr Chan Wa Ki, Ricky - Representer

R1648 – Chung Mei Kuen

R1649 – Annet Yu

R2049 – May Wong

Ms Lam Bik Yue - Representers' representative

R1672 – Dr Cho Che Wah

Dr Cho Chi Wah - Representer

R1679 – Poon Chi Sun

Mr Poon Chi Sun - Representer

R1685 – Tse Shing Chi

Ms Tse Shing Chi - Representer

R1766 – 邱古梁

Ms Kwai Chau Yuen - Representer's representative

R1786 – George Mak

Mr Allan Hay - Representer's representative

R2015 – Chan So Kuen

Ms Chan So Kuen - Representer

R2186 – Lam Bik Yue

Mr Li Kin Chung - Representer's representative

R2755 – 蕭揚真

Ms Wong So Yam, Susan - Representers' representative

R2798 - Winky Chan

R3287 - Chan Kit Wah, Eva

R4273- Allan K. Ho

R4312 – Wong Shui Ka

R4318 - Janice Ng

R4335 - Leung Ka Lok

R4336 – Gi Gi Chan

R6294 - Wong Jean Wah

Mr Wong Jean Wah - Representers and Representatives' representative

R2965 – Clement Chung

Mr Clement Chung - Representers

R3510 – Max Hui

Mr Max Hui - Representers

R3546 – Wong Lok Yin, Rocky

Mr Wong Lok Yin, Rocky - Representers

R4091 – Cheung Ching Yee

Ms Wong Lai Kuen - Representers' representative

R4140 – Ng Hau Wun, Angela

Ms Wong Mui Ying - Representers' representative

R4148 – Lam Shuk Ching, Cindy

Ms Lam Shuk Ching, Cindy - Representers

R4869 – 黃仲夫

R5247 – 余寶儀

Ms Lam Tsz Kwan, Camille - Representers' representative

R4872 – 高源溢

Ms Lee Siu Ting - Representer's representative

R6307 – 深水埗區大窩坪居民關注組

Mr Wong Lam Fung - Representer's representative

R6217 - 葉巧珍

Mr Tsang Chun - Representer's representative

C34 – Chui King Hei

Mr Chui King Hei - Commenter

C274 – Suen Fu Wa

Mr Suen Fu Wa - Commenter

C405 – The Incorporated Owners of Forest Hill

C406 – Chow Ka Lai

Mr Chow Ka Lai - Commenter and Commenter's  
representative

6. 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 presenter/commenter would be allocated a total of 10-minute speaking time;
- (d) if an authorised representative was appointed by more than one presenter/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 presenters and presenter's representatives 2 minutes before the allotted 10-minute time was to expire and when the allotted 10-minute 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) presenters/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 presenter/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.

7. Members noted that a list of speakers with an order of priority for making oral submission was tabled by the representers and commenters related to the 'Lo Fai Road Concern Group' ('Concern Group') who requested to make their presentation together which would last for about 300 minutes. In view of the Concern Group's request, the Vice-chairman suggested that the representers and commenters not related to the Concern Group should make their oral submission first, followed by that of the Concern Group. Members agreed.

8. The Vice-chairman then invited the representatives of PlanD to brief Members on the representations and comments. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Mr Soh recapitulated the presentation that was made in the hearing session on 11.12.2014 as recorded in paragraph 10 of the minutes of 11.12.2014.

9. The Vice-chairman then invited the representers and representers' representatives not related to the Concern Group to elaborate on their representations.

#### R5 – Li Wing Keung

10. Mr Li Wing Keung made the following main points:

- (a) he was the Indigenous Villagers' Representative of Tai Po Mei Village and a committee member of Hip Tin Temple (協天宮) in Cheung Shue Tan Village. He was speaking on behalf of the villagers of Tai Po Mei Village and Cheung Shue Tan Village;

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

- (b) the villagers did not object to Amendment Item H, i.e. rezoning of a site at Kon Hang from “Green Belt” (“GB”) to “Residential (Group C)8” (“R(C)8”) as the conversation value of the concerned land was not particularly high and there were already developments in the surrounding area;
- (c) Cheung Shue Tan Village had a history of several hundred years and Kon Hang was part of the village and there was a Village Representative (VR) constituency in Kon Hang. There was concern that the VR constituency in Kon Hang would be abolished upon the rezoning. The relevant government departments should be requested to ensure that the status of the VR constituency would not be affected;
- (d) the Kon Hang site was located within an area of feng shui significance for Cheung Shue Tan Village. ‘Feng shui’ had all along been attached importance by villagers, and the Government when implementing works projects in villages had paid due respect to feng shui issues in the past. To neglect the importance of fung shui in the current rezoning process would contravene the established practice of the Government;
- (e) given the proximity of Hip Tin Temple, the ‘dragon vein’ of Cheung Shue Tan Village and three traditional burial grounds, any proposed development within the Kon Hang site should be carefully considered. The proposed maximum building height (BH) of 120mPD (i.e. about 7 storeys) for the Kon Hang site was objected to due to feng shui reason and incompatibility with the surrounding developments. The maximum BH should be reduced to 3 to 4 storeys;
- (f) there was a fung shui rock along Tai Po Road and a natural stream running through the Kon Hang site which should not be affected by any proposed development for feng shui reason. The Government should maintain good communication with villagers to address the feng shui issues during the

development process;

- (g) the access to the existing traditional burial grounds should not be adversely affected by the proposed development in the Kon Hang site;
- (h) Cheung Shue Tan Road should not be affected by the access arrangement of the future development at the site; and
- (i) due to the imminent Small House demand, the Board should suitably rezone fallow agricultural land zoned “GB” and the disused “Government, Institution or Community” (“G/IC”) sites around the villages to “Village Type Development” (“V”) for development of Small Houses. The villagers would not have the knowledge and resources to prepare section 12A planning applications for such rezoning.

[Speaking time of R5: 10 minutes]

R13 – Ruy Barretto

11. Making reference to his written submission tabled at the meeting, Mr Ruy Barretto made the following main points;

- (a) there had been a serious misrepresentation of the green belt conversion policy by the Government. In rezoning the “GB” areas for residential use, there had been a breach of the 2011-1012, 2013 and 2014 Policy Addresses and failure to follow the eligibility criteria for green belt conversion;
- (b) green belts were not for sale. It was bad planning and contrary to public policy to convert vegetated “GB” areas into private housing development;
- (c) the TPB Paper provided contradictory and muddled statement as to the criteria for conversion from “GB” to residential zoning. The so-called second stage green belt review to convert the “GB” sites with relatively lower buffer and conservation value into housing was a invention by the

Development Bureau (DEVB) without consultation and was contrary to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD);

- (d) the green belt conversion policy had remained consistent since it was first introduced in 2011-2012 Policy Address, which stated the policy as *“to look into the use of GB areas in the New Territories that are devegetated, deserted or formed, thus no longer performing their original functions, and convert them into housing sites.”* The three criteria of green belt conversion, i.e. devegetated, deserted and formed, were similarly stated in the 2013 and 2014 Policy Addresses. When these three criteria were applied properly, it would lead to policy result as summarised in paragraph 2.1 of the TPB Paper No. 9797 which stated that under the 2013 Policy Address, *“GB sites adjoining development areas with no ecological value would be reviewed for housing purpose.”* However, most of the rezoning sites on the draft OZP were vegetated, not deserted or not formed and in particular, the Kon Hang site (Amendment Item H) and the site near Fung Yuen (Amendment Items D1 and D2) were performing their original functions and should not be eligible for the green belt conversion policy which was intended to protect the values in “GB” zones, not damage them;
- (e) the burden was on PlanD to prove the green belt areas desired for development were eligible areas for conversion, being devegetated, deserted or formed and hence were of ‘no ecological value’ or ‘low conservation value’. PlanD however had no evidence to prove the rezoned sites satisfied these three criteria, nor had PlanD proved the consequential ‘no ecological value’ and ‘low conservation value’. As the Kon Hang site and the site near Fung Yuen were not adjoining development areas, they should not be eligible for review and conversion;
- (f) the Secretary for Development (SDEV) in his personal blog of 7.7.2014 asserted that in the second stage of green belt review, it was ‘natural’ to consider and convert vegetated green belt sites which were close to existing developed areas for further housing of development. This was contrary to the status quo and the three criteria in the Policy Address without policy

debate and formulation. The amendments to the draft OZP demonstrated departure from the current policy and were bad planning;

- (g) the Board had a duty to prevent breach or abuse of the green belt conversion policy and to protect green belt against conversion by mistaken statements. The Board should keep the planning intention of “GB” zones intact and make decision based on the actual definition and evidence. It should apply the criteria laid down in the Policy Address but not those invented by DEVB subsequently. It should be vigilant against the changing, watering down or misapplication of the green belt conversion criteria and policy;
- (h) there was a failure of PlanD to address the points made in his representation and the TPB Paper failed to deal with the representations by inquiring and investigating them, fairly and adequately considering them and provided only vague generalities instead of going into the details with specific reasons. The Board had a duty to follow the evidence provided by the representers which were specific and based on principles and facts;
- (i) the amendments to the draft OZP were not justified based on the definition of “GB” as stated in the Explanatory Statement of the draft OZP, i.e. *“the planning intention of this zone is 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. There is a general presumption against development within this zone. This zoning covers mainly steep hillsides in the peripheral areas which are of limited potential for urban type development and should be retained in their natural state. These areas nevertheless provide opportunities for additional outdoor passive recreational outlets. There is a general presumption against development within this zone. Nevertheless, limited developments may be permitted if they are justified on strong planning grounds.”* The reasons were:
  - (i) the amendments would remove the limits of urban and sub-urban development areas and insert buildings of 4 to 10 storeys into

woodland and rural landscape with recreational, landscape and ecological value;

- (ii) the amendments would aggravate urban sprawl and generate adverse impacts without adequate planning or infrastructure. For the site near Fung Yuen, the future development would be located at an attractive hill and ridge resulting in high visual impact and becoming an eyesore;
- (iii) the amendments would destroy passive recreational outlets and other amenities and in particular, were incompatible with the surrounding rural environment or country park;
- (iv) the amendments were an attempt to overturn the presumption against development and make inappropriate developments easier in unsuitable locations;
- (v) the subject sites were suitably zoned as “GB” because of having steep slopes and located in peripheral areas. The amendments would cause damaging slope works, extensive cuttings and adverse impacts on the natural streams and features, in particular for the Kon Hang and Fung Yuen sites;
- (vi) green belts had limited potential for development. Considering the massive damage to be caused, the proposed developments thereon were not sustainable developments. In fact, only a small number of people would be benefited from the future housing development, and the loss of countryside was against the public interest;
- (vii) there were no strong planning grounds to justify the OZP amendments. The subject sites were not suitable for development as it would destroy the natural countryside and amenities close to conservation area and country parks. They should be maintained in their natural state;

- (viii) DEVB's basic criteria was to convert "GB" areas adjoining existing development areas which had good accessibility, and did not cause slope problems or necessitate massive engineering expense and damage. The subject sites even failed in meeting DEVB's criteria; and
- (ix) the future developments at the Kon Hang and Fung Yuen sites would become major eyesores. No genuine screening was possible or planned to screen off the building blocks;
- (j) the Kon Hang site was not suitable for conversion for housing development as it was located close to the Pai Mun Shan conservation area and not adjoining a development area. There were a significant natural stream and many trees in the site but no ecological survey, tree survey nor technical assessments had been conducted. There were steep slopes within the site and the heavy engineering and massive slope works associated with the future development would adversely affect the vegetation and caused pollution downstream. The proposed 10-storey buildings on the site against the mountain backdrop would have adverse visual and feng shui impacts. PlanD had not proved that the area was of 'no ecological value' or 'low conservation value';
- (k) similarly, PlanD had failed to prove that the site near Fung Yuen was suitable for conversion from "GB" to residential use. The site was located close to the Fung Yuen Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which was a key conservation area for butterflies and insects which should be protected in particular from light pollution. The proposed development and the associated slope works and road works would have adverse environmental, ecological and visual impacts on the area and would affect the access to country park and the Sha Lo Tung SSSI. However, no ecological survey or detailed technical assessments had been conducted. The tree survey only covered the large trees but excluded the dense under-storey, shrubs, herbs and saplings which supported many fauna species;

- (l) there were many errors in the TPB Paper that should be taken note, in particular AFCD was misleading in suggesting that the zoning amendments were in line with the objectives of the CBD. In fact, the amendments were contrary to Article 8(e) of the CBD which required the protection of areas adjacent to Protected Areas and the Aichi Target which required Hong Kong to reduce the loss of forest. The zoning amendments contravened the established conservation principles such as the need to protect ecological connectivity, buffer zones and the most appropriate sustainable use in areas adjacent to the Protected Areas. AFCD had also failed to consider the existence of important habitat types which were parts of the ecosystems with woodland and natural streamcourses;
- (m) it was wrong to suggest that there was 'surplus' local open space in Tai Po OZP and used it as a reason for removing the GB areas. "Open Space" was different from "GB". The GB areas were planned based on evidence and definition, and the subject GB areas still continued to meet the GB criteria;
- (n) it was bad planning to require the residents at Lo Fai Road to leave their local area to enjoy the countryside amenities elsewhere;

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

- (o) the zoning amendments would aggravate Hong Kong's failure to meet its international obligations to reduce the impacts on biodiversity and climatic change and to improve sustainable use of natural resources; and
- (p) removing "GB" protection to sell land for private non-affordable housing was not justified. It was contrary to policy, planning principles and evidence in most of the amendments items. The PlanD's views in the TPB Paper were wrong in several aspects and no assessments had been carried out to demonstrate that the rezoned green belt areas were eligible for review and conversion. The zoning amendments should be rejected.



