

**Minutes of 1203rd Meeting of the
Town Planning Board held on 28.6.2019**

Present

Permanent Secretary for Development
(Planning and Lands)

Chairperson

Ms Bernadette H.H. Linn

Professor S.C. Wong

Vice-chairperson

Mr Lincoln L.H. Huang

Mr H.W. Cheung

Mr Sunny L.K. Ho

Mr Stephen H.B. Yau

Dr F.C. Chan

Mr David Y.T. Lui

Dr Frankie W.C. Yeung

Mr Philip S.L. Kan

Dr Lawrence W.C. Poon

Mr K.K. Cheung

Mr Wilson Y.W. Fung

Dr C.H. Hau

Mr Alex T.H. Lai

Mr Stephen L.H. Liu

Miss Winnie W.M. Ng

Ms Sandy H.Y. Wong

Mr Franklin Yu

Mr L.T. Kwok

Mr Daniel K.S. Lau

Ms Lilian S.K. Law

Mr K.W. Leung

Professor John C.Y. Ng

Dr Jeanne C.Y. Ng

Professor Jonathan W.C. Wong

Mr Ricky W.Y. Yu

Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport) 3,

Transport and Housing Bureau

Mr Andy S.H. Lam

Chief Engineer (Works), Home Affairs Department

Mr Martin W.C. Kwan

Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (1)

Environmental Protection Department

Mr Elvis W.K. Au

Assistant Director (Regional 3), Lands Department

Mr Alan K.L. Lo

Director of Planning

Mr Raymond K.W. Lee

Deputy Director of Planning/District