[Speaking time of R13: 15 minutes]

R17 – The Conservancy Association

12. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Mr Ng Hei Man, Roy, made the following main points:

- (a) based on the appearance of vegetation cover, there were not many differences between GB areas and country park or protected areas;
- (b) the “GB” review exercise without public consultation and the subsequent rezoning of green belt sites for residential use were objected. Although the Government claimed that the subject “GB” sites were of low ecological value, they were serving as buffer areas between the urban and rural areas and being used for community and amenity purposes. They should not be rezoned for residential use;
- (c) according to the Technical Memorandum of the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance, ecological assessment was required for any proposed development involving woodland of more than one hectare. As most of the subject “GB” sites had an area of more than one hectare and protected plant species had been identified in some of the sites, these GB sites should be regarded as important habitats subject to detailed ecological assessment. The Government had not explained clearly the ecological value of the “GB” sites. It was also inappropriate for the Government to defer the responsibility of conducting ecological assessment to private developers;

[Ms Anita W.T. Ma left temporarily and Mr F.C. Chan returned to join the meeting at this point.]

Site near Fung Yuen (Amendment Items D1 and D2)

- (d) the structure of plantation in the site near Fung Yuen could not be regarded

as simple as mentioned in the TPB Paper. Apart from protected or rare plant species including 石筆木 (*Tutcheria spectabilis*), 吊鐘王 (*Rhodoleia championii*) and 土沉香 (*Aquilaria sinensis*), mature trees including native species and feng shui trees had been found in particular in the central and north-eastern part of the site. Moreover, as only large trees (with trunk diameter exceeding 95mm) were recorded under the Government's tree surveys, many under-storey plants might not be properly identified. Since it was evident that the exotic tree species were being replaced by native species, there were signs that the plantation in the site was transforming into a secondary woodland;

- (e) while tree compensation schemes might be able to alleviate the landscape and visual impacts of developments, the ecological value of the original woodland would not be compensated. Moreover, slope stabilisation works would adversely affect the trees in particular the tree roots, and the feasibility of transplanting trees on steep slopes was very doubtful;
- (f) once the access to the site near Fung Yuen was improved, the buffering function of the remaining "GB" area would be lost. The road widening works would also affect even more trees. He worried that the improved accessibility would provide stronger justifications to support the development proposals in the adjoining areas of conservation interest including the proposed columbarium at Sha Lo Tung;

[Mr H.W. Cheung left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

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

- (g) although the TPB Paper stated that the large *Ficus microcarpas* on the site was recommended to be preserved, the practicability to preserve the tree, which was very old and big, was doubtful;
- (h) both native and exotic tree species were identified in the site. It was evident that natural succession had been taking place in the area to become

a mature woodland;

- (i) the site was performing the function of being a buffer area for Fu Hang Estate and Nethersole Hospital which could not be readily replaced;

#### Tai Po Area 9 (Amendment Item A)

- (j) the northern part of the area was covered by significant vegetation serving the function of a buffer area. This part of the area should be excluded from the development site; and

#### Visual Impact

- (k) the visual impact assessments conducted for the zoning amendments by PlanD were considered too simple as photomontages based on only one to three vantage points were used to assess the potential visual impact of future developments. There were worries that the visual impacts of the developments, in particular the site near Fung Yuen and the Lo Fai Road site, had not been adequately assessed and considered.

[Speaking time of R17: 20 minutes]

#### R18 – Kadoorie Farm & Botanic Garden

13. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Ms Woo Ming Chuan made the following main points:

- (a) according to the 2011-2012, and 2013 Policy Addresses, only those GB sites that were devegetated, deserted or formed, thus no longer performing their original functions, could be considered for conversion into housing sites. However, it was obvious that most of the locations of the proposed zoning amendments in Tai Po were well-vegetated. Hence, the zoning amendments were not in compliance with the Policy Addresses. The proposed zoning amendments should be carefully reviewed and amended to

exclude all well-vegetated areas and natural habitats;

Amendment Item D

- (b) there was grave concern regarding the private housing development at the site near Fung Yuen and they strongly objected to Amendment Item D of the OZP;
- (c) according to DAFC, the site was largely a plantation woodland, and although some native tree species could be found, the woodland was dominated by exotic trees. However, their site inspection revealed that the plantation could be regarded as young secondary woodland as there was rich under-storey vegetation established through natural succession and a species of conservation concern in Incense Tree. In fact, the woodland was very similar to the secondary woodland across Sha Lo Tung Road which, if given time and protection from disturbance, could become a mature woodland;
- (d) rezoning the subject site for residential use would result in adverse ecological impacts as there would be direct habitat loss from tree felling and clearance of under-storey vegetation. There would also be potential off-site adverse ecological impacts, through increase in the number of visitors and possible illegal dumping activities, on the Fung Yuen Valley SSSI and Sha Lo Tung which were priority sites for Enhanced Conservation under the New Nature Conservation Policy. In fact, Fung Yuen Valley SSSI was less than 500 metres away from the subject site while Sha Lo Tung could be accessed by vehicle via Sha Lo Tung Road, the single lane carriageway along the site;
- (e) she worried that road improvement works associated with the zoning amendment would facilitate development in Sha Lo Tung which was an ecological hotspot. In late 2013, it was reported in local newspapers that a villager in Sha Lo Tung spotted a digger entering the village, and later on, the track leading to Cheung Uk was found to be widened from 2 to 3 metres. Moreover, during their site visit in late 2013, it was observed that some

vegetation was cleared near Lei Uk, some concrete waste was dumped near Sha Lo Tung Road and a stream was partially blocked by debris. Recent site visit in late 2014 found that more concrete waste was dumped and a storage container was placed next to the road;

- (f) a questionnaire survey was conducted along Sha Lo Tung Road in 2012 and about 60% of the interviewees were Tai Po residents. According to the survey result, over half of the interviewees visited the Sha Lo Tung area at least once a week and more than two-thirds visited the area for hiking or routine exercise. Hence, any development in the site near Fung Yuen would inevitably change the tranquil environment of the locality. The passive recreational value of the “GB” zones and the public interest in the enjoyment of the countryside should not be ignored;

#### Amendment Items C, E, F and H

- (g) the site at Kon Hang (Amendment Item H) was surrounded by woodland zoned “Conservation Area” (“CA”) and located in close proximity to the Tai Po Kau Nature Reserve. She was concerned that future development at the site would adversely affect the conservation value of the surrounding areas;
- (h) the site to the west of Nethersole Hospital (Amendment Item C), the site at Lo Fai Road (Amendment Item E), and the site at Lai Chi Shan (Amendment Item F) were all well-vegetated “GB” zones. She did not understand why they had been included in the OZP amendments for residential use;

#### Undesirable Precedent

- (i) according to the ES of the draft Tai Po OZP, *“the planning intention of this zone is 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. There is a general presumption*

*against development within this zone*". The reduction in areas zoned "GB" would therefore stand for a loss in the boundary for defining the limits of development areas, and losses of buffer zone to contain urban sprawl, passive recreational outlets, protection to the countryside, natural habitats, homes of wildlife and breathing space. Approval of the rezoning of well-vegetated "GB" zones would set an undesirable precedent for similar development applications and would have cumulative impacts on the natural environment and living quality in Hong Kong. A planning application for rezoning a well-vegetated "GB" in Pun Shan Chau had been received by the Board in August 2014;

- (j) in the current OZP amendments, about 20 hectares of well-vegetated areas under "GB" zone would be 'lost to urban development' without any compensation. This was considered unacceptable. As several amendment sites were located close to areas of significant conservation interest in Tai Po including Sha Lo Tung, Fung Yuen SSSI and Tai Po Kau Nature Reserve, she feared that developments overspilling into the "GB" zones would adversely affect those areas of conservation interest;
- (k) the Board and the relevant authorities were urged to carefully consider rezoning suitable areas within Tai Po into "GB" or "CA" zonings and to include such areas as part of the OZP amendment process as compensation for the reduction in area zoned "GB". It was suggested to designate the Cloudy Hill area, which was a well-vegetated slope adjacent to Pat Sin Leng Country Park and currently not covered by any statutory plan, as "CA"; and
- (l) in gist, they objected to the OZP amendments for the following reasons:
  - (i) the current OZP amendments did not comply with the statement *"to look into the use of green belt areas in the New Territories that are devegetated, deserted or formed, thus no longer performing their original functions, and convert them into housing sites"* in the 2011-2012 Policy Addresses;

- (ii) the role of “GB” zones as a buffer between urban settings and natural landscapes had been ignored;
- (iii) the zoning amendments set an undesirable precedent for opening up the “GB” zones to planning applications for development;
- (iv) there would be permanent and incremental loss of well-vegetated “GB” zones. The long-term impact of such loss on the residents of Tai Po and Hong Kong should be considered; and
- (v) no compensation had been proposed for the permanent and direct loss of these well-vegetated “GB” areas for development purpose.

[Speaking time of R18: 10 minutes]

[The meeting adjourned for a break of 10 minutes.]

[Ms Bonnie J.Y. Chan, Mr Jeff Y.T. Lam and Mr Frankie W.P. Chou left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

14. The Vice-chairman then invited the commenter not related to the Concern Group to elaborate on his comments.

#### C34 – Chui King Hei

15. With the aid of a Powerpoint slide, Mr Chui King Hei made the following main points:

- (a) he was presenting the views of the residents of Fu Hang Estate and Chung Nga Court;
- (b) public consultation on the OZP amendments were inadequate. The residents were only recently aware of the proposed public housing

development in Tai Po Area 9. Furthermore, the extant District Councillor had refused to explain to the residents the details of the proposed public housing development;

- (c) the supporting and ancillary facilities in Fu Hang Estate were the worst amongst all the private and public housing estates in Tai Po. The rezoning of a green area beside the estate for public housing development was considered unfair and undesirable to the residents of Fu Hang Estate;
- (d) the subject site in Tai Po Area 9 was originally planned for a private hospital in 2009. At that time, the Government had explained that the site was not suitable for public housing development due to insurmountable technical issues;
- (e) the provision of community facilities in Tai Po was inadequate and the traffic capacity had already been saturated. The Government had no intention to improve the situation, which would be worsened upon implementation of residential developments in the amendment sites;
- (f) although local forums had been arranged by the Tai Po District Council (TPDC) and the Housing Department (HD) to brief residents on the public housing development project, many of the Fu Hang Estate residents were not aware of such forums and the attendance was only around 50 people;
- (g) the Government should consider reducing the scale of the proposed public housing development and provide adequate community facilities and traffic improvement measures to meet the needs of the Fu Hang Estate and Tai Po residents; and
- (h) a more extensive public consultation process should be carried out to gauge the views of the local people.

[Speaking time of C34: 5 minutes]



16. The Vice-chairman noted that the views expressed by Mr Chui were mainly related to the proposed public housing development under Amendment Item A which should have been considered under another session of the meeting on Group 1 representations. He said that Mr Chui's views would be recorded and considered by the Board in deliberating the Group 1 representations.

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

17. The Vice-chairman then invited the representers, commenters and their representatives related to the Concern Group to elaborate on their representations and comments. He said that according to the representatives of the Concern Group, a total presentation time of about 300 minutes was required by their presentation team. He considered that it might not be necessary to limit the time for making oral submissions by each speaker, but reminded the concerned representers, commenters and their representatives to observe the total time limit in making their oral submissions.

18. Ms Yvonne Lui, the deputy convener of the Concern Group, showed a one-minute video illustrating the existing condition of the Lo Fai Road site (Amendment Item E) which mainly consisted of trees and vegetation. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, she made the following main points:

- (a) the sequence of presentation would be in the order of the Concern Group, PlanArch Consultants Ltd., the Incorporated Owners and residents of Forest Hill, Richwood Park, Casa Marina I & II and Tycoon Place, Legislative Council members, District Councillors, students, academics and members of the general public;
- (b) the Concern Group had a wide representation and was composed of the residents and the Incorporated Owners of the affected estates, staff and students of the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd), Tai Po residents and members of the general public who had common concern on the woodland in the subject "GB" site at Lo Fai Road;

- (c) the Concern Group had been established for a year and its objectives were to preserve the woodland at Lo Fai Road and to promote good planning of Tai Po based on local knowledge. It was recommended to accord priority for developing the brownfield sites in Tai Po;
  
- (d) the Concern Group had been liaising with the District Council and the Government on several issues including the protection of “GB” sites, developing brownfield sites, and proposals on improving the traffic, educational and medical facilities in Tai Po. The Concern Group had engaged in discussions with town planning academics and promotion of ‘developing brownfield sites first’ to the general public; and
  
- (e) there was strong opposition against the rezoning of the Lo Fai Road site. Over 4,000 adverse representations in respect of the amendment had been submitted which was the most amongst all amendment items, and the representers consisted of a number of TPDC members including Mr Cheung Hok Ming, Mr Chan Siu Kuen, Ms Wong Pik Kiu, Dr Lau Chee Shing and Mr Yu Chi Wing, district branch offices of the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and the Liberal Party, members of the Civic Party and the Civil Power as well as a number of LegCo members including Hon Emily Lau, Hon Fernando Cheung, Hon Ronny Tong, Hon Frederick Fung and Hon Kenneth Chan. Moreover, several other TPDC members had raised objection to the rezoning at the special DC meeting on 8.5.2014 and two LegCo members, i.e. Hon Gary Chan and Hon James Tien, had written letter to the DEVB regarding the subject rezoning. Other objectors included members of the general public (about 3,500 people), Tai Po residents (about 1,000 people), university students (about 200 people), staff of Nethersole Hospital (about 100 people), as well as residents in the neighbourhoods of Ting Kok Road (about 100 people) and Lo Fai Road (about 2,000 people);

[Ms Bonnie J.Y. Chan left temporarily and Mr Jeff Y.T. Lam returned to join the meeting at this point.]

R1638 – Lo Fai Road Green Belt Concern Group & Incorporated Owners of Forest Hill,  
Richwood Park, Casa Marina 1 & 2 and Tycoon Place  
R3044 – Wong Chi Kin, Kelvin  
R4287 – 梁靜宜

19. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Ms Betty Ho made the following main points:

- (a) the rezoning of the site at Lo Fai Road near Tycoon Place from “GB” to (“R(C)9”) and the stipulation of building height restriction for the “R(C)9” zone were objected to. The Board was requested to revert the zoning of the site to “GB”;

#### Site and Surroundings

- (b) the site was located at Lo Fai Road within a low-rise residential neighbourhood including Richwood Garden, Tycoon Place, Casa Marina and Forest Hill. There was a brownfield site used for open storage to the north-west of the site and the HKIEd was located to the further north-west. To the south of Ting Kok Road were a number of less desirable uses including a concrete batching plant, a sewage treatment plant, the Tai Po Industrial Estate and an ex-landfill site which had been reinstated as a golf park;

#### Planning History

- (c) the site was an ex-borrow area and once zoned “R(C)” on the Tai Po OZP No. LTP/47 in 1980. It was subsequently rezoned to “GB” and “Open Space” (“O”) on the draft Tai Po OZP No. S/TP/2 in 1986. Majority of the site, which was a densely vegetated knoll abutting Lo Fai Road, was zoned “GB” and a 10m-wide strip of land along the southern periphery of the site was zoned “O” on that draft OZP. In 2010, the whole site was zoned “GB”;

### Planning Intention

- (d) according to the extant draft OZP, 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. There was a general presumption against development. The designation of “GB” zoning for the site since 1986 was considered appropriate as it fulfilled its planning intention stipulated in the OZP;
- (e) as there had been no change in planning circumstances in the area, she did not understand why the “GB” zoning was no longer considered appropriate and the site had to be rezoned for residential use;

### Existing Condition

- (f) the site was located on top of the ridgeline where there were three densely vegetated knolls with over 2,500 trees. It was connected to a natural woodland at the lower foothill and had been performing the “GB” function of defining the limits of urban and sub-urban area and containing urban sprawl;
- (g) the site was planned as an open space/green area for passive recreational use. There was a 4m-wide paved footpath with street lighting provided by the Government along the northern, northwestern and southern periphery of the site. The site was accessible and frequently used by the general public and local community;

[Mr Frankie W.C. Yeung returned to join the meeting at this stage.]

### Demand for Housing Land

- (h) in various on-going planning studies, over 750 hectares had been planned for residential uses in North East New Territories New Development Areas (NDAs), Yuen Long South, Hung Shui Kiu NDA, Kam Tin South and Pat

Heung, Tung Chung New Town Extension, Anderson Road Quarry and Lamma Ex-Quarry Sites;

- (i) the current amendments to rezone the “GB” sites for residential use were against the established planning guidelines. According to her research, from 1991 to present, there were only 39 rezoning requests/applications from “GB” to residential zones and only eight were approved or partially approved by the Board. In most of the approved cases, the approved zoning was “R(C)” with a plot ratio of about 0.4 and the grounds of approval were related to rectification of the discrepancy of zoning boundary and reflection of the existing use or development right. As for the 31 rejected cases, the typical rejection reasons were deviation from planning intention of “GB” zone, insufficient information to demonstrate no adverse environmental, ecological or infrastructural impacts, prejudicial to the results of on-going planning study, undesirable precedent for other similar requests, and rezoning of the site would not be necessary as the “GB” zoning had already made provision for residential development upon obtaining planning permission on application to the Board;
  
- (j) in a case study of an rezoning request No. Z/TW/1 for proposed amendment to the draft Tsuen Wan OZP from “GB” to “R(B)”, about half of the site was formed and occupied with temporary structures for years. The request was rejected by the Board in 1999 for the reasons that a plot ratio (PR) of 0.9 was considered excessive; extensive clearance of existing natural vegetation was involved, and rezoning of the site would not be necessary as the “GB” zoning had already made provision for residential development upon obtaining planning permission on application to the Board;
  
- (k) as regards section 16 planning applications for development within the “GB” zones, the Town Planning Board Guidelines No. 10 (TPB PG-No. 10) on “Application for Development within Green Belt Zone under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance” would be applicable. The following main points in TPB PG-No. 10 should be taken note of:

- (i) the planning intention of “GB” was primarily to promote the conservation of the natural environment and to safeguard it from encroachment by urban-type developments;
  - (ii) there was a general presumption against development within the “GB” zone;
  - (iii) normally, a PR up to 0.4 for residential development might be permitted; and
  - (iv) the development should not involve extensive clearance of existing natural vegetation, affect the existing natural landscape, or cause any adverse visual impact on the surrounding environment;
- (l) permitting residential development at the subject site was against all the established planning guidelines and practice in respect of “GB” zone. The rezoning of the site would allow incompatible development with a maximum PR of 1.6 (based on net site area) which doubled the plot ratio of the adjoining residential developments and was four times the usual permitted PR of 0.4 in “GB” zones. Moreover, any developments in the site would inevitably involve extensive site formation and the clearance of 2,500 existing trees and affect the existing natural landscape;
- (m) in a case study of a section 16 planning application No. A/TP/273 for a proposed residential development with a PR of about 0.15, the site was a formed site on previously abandoned farmland. The application was rejected by the Board in 2003 for the reasons that it was not in line with the planning intention of the “GB” zone, not in line with the TPB PG-No. 10 and setting an undesirable precedent for similar developments within the “GB” zone;
- (n) in the 2014 Policy Address, it was stated that *“We are taking steps to rezone for residential use sites in Green Belt areas which are devegetated, deserted or formed.”* Rezoning the subject site, which was neither

devegetated, deserted nor formed, was against the Government's policy as announced in the 2014 Policy Address. The so-called second stage of "GB" review was only originated from a blog in the DEVB website. Rezoning "GB" areas with low conservation value should not be interpreted as a policy objective of the Chief Executive;

- (o) the planning intention of "GB" zones was not for conservation of areas with high conservation value. Areas with high conservation value should be zoned as "CA" or "SSSI". The planning intention of "GB" was very clear, i.e. to define 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. If "GB" with relatively low conservation value could be developed into residential use, it implied that all green belts should be developed;
- (p) the subject site should be retained as "GB". In terms of urban design, the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines recognised that ridgeline was an important urban design attribute as it defined the image of a city. As ridgelines and mountains in the New Territories had defined the edges of new towns as well as vista points of the city and the country parks beyond, ridgelines/peaks were valuable assets and their preservation should be given special consideration as far as possible in the development process of development;
- (q) while PlanD was of the view that the overall height profile of anticipated residential developments at Lo Fai Road would protect and enhance the relationship of the city and its natural landscape, and the overall urban design at Lo Fai Road was very desirable and fully complied with the Urban Design Guidelines as the local peak at the subject site was planted with dense vegetation, there was reasonable doubt whether the photomontage prepared by PlanD (as extracted from RNTPC Paper No. 6/14) was a true reflection of the proposed development. The photomontage prepared by her architect showed that the visual and urban design impacts of the proposed 5-storey residential development were much more severe. She

was of the view that the future development at the highest location of the site would destroy the ridgeline;

- (r) the residential development at the site would also contravene the existing stepped height profile of the developments in the neighbourhood, i.e. with Tycoon Place (3-storeys above ground) and Casa Marina I (3-storey) at lower platforms, and the taller 5-storey Richwood Park and Forest Hill at the back which were invisible when viewing from the south;
- (s) the residential flats to be built on the subject site were not what the community needed. According to RNTPC Paper No. 6/14, the proposed development would have a maximum domestic gross floor area (GFA) of 46,200m<sup>2</sup> for 660 flats with an average flat size of about 70m<sup>2</sup>. According to statistics, the lowest vacancy rates in Hong Kong were among those flats smaller than 70m<sup>2</sup> and the vacancy rates in Tai Po were ranked first and third amongst all districts in Hong Kong in 2012 and 2013 respectively;
- (t) the 2,500 trees together with other vegetation on the subject site possessed a high ecological group value and various types of wildlife including pythons, boars, barking deer and reptiles were spotted by local residents. The subject site also served as an ecological corridor between the natural woodlands to its north and south;
- (u) the subject “GB” site was performing its function as a buffer area. The tall trees on the site could screen off traffic noise, dust, pollutants and bad smell from various industrial establishments along Ting Kok Road for the Lo Fai Road community, even though with the tree buffer, there had been a history of complaints from various residential estates against the bad smell blown over from the sewage treatment plant and concrete batching plant. Also, researches showed that natural vegetation could create cooler air movement and the existing trees were beneficial to air movement among the neighbouring residential communities;
- (v) a nearby brownfield site was available for residential development in the



valley below HKIEd. The site had an area of about 8 hectares and was zoned “GB”. It was devegetated and formed and had been used for storage of construction materials and open storage uses since 2000. The local community of Lo Fai Road had been complaining about the nuisance created by the concerned open storage area for years but no planning enforcement could be taken under the Town Planning Ordinance. It was known that the owner of the site (C89) had shown interest in redeveloping the site into residential development. When compared to the subject site, the concerned brownfield site could better meet the criteria for rezoning “GB” for residential uses as set out in the 2014 Policy Address as it was an eyesore and a nuisance generating area which could be built higher (i.e. more than 20 storeys) with no adverse impacts on visual quality and ridgeline. The brownfield site could also offer an opportunity for a mix of housing types and flat sizes;

- (w) pursuing development on a green “GB” site at Lo Fai Road while doing nothing on the brownfield site affecting the environment would weaken the governance. Such act might also attract judicial reviews which would eventually slow down the rezoning of “GB” sites of the whole Tai Po OZP;
- (x) PlanD’s arguments in TPB Paper were misleading. The requirements on the submission of a Landscape Master Plan with tree preservation proposal could not be a practical solution to compensate for the loss of 2,500 trees in the subject site. Regarding the potential visual impact of development, PlanD stressed that in the highly developed context of Hong Kong, it was not practical to protect private views without stifling development opportunity. However, the public views from the Tolo Harbour cycling tracks, the golf park and Pak Shek Kok promenade should also be protected; and
- (y) in conclusion, the site history, site characteristics and planning intention for the subject site should be considered. The “GB” zoning for the site was appropriate and the planning intention had been fulfilled. The zoning amendment from “GB” to “R(C)” was illogical, against the TPB Guidelines

and established practice, and would not be able to meet the community's need. It was unreasonable to destroy a green "GB" site, while not upzoning a nearby brownfield site for residential development. There was reasonable expectation from the local residents that the woodland on the site should be retained. The Board should revert the zoning of the subject site to "GB".

C405 – The Incorporated Owners of Forest Hill

C406 – Chow Ka Lai

20. With the aid of a Powerpoint slide, Mr Chow Ka Lai made the following main points:

- (a) Forest Hill comprised 33 blocks with a total population of about 1,083. Though there were some facilities provided in Forest Hill, the landscaping areas in the development were vastly inadequate. The same situation also applied to other neighbouring developments in the Lo Fai Road;
- (b) Forest Hill was located in the north-east of Tai Po Industrial Estate. It had been subject to severe odour nuisance from the industrial estate under the prevailing south-westerly wind. Since 2000, The Incorporated Owners of Forest Hill had been complaining the odour problem to the Environmental Protection Department (EPD). According to the reply from EPD, various kinds of bad smells originated from the industrial estate had been detected at Forest Hill but the smells were short-lived. The fact that some of the complaints were lodged between 9:30 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. represented that the bad smells had been lasting for a rather long period of time and affecting the livelihood of the residents. The wooded area in the subject site had been effective in screening off some of the bad smells. If the wooded area was removed for development, the situation would be worsened;
- (c) among the population of Forest Hill, about 10% was retired persons, 18% was students and 12% were housewives. These were the people who suffered most from the bad smells as they usually stayed at home and had to

endure the bad smells for a rather long period of time;

- (d) Forest Hill and the neighbouring developments were served by Lo Fai Road which was a steep road. There were no public open space or recreational facilities along Lo Fai Road, and the subject site had been relied upon as an important exercising, leisure and breathing space for local residents. It would be very inconvenient to the local residents, especially the young and elderly, if they were required to travel to other parts of Tai Po for enjoyment of the parks and open spaces;
- (e) the residents had been hoping for a sustainable living in Hong Kong. They had attached high importance to the green belt conversion policy as stated in the Policy Address and would support the review of “GB” areas that were devegetated, deserted or formed, thus no longer performing their original functions, and converting them into housing sites. To rezone the densely vegetated “GB” at Lo Fai Road for residential use was a drastic policy change that had not been subject to proper public consultation. Also, the views of the local residents on the proposed OZP amendments had not properly been sought prior to the publication of the amended OZP. The lack of consultation was considered unacceptable and the views of the local residents should be duly respected; and
- (f) the rezoning of the site had been subject to strong opposition from many sectors of the community. The Board had a duty to guard against the rezoning of those “GB” sites which were vegetated and performing their “GB” functions. Otherwise, an undesirable precedent would be set and the general presumption against development within the “GB” zone would be lost. As a result, the green belt policy would be shattered since no other “GB” sites in Hong Kong would be worthy of protection.

R1642 – The Incorporated Owners of Richwood Park

R2581 – Mak Chi Keung

R4556 – George Mak

21. With the aid of a Powerpoint slide, Mr Mak Chi Keung made the following main points:

- (a) he was the vice-chairman of The Incorporated Owners of Richwood Park;
- (b) Richwood Park was the first development completed in 1995 in the Lo Fai Road area and he was among the first batch of its occupants. He moved to Richwood Park mainly for the tranquillity of the environment and the Lo Fai Road woodland which served as a recreation space for the local residents;

[Mr Stephen H.B. Yau left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

- (c) since early 2014, the Incorporated Owners of the five estates, the Concern Group and local residents had been closely liaising with PlanD and the relevant TPDC members regarding the rezoning of the Lo Fai Road “GB” site. PlanD’s responses to the questions raised by the residents were vague without any support of technical calculations and assessments. He was worried that the traffic problem, and air and noise pollution in the area would aggravate;
- (d) contrary to the description by PlanD, there was not much green space within Richwood Park and other estates in the neighbourhood. Moreover, since the “GB” site was located very close to the existing developments and it would become a private development in the future, he doubted whether space within and outside the “GB” site for public green area would be available;
- (e) the local residents had made diligent effort in studying the usage and characteristics of the “GB” site, and wildlife including bats, tree frogs and snakes were found. The ecological information provided by government departments was inaccurate;
- (f) the “GB” site was serving as an important buffer to screen off noise, dust

and odour generated from Ting Kok Road and the surrounding polluting uses including the concrete batching plant, sewage treatment plant and Tai Po Industrial Estate;

- (g) the “GB” site was an important leisure and recreational space for the local residents. If the “GB” site was developed, residents in the area would have to travel to other parks in Tai Po for recreation, the closest being Tai Po Waterfront Park which was about 2 km away. This would create great inconvenience to the local residents in particular the elderly who required regular exercise;
- (h) the five estates at Lo Fai Road were already congested as they were built compactly along the road. The environment and the visual amenity would be aggravated upon completion of the proposed 5-storey residential development at the “GB” site;
- (i) the total number of residential units in the five estates was 834 and the proposed addition of 660 flats at the “GB” site represented a 80% increase. At present, the traffic along Lo Fai Road and at the junction with Ting Kok Road was already very congested during rush hours. The congestion had already created difficulty for access to and from the fire station and ambulance depot near that junction. During weekends, the traffic was still busy given the visitors to Tai Mei Tuk, and the situation would get worse upon completion of the new tourist attractions in the surroundings including Tsz Shan Monastery, the spa resort hotel and Lung Mei Beach. With the addition of 660 flats, the traffic condition would only be worsened during both weekdays and weekends. He doubted whether any traffic impact assessment had been carried out by the Government; and
- (j) housing demand could be indefinite. The housing shortage problem should be tackled at source and the housing policy of Hong Kong should be considered in collaboration with the demographic policy.

22. With the aid of some Powerpoint slides, Ms Yvonne Lui showed two photos of

Richwood Park which illustrated that it was developed close to the subject site along Lo Fai Road, and several letters written by the management office of Forest Hill to EPD from 2002 to 2014 complaining about the odour problem.

R1641 – The Incorporated Owners of Tycoon Place

R2799 – Lin Pik Fun

23. Ms Lin Pik Fun made the following main points:

Local Traffic

- (a) there were five residential developments and the HKIEd in the neighbourhood along Lo Fai Road, which had been completed for more than 10 years. The local residents mainly relied on shuttle buses and private cars for travelling;
- (b) local traffic had been increasingly busy especially during the rush hours, and often resulting in traffic congestion at the junction of Lo Fai Road/Ting Kok Road. Since Tycoon Place was only served by shuttle buses, it had been very inconvenient for the residents to travel to Tai Po town centre;
- (c) the residents had previously demanded for provision of more public transport facilities for the area. In this regard, meetings had been held with several TPDC members and representatives from the transport operators to explore the possible solutions. Nonetheless, no improvement to the public transport provisions had been made and worse still, bus route No. 275M was subsequently cancelled;
- (d) the Government had done nothing to improve the traffic condition. On the one hand, the Government had restricted estate shuttle bus services such as the drop-off points, and hence the residents of Tycoon Place were forced to use private vehicles, which resulted in even heavier traffic on Lo Fai Road. On the other hand, the Government had been ignoring the needs of the residents in terms of community planning and traffic improvement. The

current proposal to increase residential developments in the area would further worsen the traffic condition and result in more traffic congestion during the school and work peak hours;

#### Community Environment

- (e) densely planted woodland was found in the subject “GB” area which was the habitats of a number of wildlife including monkeys, lizards, porcupines, pangolins and snakes. Removal of the woodland would destroy the homes of many wildlife in Hong Kong;
- (f) the “GB” was as a buffer area for the several residential developments in the area. It serves to provide rural ambience, tranquil environment and fresh air for the neighbourhood and reduce the heat radiation, noise and light pollution. Removal of the woodland would completely destroy the pleasant environment of the local community; and

#### Direct Impact on Tycoon Place

- (g) Tycoon Place was a low-density residential estate, enjoying a high degree of privacy and tranquillity. Development of the subject “GB” zone for residential buildings would have the following direct impacts on Tycoon Place:
  - (i) the “GB” site was located very close to Tycoon Place. During site formation, tree removal and construction stages, the proposed residential development at the “GB” site would generate significant nuisance to Tycoon Place in terms of noise and air pollution, and affecting privacy;
  - (ii) the proposed development would adversely affect the drainage in the area. At present, stormwater collected from the surrounding areas was discharged to Wong Yue Tan vide a storm drain within Tycoon Place. The removal of trees and construction of residential

buildings at the subject site would inevitably increase drainage discharge and might result in blockage of the storm drains. There were past records of severe flooding incidents within Tycoon Place during heavy rainfall in its early years of occupation due to rainwater washing down from the subject “GB” site;

- (iii) many residents used their life savings to purchase such expensive properties in Tycoon Place because of the presence of the GB site. Destroying the GB site would not only destroy the environment of Tycoon Place but also adversely affect its property value. As some units in Tycoon Place were as close as within 5m distance from the “GB” site, any future residential development on the “GB” site would severely obstruct air ventilation and affect the health of the existing residents;
- (iv) good planning should be based on the objective of improving living environment. To put higher density development in the existing neighbourhoods was an irresponsible act that ignored the needs of the existing local residents. The Government had been promoting more tree planting, protection of countryside, enhancing community harmony and building a cohesive society, but it was now acting in the opposite; and
- (v) the Government had previously ignored the demands of the Tycoon Place residents, and was now destroying its green environment. This had aggravated local objection against the violation of planning principles for “GB” sites and weakened the governance. Therefore, the residents of Tycoon Place strongly urged the Board to withdraw the zoning amendment for the “GB” site.

R1643 – The Incorporated Owners of Casa Marina I

R1868 – Ho Mo Kuen

R3867 – Amy Chu



24. Mrs Amy Chu made the following main points:

- (a) the residents of Casa Marina I objected to the rezoning of the Lo Fai Road “GB” site. The Government was acting contrary to its policy and the residents’ will in felling over 2,000 trees for development of a small number of residential units. Substantial resources would also be required for transplantation of trees and compensatory planting;
- (b) some ten units in Casa Marina I were located in close proximity to the “GB” site. The proposed residential development at the “GB” site would have adverse impact on the environmental quality of the existing residents and the value of the properties. The residents had used their life savings to purchase such expensive properties in Casa Marina I. It was unfair to them as they were mainly professionals, academics and merchants who had positively contributed to the community. They felt let down by the Government;

[Mr F.C. Chan left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

- (c) there was no imminent need to develop the “GB” sites as there were brownfield sites available for development. Trees and vegetation on the “GB” site were precious resources that should be treasured; and
- (d) there were no medical and shopping facilities along Lo Fai Road. It was particularly inconvenient for the elderly people, including some on wheelchairs, to travel all the way to Tai Po town centre for those facilities.

R4869 – 黃仲夫

R5247 – 余寶儀

25. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Ms Lam Tsz Kwan, Camille, made the following main points:

- (a) the increase in housing supply might not necessarily resolve the housing

problem. The future residential development at the Lo Fai Road “GB” site would not meet the imminent needs of the general public. The suitability of the “GB” site for residential development should be considered separately from the housing issue;

- (b) the Government should consider enforcing the release of vacant units held up by developers into the housing market;
- (c) there was a brownfield site located at Tung Tsz Valley to the south of HKIEd which could be considered for residential development. This site was zoned “GB” on the Tai Po OZP, and could be accessed via Tung Tsz Road. It had been used for open storage and warehouse purposes. This site was considered suitable for low to medium-density residential development which was compatible with the surrounding developments;
- (d) compared with the Lo Fai Road “GB” site, the Tung Tsz Valley site had a larger area of about 9 hectares and could be built to a higher intensity, i.e. plot ratios of 2 to 3, thus providing more residential units. The Tung Tsz Valley site was already a disturbed site and development thereon would not require removal of a significant number of trees. Moreover, in developing the Tung Tsz Road site, a polluting use would be removed and that would be welcome by the local residents. While improvement of Tung Tsz Road would be required to support any development on the Tung Tsz Valley site, with the Government’s commitment, such works could be expedited to facilitate the residential development. Nevertheless, the Tung Tsz Road site should not be treated as an alternative to the Lo Fai Road site since the latter should not be considered suitable for residential use in the first place;

[Dr C.P. Lau left and Mr F.C. Chan returned to join the meeting at this point.]

- (e) in general, the Government had perceived three main problems in relation to the development of brownfield sites, i.e. complex landownership, relocation of operators and inadequate supporting infrastructure. In the United Kingdom, there were mechanisms to tackle the issue of brownfield

sites, including formal definition of brownfield sites and a systematic database to record and monitor all the development of brownfield sites. There were also public policies to encourage new housing on brownfield sites and through the conversion of existing buildings. In terms of funding mechanism, a Land Restoration Trust had been set up by public and private agencies to manage derelict brownfield land with no commercial use;

- (f) in the United States, brownfield sites were generally referred to as land having been contaminated. Redevelopment of brownfield sites would be implemented through public or private initiatives or public-private partnership. Examples of after uses were recreation, commercial, residential and light industry/technology hub; and
- (g) in the context of Hong Kong, there should be clear policy objectives in respect of brownfield sites with an aim to reinstating the land and improving the rural environment. A public-private partnership approach for implementation should be considered. Financial incentives and other mandatory measures should be examined to facilitate the reinstatement of brownfield sites. Related government policies on the recycling, open storage and port back-up uses should also be reviewed and complemented by land use planning as appropriate.

26. The meeting was adjourned for lunch break at 1:30 p.m.

27. The meeting was resumed at 2:30 p.m. on 18.12.2014.

28. The following members and the Secretary were present at the resumed meeting:

Mr Stanley Y.F. Wong Vice-chairman

Mr Roger K.H. Luk

Mr Lincoln L.H. Huang

Mr F.C. Chan

Mr Frankie W.C. Yeung

Assistant Director/Regional 3, Lands Department  
Mr Edwin W.K. Chan

Principle Environmental Protection Officer (Strategic Assessment),  
Environmental Protection Department  
Mr Victor W.T. Yeung

Director of Planning  
Mr K.K. Ling

### **Agenda Item 2 (cont'd)**

[Open Meeting]

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.]

### **Hearing for Group 2**

#### ***Representations***

R1 to R5, R6 (Part) to R1273 (Part), R1324 (Part), R1325, R1326 (Part), R1327 to R1624,  
R1625 (Part), R1626 to R6321, R6322 (Part)

#### ***Comments***

C2 (Part) to C79 (Part), C80 to C439

Presentation and Question Session

29. The following representatives of the Planning Department (PlanD), the Transport Department (TD) and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) were invited to the meeting at this point:

- |                    |   |   |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Mr C.K. Soh        | - | District Planning Officer/Shan Tin, Tai Po and North (DPO/STN), PlanD |
| Mr C.T. Lau        | - | Senior Town Planner/Tai Po (STP/TP), PlanD                            |
| Mr Wong Kwok-Leung | - | Engineer/Tai Po 1 (E/TP1), TD   |
| Mr K.T. Chan       | - | Nature Conservation Officer/Tai Po (NCO/TP), AFCD                     |

30. The following representers, commenter and their representatives were invited to the meeting at this point:

R13 – Ruy Barretto

- |                 |   |             |
|-----------------|---|-------------|
| Mr Ruy Barretto | - | Representer |
|-----------------|---|-------------|

R17 – The Conservancy Association

- |                    |   |                              |
|--------------------|---|------------------------------|
| Mr Ng Hei Man, Roy | - | Representer's representative |
|--------------------|---|------------------------------|

R18 – Kadoorie Farm & Botanic Garden

- |                   |   |                               |
|-------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Dr Chiu Sein Tuck | ) |                               |
| Mr Tony Nip       | ) | Representer's representatives |
| Ms Woo Ming Chuen | ) |                               |

R26 – Yiu Chung Yim

R1629 – Cheung Chiu Hung

R1635 – Ken Yu District Council Member Office

R1636 – Wong Pik Kiu, Tai Po District Councillor

R1681 – Suen Palmer Helen

R1687 – Chong Yiu Kwong

R2778 & R5909 – Yvonne Lui

R4642 – Erna Zint

R5245 – 黎慎初

C91 – 「反對露輝路綠化地改建住宅」關注組

C437 – B.Y. Lam

Ms Yvonne Lui (Mrs Hui) (Forest Hill - Representers and Representers/  
Concern Group) Commenters' representative

R47 – Lui Yan Yan, Yvonne

R2779 – Helen Yue

R2890 – P. Liu

Mr Steve Sau - Representers' representative

R124 – 胡明洋

R950 – 劉志鍵

Mr Roy Tam (Green Sense) - Representers' representative

R191 – 陳秀霞

R3290 – Jennifer Yip

Ms Jennifer Yip - Representer and Representer's  
representative

R1133 – 李淑芬

Mr Mo Ka Chun - Representer's representative

R1166 – Hui Sin Hang, Stellar

R1655 – So Mo Ching, Crystal

R2742 – Yau Ka Po

Ms Hui Sin Hang - Representer and Representers'

representative

R1262 – Wong Ka Sing

Mr Wong Ka Sing - Representer

R1327 & R2925 – Lau Chee Sing

R3432 – Clement Woo

Dr Lau Chee Sing - Representer

R1638 – Lo Fai Road Green Belt Concern Group

R2053 – Leung Ching Yi

R3044 – Kelvin

Ms Betty Ho (Plan Arch Consultants Ltd) ) Representers' representatives

Mr Kan Cheng )

R1641 – The Incorporated Owners of Tycoon Place

R2799 – Lin Pik Fun

Ms Lin Pik Fun - Representer and Representers' representative

R1642 – The Incorporated Owners of Richwood Park

R2581 – Mak Chi Keung

R4556 – George Mak

Mr Mak Chi Keung - Representer and Representers' representative

R1643 – The Incorporated Owners of Casa Marina (Phase I)

R1868 – Ho Mo Kuen

Mr Chan Mui Chong - Representers' representative

R1645 – Ricky Chan

R4140 – Angela Ng

R4148 – Lam Shuk Ching, Cindy

Mr Ricky Chan Wai Ki - Representer and Representers'

representative

R1648 – Chung Mei Kuen

R1649 – Annet Yu

R2049 – May Wong

Ms Lam Bik Yue

- Representers' representative

R1672 – Tso Che Wah

R1679 – Poon Chi Sun

Dr Tso Che Wah

- Representer and Representer's  
representative

R1685 – Tse Shing Chi, Rainbow

Ms Tse Shing Chi, Rainbow

- Representer

R1786 – Georg Mak

Mr Allan Hay

- Representer's representative

R2755 – 蕭揚真

Ms Wong So Yam, Susan

- Representer's representative

R2798 – Windy Chan

R3287 – Chan Kit Wah Eva

R4273 – Allan K. Ho

R4312 – Wong Shui Ka

R4318 – Janice Ng

R4335 – Leung Lok

R4336 – Gi Gi Chan

R6294 – J.W. Wong

Mr J.W. Wong

- Representer and Representers'  
representative

R2965 – Clement Chung

Mr Clement Chung

- Representer



R3546 – Wong Lok Yin, Rocky

Mr Wong Lok Yin, Rocky - Representor

R3867 – Amy Chu

Ms Amy Chu - Representor

R4091 – Cheung Ching Yee

Ms Wong Lai Kuen - Representor's representative

R4287 – Leung Ching Yi

Ms Leung Ching Yi - Representor

R4872 – 高源溢

Ms Lee Siu Ting - Representor's representative

R5416 – 露輝路樹林關注組

Mr Lo Chung Cheong - Representor's representative

R6307 – 深水埗區大窩坪居民關注組

Mr Wong Lam Fung - Representor's representative

R6321 – 葉巧珍

Mr Tsang Chun - Representor's representative

C83 – Chan Yee Tak

Mr Chan Yee Tak - Commentor

31. The Vice-chairman extended a welcome to the government's representatives, the representors, commentors and their representatives and said that the Lo Fai Road Concern Group (the Concern Group) would continue with their presentation regarding the Amendment Item at Lo Fai Road on the draft Tai Po OZP No. S/TP/25.

32. Ms Yvonne Lui (R2778) (Mrs Hui), who represented the Concern Group, asked whether R1133 could present his representation on Tai Po Area 9 site before her group. As there was no objection from other representers and commenter, the Vice-chairman invited R1133 to proceed first.

R1133 – 李淑芬

33. Mr Mo Ka Chun, the representative of R1133, made the following main points:

- (a) the representer objected to the proposed public housing development at Tai Po Area 9 and Chung Nga Road as the representer considered that the “Green Belt” (“GB”) concerned was a public asset for the Tai Po residents. The proposed rezoning in Tai Po Area 9 and Amendment Item C was against the planning intention of “GB” zone, which was intended for a buffer between the urban and rural areas, and to contain urban sprawl. The rezoning would result in the loss of passive recreational space, especially for residents living in Fu Heng Estate;
- (b) the Development Bureau (DEVB) had all along been saying that only sites in “GB” zone that had lost its function as green belt, deserted, de-vegetated or formed would be proposed for rezoning. However, the rezoned sites in Area 9 and Chung Nga Road were well-vegetated slopes, which were favourite exercising, jogging and hiking spots for local residents. These sites were in fact performing their function of a green belt for passive recreational use;
- (c) notwithstanding PlanD had explained that the trees at these sites were planted 30 years ago and there was no old and valuable tree (OVT), the representer considered that 30-year old trees were mature and valuable as they had all along served the function of purifying the air. There was a 100-year old banyan tree in Area C. This tree had endured for such a long time because of the surrounding natural environment. While this tree could be preserved, it could not grow healthily if the

surrounding environment had been destroyed. There was no guarantee that the developers would be bounded by the lease condition on tree preservation;

- (d) a resident had pointed out previously that a feasibility study was conducted in 2009 for the housing development in Tai Po Area 9 in association with the Po Heung Street site. The study concluded that Tai Po Area 9 was not suitable for housing development in view of its remote location on top of a knoll and affected by the exhaust vent of the adjoining Nethersole Hospital. As there were inadequate infrastructure facilities in the area, residential development would have adverse impact on Fu Heng Estate nearby. PlanD should clearly explain why the findings of the study could be drastically changed in a few years' time. He objected to making a hasty decision for rezoning for the sake of meeting the housing demand;
- (e) the proposed residential development would have adverse impact on the traffic. In particular, the capacity of Tolo Highway could not cope with the additional population, taking into consideration that the future population of the North East New Territories (NENT) New Development Areas would also depend on Tolo Highway for commuting. There would be serious traffic congestion if there was an accident in Tolo Highway. Although there would be improvement to the rail network, the increase in the carrying capacity of the East Rail Line (ERL) would be limited as the number of carriages of the ERL would be reduced from 12 to 9, and the existing train frequency could not be further increased;
- (f) the proposed rezoning for residential development would affect Fu Heng Estate, which had inadequate supporting facilities and was not close to the MTR station. Chung Nga Road was congested on rainy days and the connecting bus service to the MTR station was infrequent. The proposed residential development would bring in additional residents to compete for the limited bus services, which would not be

fair to the Fu Heng Estate residents. The bus services should be improved for Fu Heng Estate and a new bus route connecting the MTR station with the proposed residential development should be provided to improve the situation;

- (g) Tai Po was a mature new town and it was reasonable to expect that there should not be new public rental housing development (PRH) except for redevelopment. As Tai Po residents would not have priority to move into the proposed PRH, the proposed rezoning for housing development would not benefit the local residents. The future residents, who could not blend in the local community, would be like living on an 'island within the city' similar to that of Ching Ho Estate in the North District and Kai Ching Estate in Kowloon; and
- (h) residents in the low to medium income group would not benefit from the planned low to medium-density residential developments in Tai Po. It might be more appropriate to develop Home Ownership Scheme (HOS) developments in Tai Po, which was in line with the Long Term Housing Strategy (LTHS) in providing more affordable housing for Hong Kong citizens.

[Actual speaking time of R1133 : 11 minutes]

34. The Vice-chairman said that the presentation of Mr Mo (the representer of R1133) would be recorded and conveyed to Members for consideration and deliberation of Group 1 representations. He then invited the Concern Group to continue their presentations regarding representations on Amendment Items affecting Lo Fai Road.

R1166 – Hui Sin Hang, Stellar

R1655 – So Mo Ching, Crystal

R2742 – Yau Ka Po

35. Ms Stellar Hui, a representer and the representative of R1655 and R2742, made the following main points:

- (a) She was a university student and considered that 10 minutes speaking time was inadequate;
- (b) there were other alternative sites for development. Priority should be given to develop brownfield sites which had been formed. Developing the brownfield sites would be more cost effective and there would be less resistance from the green groups. “GB” sites with trees of 30 years old should not be cleared;
- (c) the housing shortage problem in Hong Kong was not simply a question of supply and demand. While about 13% of the private housing stock in Hong Kong was vacant, many Hong Kong residents could not afford to buy their own flats. The general public could not benefit from the proposed low-density residential development in the “GB” sites in Tai Po, which was not affordable to them;
- (d) students from various universities had protested against developing “GB” sites in May 2014 because they wanted to protect their living environment. She urged Members to take their views and those of the Tai Po residents into consideration; and
- (e) many students had a strong sense of belonging to Hong Kong and would like to preserve their living environment. They would not agree to the ‘develop first, preserve later’ approach.

36. Mrs Hui then played 2 video clips in which Yau Ka Po (R2742) and So Mo Ching, Crystal (R1655) gave their views. Views of Mr Yau were summarised as follows :

- (a) he had solicited support from several hundred students requesting the Government not to rezone the “GB” sites at Lo Fai Road and not to clear the dense vegetation for development of luxurious flats. There were brownfield sites available for development. While

there was a need to increase housing supply, green belts should not be sacrificed for housing development; and

- (b) Hong Kong was rated a livable city because of its relatively high proportion of vegetated area and Country Parks. Increasing housing supply was intended to improve the quality of living of the Hong Kong residents. However, the clearance of vegetation in the “GB” sites would degrade the environment, contradicting the original intention and reducing the green areas in Hong Kong. Development should take place in deserted sites.

37. Views of Ms So were summarised as follows :

- (a) the housing problem in Hong Kong needed to be addressed by long-term planning and appropriate development strategy;
- (b) the “GB” site at Lo Fai Road was about 4 ha in size and trees growing there were over 30 years old, providing an important natural habitat for wild-life. It played an important role in keeping the eco-system, air quality and temperature of the area;
- (c) the brownfield sites near the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd), which had an area of about 9 ha and currently used as open storage and car dumping, should be considered for development. A sustainable mode of development should be adopted; and
- (d) the proposed development at Lo Fai Road would have adverse environmental, traffic and visual impacts on the surrounding area. The quiet learning environment of the HKIEd would also be adversely affected during the construction stage.

[Actual speaking time of R1166 : 14 minutes]

R1786 – Georg Mak

38. Mr Allan Hay, the representative of R1786, made the following main points :

- (a) He raised concern on the small number of Members attending the afternoon session of the meeting. Those Members who were unable to attend the meeting had missed the presentations of the residents and could not feel the frustration the residents had against the proposed development. Members should have a full understanding of the facts and digested the minutes of the meeting before making a decision on the rezoning. PlanD should explain to Members the rationale for the rezoning. A site visit to the Lo Fai Road area should be arranged for Members to better appreciate the site condition. The presentation made by Mr Ruy Barretto had summarised why the planning intention was wrong and why the proposal contravened the convention on bio-diversity and he urged Members to read Mr Barretto's written submission;
- (b) Tai Po New Town was well planned and well implemented. The "GB" sites at Lo Fai Road, near Sha Lo Tung and Nethersole Hospital, which were heavily used by residents, had performed their functions as a buffer to prevent urban sprawl and passive recreation areas. The rezoning would destroy the well planned "GB" sites and represent a major deviation from its original intention. The DEVB should be made aware that these "GB" sites were not suitable for residential development;
- (c) the Secretary for Development's blog in July 2014 was wrong in saying that it was only natural to review other "GB" areas after completion of the review on devegetated, deserted and formed "GB" sites. Proposals involving vast clearance of vegetation would meet considerable resistance from the community;

- (d) PlanD should be given adequate time to plan properly, and to consider developing brownfield sites. The LTHS had not considered developing brownfield sites and under-utilised industrial sites for housing purpose. Infrastructure and road improvement to facilitate residential development at specific sites, e.g. Tung Tsz Road, was possible and could be done by the government or the developer. Housing development should benefit its residents, but clearance of “GB” sites for development would cause disadvantages to residents;
- (e) although only a small percentage of “GB” zone was affected, the statistics should not be the excuse. These “GB” sites were not devegetated, deserted nor formed and they served very important purpose. Developing these “GB” sites would involve extensive clearance of vegetation and site formation, causing environmental nuisance; and
- (f) the Government should not be aiming at meeting the flat production target without first carrying out technical assessments. The proposed rezoning should not have taken place. The rezoning of “GB” sites for housing development proposed by DEVB contradicted the convention on bio-diversity administered by the Environmental Bureau.

[Actual speaking time of R1786 : 11 minutes]

39. The Vice-chairman clarified that the deliberation of the representations and comments on the draft Tai Po OZP would be conducted after completion of the hearing of the representations and comments. The points raised and discussed would be properly recorded, and issued to Members. Members would be adequately briefed before deliberating on the representations and comments. Mr Allan Hay re-iterated that Members that were not in the meeting could not appreciate fully the feelings of the residents. They should be told that there was tremendous opposition against the “GB” rezoning, and the rezoned sites did not comply with the criteria set out in the Policy



Address. Once the vegetation was cleared, no mitigation measures could make up for the loss of the 30 years old woodland, which had become a natural habitat. The Vice-chairman reassured Mr Hay that the points made in his presentation would be properly recorded for Members' information. Mrs Hui echoed Mr Hay's view and said that Members' presence in the meeting would have a positive impact on the public's confidence in the town planning system.

R1672 – Tso Che Wah

R1679 – Poon Chi Sun

40. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Dr Tso Che Wah, a representer and the representative of R1679, made the following main points :

- (a) while he appreciated Members' patience in listening to their presentations, he was disappointed that many Members were not able to attend the meeting. He requested that the Powerpoints presentations be passed to Members who were not at the meeting;
- (b) the "GB" site at Lo Fai Road was located on top of a knoll. It had an area of about 4.13 ha with over 2,500 mature trees, which had become a natural habitat of birds, insects and small animals. The Lo Fai Road site provided a passive recreation area for residents in the adjacent residential developments, namely Forest Hill, Richmond Park, Casa Marina and Tycoon Place. It also acted as a buffer between these residential developments in Lo Fai Road and the polluting industrial uses in the Tai Po Industrial Estate (e.g. the gas plant and sewage treatment plant) and the adjacent concrete batching plant;
- (c) the Lo Fai Road site was an integrated part of the surrounding development. The woodland had served its function as a green buffer and an accessible passive recreation area for the local residents, especially the elderlies;

- (d) the need to increase housing supply in the medium to long term should be met by high-rise, high-density PRH development. Low-density residential development at the Lo Fai Road site would not provide affordable housing for young people nor help shortening the waiting time for a public rental flat;
- (e) instead of developing the Lo Fai Road site, the Government should consider developing a de-vegetated brownfield site of about 9 ha nearby, which could provide about 3,000 flats. The Government should not give up the opportunity in developing this brownfield site in view of the difficulties in land acquisition and infrastructure provision; and
- (f) the trees in the Lo Fai Road site could absorb odours and carbon dioxide, trap suspended particles, reduce local temperature, provide shading, reduce traffic noise, retain soil and water run-off. The site was also a popular recreation place for the local residents and should be retained from sustainability perspective.

[Actual speaking time of R1672 : 9 minutes]

41. Mrs Hui noted said a ‘postcard’ had been distributed to Members to help them understanding the situation of the Lo Fai Road “GB”. She referred to a slide in Dr Tso’s Powerpoint presentation and added that the local residents cared very much about the “GB” site at Lo Fai Road and took initiative to sweep the footpath to keep the place clean.

R2965 – Clement Chung

42. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Mr Clement Chung, a flat owner of Richwood Park, made the following main points on road safety and traffic assessments of Lo Fai Road :

- (a) he was engaged in the traffic and transport industry and had assisted the Police by giving expert witness on this aspect in the Court on a

number of occasions. A 50m section of Lo Fai Road between 'Exit C' of Forest Hill and the ingress/egress of Casa Marina Phase 1 where there were constant illegal parking outside the supermarket, Wellcome, was considered 'dead ground', i.e. approaching vehicles could not see each other. Head-on collision could happen to approaching vehicles travelling at 50 km per hour within this 50m stretch of road in about 3.6 seconds. A head-on collision at this speed was equivalent to a vehicle hitting a stationary object at 100 km per hour, which would be fatal. The rezoning of the Lo Fai Road site for residential development would increase the risk of traffic accident here as 19 on-street parking spaces would be cancelled and with more vehicles (including construction vehicles) travelling on Lo Fai Road. The situation could not be illustrated by the statistics on traffic accidents, but by the severity of such an accident. He then illustrated his point with a video clip showing how approaching vehicles would travel close to each other near the illegally parked vehicles.

- (b) according to the data from TD, the capacity of Lo Fai Road was 1,100 passenger car unit (pcu), not 1,400 pcu as quoted by PlanD, i.e. about 550 pcu each way. There were a total of 834 flats in the existing residential developments at Lo Fai Road, and about 345-349 outbound vehicles leaving Lo Fai Road, i.e. about 41% of the households would use their cars. Similarly, the additional 660 flats at the "GB" site would generate 273 vehicles, resulting in a total of about 620 vehicles, which exceeded the capacity of Lo Fai Road by more than 20%; and
- (c) the above data had not taken into account the traffic generated by the HKIEd and the roadside loading/unloading activities carried out at the supermarket nearby. The traffic would get worse with the increase in the number of students, additional population from the proposed development, construction vehicles, loss of on-street parking spaces and traffic generated from associated facilities to

serve the local residents. As Lo Fai Road was the only road linkage in this area, it could not cope with the additional traffic generated. Increase in traffic would also aggravate the traffic noise problem experienced by residents of Forest Hill and Richwood Park as these developments were built up to the edge of Lo Fai Road.

[Actual speaking time of R2965 : 11 minutes]

43. Mrs Hui supplemented that illegal parking could not be resolved even though a resident from Richwood Park had made numerous complaints to the Police, probably due to such illegal parking was generated from the needs of the nearby residents.

R1641 – The Incorporated Owners of Tycoon Place

R2799 – Lin Pik Fun

44. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Ms Lin Pik Fun, a representer and the representative of R1641, made the following main points :

[Mr Roger K.H. Luk left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

- (a) she grew up in Tai Po and moved into Tycoon Place 12 years ago for the natural environment in that area. Different kinds of wild animal, including Muntiacus muntjak (赤麂), wild pigs and snake were spotted in the “GB” nearby, sometimes even at the entrance to Tycoon Place. This was contrary to PlanD’s view that the ecological value of the “GB” site at Lo Fai Road was low;

[Mr Frankie W.C. Yeung left the meeting temporarily at this point.]

- (b) some potentially polluting industries, e.g. concrete batching plant, sewage treatment plant, gas plant and landfill (now developed as a golf course) were located to the south of the Lo Fai Road site. Noise and dust problems were generated from the activities at the concrete batching plant, and odour problem from the fish farm at

Sam Mun Tsai, sewage treatment plant and the ex-landfill. Numerous complaints were made about the odour from the sewage treatment plant since 2000 and the situation had not been improved. The “GB” sites at Lo Fai Road was the only buffer the residents could rely on;

- (c) the “GB” site at Lo Fai Road would serve as a buffer to the noise, dust and odour generated by activities in the industrial area. If the “GB” site was rezoned for residential development, the residents at Lo Fai Road would lose the buffer while the future residents at the rezoned site would be subject to nuisance. The vegetation would be replaced by housing blocks, resembling a nearby development known as The Beverly Hills, which was unsightly; and
- (d) trees within the “GB” site at Lo Fai Road was planned to provide a buffer to the industrial area, the Government should not change its original intention. Residents had not been consulted on the proposed rezoning of the Lo Fai Road site. Members should consider the feeling of the residents and the importance of protecting the environment.

[Actual speaking time of R2799 : 19 minutes]

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

45. The Vice-chairman said as the presentations of the Concern Group had not yet finished, Mr Roy Tam (Green Sense) representing R124 and R950 scheduled for the afternoon session might need to make his presentation afterwards. Mrs Hui said that she had obtained Mr Tam’s consent to continue the Concern Group’s presentations. The Vice-chairman noted that the Concern Group would require an additional 90 minutes for their presentations. The Vice-chairman said that while Members would listen to all presentations, he reminded the Concern Group to be brief and not to repeat the points already covered by other representers.

R1642 – The Incorporated Owners of Richwood Park

R2581 – Mak Chi Keung

R4556 – George Mak

46. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation and video clips, Mr Mak Chi Keung, a representer and representative of R1642 and R4556, made the following main points:

- (a) Government often planned and made proposals on the basis of information and data held by relevant departments, which could not solve the real-life problem experienced by the local residents. It was expected that development at the “GB” site at Lo Fai Road would be low-density private residential development in order to blend in with the local environment and the existing developments. This type of low-density residential development would not help solving the housing problem in Hong Kong; and
- (b) from their own knowledge, about 2,400 flats were sold in Tai Po last year, including The Beverly Hills, Providence Bay, Mayfair by the Sea and The Golden Gate. As illustrated by the video clips showing these developments at night time, the occupancy rate was very low. Owners would not move into these flats nor lease them out. As such, this type of development would not help meeting the housing demand.

[Actual speaking time of R2581 and R4556 : 10 minutes]

47. Mrs Hui spoke on behalf of a resident, who had left the meeting, that the rezoning of “GB” sites was in breach of the policy of preserving “GB”, which had been in place for a long time. There was no public engagement on this change in policy, and there was not any explanation on the change.

R1327 & R2925 – Lau Chee-Sing

48. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Dr Lau Chee Sing, a Tai Po District

Council (TPDC) member, made the following main points :

- (a) he had been assisting the local residents in expressing their views on the rezoning of the Lo Fai Road site. Most of the local residents objected to the rezoning of the Lo Fai Road site. Their views had been expressed to the TPDC and PlanD in various meetings;
- (b) in the TPDC meeting held on 8.5.2014, a motion was passed to request PlanD and the Board :
  - (i) to respect the objecting views of the local residents;
  - (ii) to honour the Chief Executive (CE)'s promise to preserve green belts and not to rezone well vegetated area such as the Lo Fai Road site for development. The brownfield sites near HKIEd should be considered for development instead;
  - (iii) to consider the capacity of the existing road network, having regard to various existing or planned developments, e.g. Tsz Shan Monastery, Lung Mei Beach, a columbarium with 12,000 niches and a spa hotel;
  - (iv) to respect the original "GB" zone as residents living in Lo Fai Road were attracted by its natural environment. The "GB" site should not be taken away;
  - (v) to review the demand for low-density residential development in Tai Po as the occupancy rate of a number of such developments in Tai Po was low; and
- (c) the Board should respect the objecting views of the local residents and the views of the TPDC in considering the representations. Otherwise, its decision would be subject to judicial review.

[Actual speaking time of R2925 : 15 minutes]

49. Mrs Hui said that many TPDC members and Legislative Council (LegCo) members had submitted their representations. She then played video clips in which TPDC members Ms Peggy P.K. Wong (R1636) and Mr Ken C.W. Yu (R1635), and LegCo member Dr Cheung Chiu Hung (R1629) expressed their views.

50. Views of Ms Peggy P.K. Wong (R1636) were summarised as follows :

- (a) in the TPDC meeting held on 8.5.2014, twelve DC members had raised objections to the rezoning of the Lo Fai Road site;
- (b) Ting Kok Road had to cope with traffic generated from the existing Shuen Wan landfill, sewage treatment plant, residential developments and the HKIEd at Lo Fai Road. The capacity of Ting Kok Road would be further stretched by development projects in the pipeline, e.g. Tsz Shan Monastery, a columbarium and Lung Mei Beach. The number of classes in the HSBC Early Childhood Centre at HKIEd would be increased in view of the demand for kindergarten place. Ting Kok Road and Lo Fai Road could not cope with the additional traffic arising from the rezoning; and
- (c) the 660 flats proposed at the Lo Fai Road site could be accommodated at other more suitable sites. The vegetation at the Lo Fai Road site would be lost, together with plants and herbs that might be valuable to the teaching of Chinese medicine. If development was unavoidable, the site could be used for the HKIEd expansion to serve the additional population in the proposed public housing development in Tai Po Area 9.

51. Views of Mr Ken C.W. Yu (R1635) were summarised as follows :

- (a) TPDC members had objected to the rezoning of the Lo Fai Road “GB” site in the TPDC meeting held on 8.5.2014;



- (b) while TPDC generally supported new housing developments, they should be carried out in sites where there were no vegetation as advocated in CE's Policy Address. The well vegetated and beautiful woodland at the Lo Fai Road site should be retained as it provided a breathing space in the area;
- (c) there was traffic congestion problem at Lo Fai Road as it was the only public road serving the existing residential developments and the HKIEd. The additional 660 flats would aggravate the traffic congestion problem at Lo Fai Road and have adverse impact on the traffic condition; and
- (d) while he did not support any development at the Lo Fai Road site, he considered that the site could only be developed if the residents' concerns on the above issues were properly addressed.

52. Views of Dr Cheung Chiu Hung (R1629) were summarised as follows :

- (a) he was against the rezoning of the Lo Fai Road "GB" site for luxury housing development. It was stated in the LTHS and in CE's Policy Address that the Government would review "GB" sites that had lost its original function as green belt for development. Well vegetated site such as the Lo Fai Road site, which was a popular place for passive recreation for the local residents, should not be considered for development;
- (b) the proposed rezoning was not in line with the intention of protecting the natural environment and against social justice. The rezoning would deprive the residents' right to enjoy the natural environment and would only benefit few people who could afford to buy the flats to be developed at the site;

- (c) the local residents had pointed out that a privately owned devegetated site near the HKIEd could be considered for development. Rezoning a well vegetated “GB” site which was heavily used by the local residents for residential development would set an undesirable precedent for similar rezoning. It was an established practice that developments within “GB” zone would be rejected to maintain the natural environment. If “GB” sites were rezoned for development easily, more and more “GB” zones would be lost and the Country Parks would be affected eventually. The Board should perform its gate-keeping role in protecting the “GB” sites in considering the rezoning; and
- (d) while there was a need to meet the housing demand, the Lo Fai Road site should not be rezoned for development, whether for low-density housing development or public rental housing. The rezoning should be refused.

R3546 – Wong Lok Yin, Rocky

53. Mr Wong Lok Yin, Rocky made the following main points :

- (a) he represented the Liberal Party, Offices of Legislative Councillor Hon James Tien Pei-Chun and was concerned about air quality and environmental protection in Hong Kong;
- (b) Hong Kong had focused on its economic growth and ignored the importance of protecting the environment. Hong Kong should make reference to other cities like Singapore in adopting a development approach that struck a balance in safety, function and aesthetic in its development. It was well-known that vegetation could provide shading, reduce heat and absorb carbon dioxide. Comparing with Hong Kong, the extent of green coverage had produced a more pleasant living environment in Singapore. Singapore had a policy to turn itself into a city within garden;

- (c) China had also promulgated a greening policy to address the global warming issue, including extensive tree planting, forestation, higher green coverage ratio, land management to revert desertification of land and encroachment onto wooded area; and
- (d) cities around us were focusing on greening but Hong Kong was doing the opposite by rezoning “GB” sites for development. Hong Kong would soon become a concrete jungle.

[Actual speaking time of R3546 : 6 minutes]

R191 – 陳秀霞

R3290 – Jennifer Yip

R4091 – Cheung Ching Yee

54. Ms Wong Lai Kuen, the representative of R191, R3290 and R4091, made the following main points :

- (a) she appreciated Members’ patience in listening to their presentations. However, the representation hearing session would not be necessary if there was no rezoning proposal for the “GB” site at Lo Fai Road in the first place. All attendees at this meeting knew the importance of the “GB” site and hence it was not worth the effort to spend the time and resources to repeatedly discussing its function and stating its importance to the local residents;
- (b) she was glad to see that China had become aware of the importance of protecting the environment. Yet, the rezoning of the Lo Fai Road site was taking a step backward. It was wrong to destroy a “GB” site even if there was a good reason;
- (c) the root of the housing problem was not about supply and demand, but that the housing price was beyond the reach of many people.

The rezoning of the Lo Fai Road site for luxury housing development would not address the problem. The Government should not proceed with the development; and

- (d) she had faith that Members would carry out their duties by listening to the representations, and that Hong Kong was still bound by law and could be reasoned with.

[Actual speaking time of R191, R3290 and R4091 : 4 minutes]

R47 – Lui Yan Yan, Yvonne

R2890 – P. Liu

55. Mr Steve Sau, a representer and the representative of R47, made the following main points :

- (a) while the Government made no attempt to develop its land reserved for the short-term uses, the 400 ha vacant government land for the medium-term uses and the 800 ha brownfield sites for the long-term uses, it went for developing 207 ha “GB” sites announced in the 2013 and 2014 Policy Addresses for administrative convenience. This would mean clearing the wooded area, which was against the principle of improving the living environment, sustainable development and green living, and had disregarded the issue of the global climate and ecological change;
- (b) there was a Chinese proverb saying “the ancestors planted trees to provide shading for their offsprings”. The extensive country parks and “GB” areas in Hong Kong were the result of tree planting policy implemented by the Government since 1870. The Government put great emphasis on preserving the “GB” zone in the past and over 80% of the applications for development within the “GB” zone were rejected for reasons of setting undesirable precedent and conflicting with the planning intention of the “GB” zone;

- (c) the previous 2 terms of the Government had not exploited “GB” sites for development, but had worked towards the expansion of country parks to 440 sq.km and to reduce the intensity of developments to improve air ventilation. Researchers of the Chinese University of Hong Kong found out that Hong Kong suffered from heat island effect as the average wind velocity in the urban area decreased from 3m per second in 1966 to less than 1m per second nowadays. This led to a 30% increase in energy consumption for air conditioning during summer;
- (d) the Government failed to manage the devegetated and deserted “GB” areas and rehabilitate them back to a natural state, but to use them for development instead. He queried why the brownfield sites was not used first. The Government had not assessed the social costs and the impact of rezoning 207 ha of “GB” zone in terms of loss of natural habitat and bio-capacity, which could not be replaced by theme planting or vertical greening;
- (e) the fume and smog were trapped by tall buildings in the urban area and could not be dispersed. As discovered by researchers in the School of Public Health of the University of Hong Kong, there were about 1,200 and 1,300 deaths last year associated with cardiovascular and respiratory diseases respectively. The air pollution would also affect the development of the cardiovascular and respiratory system in children;
- (f) deforestation caused global warming and resulted in the rise of sea level, severe storms and spreading of diseases. The Government had not assessed the economic loss due to natural disasters associated with global warming. New York, Paris and Tokyo were cities that had faced the consequences of over-development. They were now increasing tree planting and rehabilitating land back to the nature. While the Environment Bureau was promoting the

awareness of environmental protection, the DEVB used the excuse of low ecological value to rezone well-vegetated “GB” sites for development. It would be better to preserve species that were common and abundant today than to preserve them tomorrow when they were endangered; and

- (g) it was a short-sighted act for the Government to rezone the Lo Fai Road “GB” site for development as it had ignored the loss of vegetation, the damage done to the natural environment and its contribution to global warming. The Board should consider carefully on the rezoning and act accordingly to preserve the precious woodland and reverse the trend of global warming and climatic changes.

[Actual speaking time of R47 : 20 minutes]

R2798 – Windy Chan

R3287 – Eva Chan Kit Wah

R4273 – Allan K. Ho

R4312 – Wong Shui Ka

R4318 – Janice Ng

R4335 – Leung Lok

R4336 – Gi Gi Chan

R6294 – J.W. Wong

56. Mr J.W. Wong, a representer and the representative of 7 other representers who had left the meeting, made the following main points :

- (a) he was not living in Tai Po but often visited Tai Po during weekends for recreational purposes. The environment of Tai Po was not exclusive to the Tai Po residents, but was also shared by non-Tai Po residents;

- (b) the general public would not have the resource or knowledge to verify the technical data provided by the Government for the rezoning. They could only provide comments based on common sense and their feelings. However, their views were not taken seriously as could be seen in many rezoning cases. The Government was simply repeating their stance throughout the consultation process;
  
- (c) while there was no dispute on the need to provide housing to meet the demand, residents did not have the opportunity to participate in formulating the policy on reviewing “GB” zone, i.e. rezoning of devegetated and deserted “GB” sites that had lost its green belt function in the Stage 1 review, and rezoning of “GB” sites with gradient less than 20 degree and close to areas with infrastructure provision in the Stage 2 review. The policy on “GB” rezoning was arbitrary as there was no consultation on the policy formulation. It was not known to the public how the policy of rezoning “GB” sites was formulated and whether there would be further stages for “GB” review. The Government protected “GB” zone in the past and seldom approved any developments within “GB” zone. If the Government did not stand firm on protecting the “GB” areas and took the lead in rezoning “GB” areas, it would set an undesirable precedent for private developers to follow. He feared that if 1% of “GB” zone was rezoned for development, there would be more rezoning of “GB” to come;
  
- (d) Hong Kong had experienced housing boom in the past, but had never rezoned “GB” zone for development. The housing problem was far more complicated than balancing the supply and demand of housing land. Rezoning “GB” sites for luxury housing would not solve the housing problem as the price of these developments would be beyond the reach of ordinary citizens and was only fit for speculation;

- (e) the Government should give priority to developing brownfield sites and other under-utilised sites currently used for recreational and industrial uses; and
- (f) the 7 representers he was representing were disappointed for not being able to speak in person due to the long meeting. They would like to have another opportunity to make their presentations.

[Actual speaking time of R6294 : 17 minutes]

R1645 – Ricky Chan

R4140 – Angela Ng

R4148 – Lam Shuk Ching, Cindy

57. Mr Ricky Chan Wai Ki, a representer and the representative of R4140 and R4148, made the following main points :

- (a) the problem with the younger generation not able to have their own flats should be addressed by building more public housing, instead of luxury housing in “GB” sites. The flats to be developed at the rezoned “GB” site would be luxurious, which would probably be subject to speculation;
- (b) the loss of trees in the “GB” zone might not be mitigated through compensatory planting;
- (c) the Government had no clear direction in land development and sites were put into inappropriate uses, e.g. the site in Kowloon Bay for the Construction Industry Council Zero Carbon Building could have been developed for PRH which could easily accommodate 600 to 1,000 flats;
- (d) the general public would have the feeling that there was possible collusion between the Government and developers in rezoning “GB”



sites for sale to developers for luxury housing developments; and

- (e) the 2011 Census indicated that there were about 2.4 million households but there were about 2.6 million living quarters in Hong Kong. He wondered whether there was really a problem of housing shortage and whether the shortage was in public housing, private housing or luxury housing.

[Actual speaking time of R1645 : 7 minutes]

R6307 – 深水埗區大窩坪居民關注組

58. Mr Wong Lam Fung, the representative of R6307, made the following main points :

- (a) the whole world was now advocating for environmental protection, and preserving the nature and trees. We should not be spending so much time on discussing about “GB” rezoning as we should all know the importance of “GB” areas to the city; and
- (b) while there was housing demand, the Government had focused wrongly on the supply side to address the housing problem. There should be a population policy. Land in Hong Kong could not sustain an ever increasing population. The Board should not become the political tool of the Government in pressing for development. Once the “GB” site was destroyed, it could not be re-instated.

[Actual speaking time of R6307 : 7 minutes]

59. Mrs Hui supplemented that the sudden change in the “GB” policy had undermined residents’ confidence in the planning system and the independence of the Board. She hoped that the Board would take residents’ views into consideration and make their judgment independently. She also showed some slides to illustrate a

representer's view that Hong Kong had some of the poorest air quality in the world. For Tai Po, 3 air pollutants had exceeded the recommended limits. Also, the concentration of a fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) in Hong Kong was almost the same as that in Beijing. As the air quality was already bad in Hong Kong, taking away 1% of "GB" zone would further aggravate the situation and it was necessary to explore alternatives to vegetation clearance in "GB" zone for development. She then played a video clip on the presentation made by Mrs Fung who was not a representer and 黎慎初 (R5245).

60. Views of Mrs Fung were summarised as follows :

- (a) she was a resident of Casa Marina and was diagnosed with terminal lung cancer 3 years ago. The Lo Fai Road site, which was adjacent to Casa Marina, was very important to her as she practised Chi Gong there daily for 4 hours. She was happy that she could contain her illness by doing exercise. As she was physically weak, she could not travel to other places to do exercise. She felt desperate when she knew that the "GB" site would be rezoned for development and she would die soon if she could not carry on with her exercise. She knew that some other elderly residents also suffered from various types of cancer and they too relied on the "GB" site for doing exercise; and
- (b) the "GB" site was a convenient place for many local residents to jog and run as the open area within their residential developments were too small.

61. Views of 黎慎初先生 were summarised as follows :

- (a) the Lo Fai Road site was very important to the elderly residents in the area. They moved in the area for its natural environment and came every morning for a walk and doing exercise to stay healthy. The local residents took care of the wooded area themselves;

- (b) although the trees in the site were not special, they were valuable to the local residents as well as residents in Tai Po as it screened off the odour and dust from the industrial area. The air quality in this piece of vegetated area was fresh;
- (c) the rezoning would bring additional 660 flats, resulting in increasing traffic and the exhaust gases from the traffic would adversely affect the residents, especially the health of the elderly, and generate additional demand for medical facilities. Additional school and kindergarten would also be required for the additional population; and
- (d) as the rezoning would have impact on the provision of educational, and medical facilities as well as adverse impacts on the environment, it should not be proceeded.

R1687 – Chong Yiu Kwong

62. Ms Yvonne Lui (Mrs Hui), the representative of R1687, made the following main points :

- (a) the valley near HKIEd was polluted, flooded and infested with mosquitoes. The landowner formed the land to avoid the flooding and mosquito problem, but unauthorised use had continued on the site. This site should be developed instead;
- (b) priority should be given to develop the brownfield sites in the New Territories;
- (c) HKIEd would be accredited as a University in a few years' time and would cover courses other than education degrees. There were already over 6,000 students in HKIEd and the number of school places would be increased after the accreditation, especially the number of Bachelor's and Master's Degree courses. There would

also be an increase in the number of classes. HKIED had not been consulted and the need for the HKIED's expansion had not been considered in the proposed rezoning of the Lo Fai Road "GB" site for residential development; and

- (d) staff and students of the HKIED would shop at the supermarket as well as take a stroll at the "GB" site. The site was considered an important part of the HKIED community.

[Actual speaking time of R1687 : 4 minutes]

R2778 – Yvonne Lui

63. Ms Yvonne Lui (Mrs Hui) made the following main points :

- (a) the policy of preserving "GB" had been implemented for over 30 years and the current "GB" rezoning was a sudden shift in the policy. The "GB" rezoning was against the majority views and there was no public consultation on this policy change. The rezoning of vegetated "GB" sites near areas with infrastructure provision, without considering the value and function of these "GB" sites represented a major departure from the announced policy of the first stage of "GB" review, which covered sites that had been devegetated and deserted;
- (b) there was no definition of 'low buffer value' to determine the rezoning criteria in the second stage of "GB" review. Many residents considered that the Lo Fai Road site had provided an important buffer between the existing residential developments at Lo Fai Road and the industrial plants in the Tai Po Industrial Estate, but the site was considered having 'low buffer value' and hence rezoned. The proposed rezoning was arbitrary, undermining the public's confidence in the planning process;

- (c) although the site was accessible by Lo Fai Road, the capacity of Lo Fai Road could not absorb the additional traffic generated;
- (d) the Lo Fai Road “GB” site was located near the ‘Guanyin’ statue, which was a prominent landmark in Tai Po, was visible from the 12 km long cycle track along Tolo Highway. Residential development at the site would have adverse visual impact on Tolo Highway;
- (e) there was no assessment on the ecological value of the “GB” site at Lo Fai Road to justify that its ecological value was low. Although there was no OVT at the site, common tree species were just as important and they should not be felled;
- (f) there was no evident to conclude that rezoning 1% of the “GB” zone for development would not have adverse impacts on Hong Kong. As the air quality in Hong Kong was not good, more “GB” areas were needed. Other cities were trying to increase their “GB” area and we should not do the opposite;
- (g) the “GB” rezoning was carried out in phases and several sites were considered each time. However, a total of 23 “GB” sites in Tai Po would be rezoned for development. There was no assessment on the cumulative impacts on Tai Po for the loss of all 23 “GB” sites; and
- (h) the rezoning would only provide 660 luxurious flats, which were not what the public wanted. Other representers had pointed out that the vacancy rate of this type of housing in Tai Po was high. The rezoning would have adverse impacts on visual and the biodiversity of the area. The community would not gain anything from the rezoning, but would suffer from loss of a green belt, a breathing space/buffer, the opportunity to develop brownfield sites and Hong Kong’s reputation.

[Actual speaking time of R2778 : 10 minutes]

R1638 – Lo Fai Road Green Belt Concern Group

R2053 – Leung Ching Yi

64. With the aid of a Powerpoint presentation, Ms Betty Ho, the representative of R1638 and R2053, made the following main points :

- (a) there were more than 4,000 representations objecting to the rezoning of the Lo Fai Road site. They were submitted by people with different background, including the general public, Tai Po residents, Lo Fai Road residents, students from HKIEd, scholars, TPDC members, LegCo members representing different political parties and environmental concern groups. They all cared about the Lo Fai Road site and the vast number of representations illustrated that the site was very important to them;
- (b) the Lo Fai Road site fully performed its function according to the planning intention of the “GB” zone. Its rezoning for residential development would change the planning intention for the site, which was against the objective of the “GB” zone in the past 30 years and strong justifications should be provided to the public;
- (c) the Lo Fai Road site was located on top of a knoll and the proposed residential development would affect the ridgeline and the visual linkage to the Pat Sin Leng backdrop from the public viewing points along Tolo Highway and by the sea. The proposed development would also have adverse traffic impacts in terms of road safety and capacity;
- (d) the site was currently a public space for passive recreation use and a breathing space. The site provided a much needed space for the local residents to maintain their sense of belonging;

- (e) the site functioned as a buffer between the residential developments at Lo Fai Road and the Tai Po Industrial Estate and the concrete batching plant nearby. The use of the site by the local residents as a recreation/exercise ground contributed positively to their well being in terms of physical and psychological health; and
  
- (f) the residents could not accept that a piece of brownfield site near HKIEd, where there was no vegetation cover, would not be considered for development whereas more than 2,500 trees in the Lo Fai Road site would be cleared for development. Developing such brownfield site was feasible and could be implemented within a short-time frame. The residents would only accept rezoning the Lo Fai Road site if development of the brownfield site could not be materialised. The rezoning would jeopardise the residents' trust in the planning system, the Board and PlanD. The site should be reverted to the "GB" zone.

[Actual speaking time of R1638 : 7 minutes]

65. Mrs Hui played a video clip of Professor Yiu Chung Yim (R26). The views of Professor Yiu were summarised as follows :

- (a) from a global point of view, climate change and global warming were real and imminent. Effort should be made towards reducing global warming and its effect on severe climate change. The vegetation in the Lo Fai Road site was an important element in contributing towards reducing global warming, temperature and air pollution locally;
  
- (b) the average population density in Hong Kong was about 7,000 people per ha, which was in the upper limit of medium population density by the world's standard. However, the population density in the urban areas in Hong Kong was much higher, which was equal to that of the top few most densely populated cities. In view of the

increasing population density, the livability ranking of Hong Kong had dropped to beyond the livable level. Rezoning “GB” sites for development would affect the overall population density in Hong Kong and further lower the ranking of Hong Kong in terms of its livability;

- (c) the Lo Fai Road site was important in terms of bio-diversity and its function as green belt. The rezoning would change the function of the site and deviate from the original intention that the Board had previously supported;
- (d) the Town Planning Ordinance (the Ordinance) empowered the Board to prepare plans for the promotion of health, safety, convenience and general welfare of the community. The Ordinance did not make provision for the Board to prepare plans in consideration of the Government’s need to redistribute the landuse to meet the demand for developable land. In considering the rezoning of “GB” sites, Members should consider whether the rezoning would affect the health, safety, convenience and general welfare of the district, and not just land supply for residential development. Rezoning of a “GB” site which was still functioning as a green belt would contravene its original planning intention; and
- (e) it was clearly stated in the Notes of the OZP that there was a presumption against development within the “GB” zone. If the “GB” had not lost its green belt function, then development should not be allowed and the site should not be rezoned. The recent change in policy to review “GB” sites by the Government, irrespect of whether it had been devegetated, had triggered many applications from private developers to rezone “GB” sites. This would have significant adverse impact on the general welfare of the district concerned and would affect the livability of Hong Kong as a whole.



66. The Vice-chairman thanked Mrs Hui and the Concern Group for attending the meeting and said that the Concern Group had used about 380 minutes of their time altogether, which was within the allotted time for the representers or their representatives co-ordinated by the Concern Group. The Vice-chairman thanked Mr Roy Tam for his patience to wait until the Concern Group had finished their presentations.

67. Mr Roy Tam said that he was authorised by two representers and therefore would speak for 20 minutes. He considered that the “GB” rezoning on the Tai Po OZP involved issues including a change in the “GB” policy, priority in developing brownfield sites, and demand for school places arising from the additional population. These matters should be carefully considered by the concerned bureau/departments as the Board could not address all the issues by itself. He suggested that the Board should adjourn the meeting and the Government should work out an alternative that could preserve the “GB” site and avoid tree felling while providing the required number of flats on other suitable sites. The Vice-chairman explained that the objective of the meeting was to provide an opportunity to representers and commenters to present their views and for the Board to consider the representations and comments in the preparation of draft Tai Po OZP. The Board would deliberate after listening to all representations and comments and make a decision on whether the OZP should be amended or not. The hearing should proceed and the relevant issues could be considered by the concerned bureau/departments separately.

R124 – 胡明洋

R950 – 劉志鍵

68. With the aid of the visualiser and a Powerpoint presentation, Mr Roy Tam, the representative of R124 and R950, showed a newspaper article on the objections raised by residents on the rezoning of the Lo Fai Road site, tabled a letter stating his main points and made the following main points :

- (a) the Stage 2 review of “GB” covering sites with vegetation was unreasonable;
- (b) 9 ha of land near HKIEd had been cleared for storage use. This brownfield site should be rezoned for development instead of the Lo

Fai Road site. If this site were developed for PRH, three vegetated “GB” sites in Tai Po could have been saved;

- (c) decisions on development proposals in other countries were made by City Council through discussion with stakeholders to achieve a win-win outcome. Subject to proper consultation, he was willing to accept PRH development in the “GB” site, but not low-density luxury housing development;
- (d) the policy on increasing flat supply should not be followed blindly. It was reported in the newspaper that Siu Ho Wan was considered for residential development. As Siu Ho Wan was affected by Noise Exposure Forecast 25 of the Hong Kong Airport, it should not be used for residential development. The Government would receive vast number of representations if such unreasonable proposal was pursued;
- (e) there were discrepancies in the number of “GB” sites to be rezoned for development announced by the Government. Although 70% of the flats developed in these sites would be for public housing, the majority of these “GB” sites were for private residential development;
- (f) as rezoning “GB” sites with vegetation involved a drastic change in policy, the public should be consulted. Assessments on all the “GB” sites including tree survey, ecological assessment and landuse study should be carried out. The draft Tai Po OZP to rezone “GB” sites would be subject to judicial review if these assessments were not carried out;
- (g) he doubted how Members could make a decision on the proposed rezoning if they did not have a full picture of the presentations since many of them did not attend the other session of the meeting in

which he made an one-hour long presentation with video clips showing the “GB” sites;

- (h) for many years, residents making representations to OZPs were disappointed that their views were not accepted since the Board’s decisions were very often unduly affected by the Government and were more pro-development;
- (i) the Lands Administration Office Practice Note 7/2007 regarding “Tree Preservation and Tree Removal Application for Building Development in Private Projects” would not be able to protect the trees within the development site. This could be illustrated in the Sheung Shing Street case where 50% of the site was originally covered by vegetation. Yet at the end, all the trees (over 400 trees) except 3 were felled. The developer would put up good reasons to justify clearance of the trees for development. If the Lo Fai Road site was rezoned for development, all the trees would be felled. Tree survey should be thoroughly carried out before land disposal;
- (j) the planning system was being used to meet administrative directives. The Board should make its decision independently and conscientiously;
- (k) it was not necessary to clear the wooded area to the north of the site planned for PRH development in Tai Po Area 9 as there was no need to reserve land for constructing the primary school noting that the number of primary students was decreasing;
- (l) he objected to the rezoning of “GB” sites with vegetation for private residential development, or would consider lodging a judicial review on the Board’s decision if the rezoning was approved. Litigation would be a long process and the proposed development could not be implemented within a short period of time; and

- (m) there was a 100-year old banyan tree at the “GB” site near Fu Heng Estate, several thousand trees at the site near Fung Yuen and the Lo Fai Road site. Rezoning these 3 sites would not be necessary if the 9 ha brownfield site near HKIED was developed instead.

[Actual speaking time of R124 and R950 : 18 minutes]

69. As representers and commenters attending the meeting had no further presentation, the Vice-chairman said that the presentation session was completed. According to the original schedule, there should be a Q&A session. He would like to have a comprehensive and interactive Q&A session as the issues involved were complicated, but it would mean a much pro-longed meeting. He noted that some representers had commented that many Members were unable to attend the afternoon session of the meeting and he asked whether a separate session, probably in early 2015, should be arranged for the Q&A session.

70. In response, Mrs Hui said that the Concern Group generally agreed to arrange a separate Q&A session as suggested. She requested that more non-official Members should attend the Q&A session. She said that Mr Allan Hay would be away from Hong Kong for 2 months and wondered if he could proceed with the Q&A session on his part at the current session. The Vice-chairman explained that it would be fair to conduct the Q&A session in one session. As Mr Allan Hay had made his presentation in another session and had participated in the Q&A session at that time, his views were already made known to the Board.

71. In response to the Vice-chairman’s suggestion for a separate Q&A session, Mr Tam said that the Board was facing a dilemma; i.e. to rezone “GB” sites to meet housing demand and public opposition to the rezoning. He considered that representatives from the Education Bureau and the Housing Department should be invited to explain their justifications for using the site. It would be sensible for the concerned bureau/departments to work out a compromised solution acceptable to all parties. Otherwise, the Board would be blamed for whatever decision it would make. The Vice-chairman noted his view.

72. Mrs Hui asked whether it would be possible that the Q&A session would be arranged in February 2015 when Mr Allan Hay was back to Hong Kong. The Secretary said that there was a statutory time limit to process the representations and comments and submit the OZP to Chief Executive in Council for approval. The Vice-chairman added that the Q&A session should be arranged as soon as possible in order that a fruitful discussion could be made while Members still had a fresh memory of all presentations made at the current session. The Vice-chairman said that the date and details of the Q&A session would be announced in due course.

73. Mr Tony Nip (R18) asked if the statutory period for submitting the Tai Po OZP for approval could be extended. The Vice-chairman said that the Board would carry out its duty accordingly and would seek extension of the statutory time limit if necessary.

74. Mr Allan Hay said that he had made his presentations and participated in the Q&A session in the first day of the hearing for Group 2 representations. The Board should know his views clearly. He hoped that the points made by all representers would be relayed to non-official Members and a site visit could be arranged for Members. He did not mind whether or not to attend the Q&A session.

75. In conclusion, the Vice-chairman said that a separate Q&A session would be arranged and the Secretariat would issue notice to invite representers and commenters to attend the Q&A session.

76. Mr Roy Tam said that he had prepared a video clip showing the sites. However, due to time constraint, he did not play the video at the current session. He requested that Members should visit the sites to have a better understanding of the sites and the surrounding areas. The Vice-chairman assured Mr Tam that Members would visit the sites on their own initiatives, especially those sites with controversial issues. He thanked all representers/commenter, representers' representatives and government representatives for attending the meeting.

77. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.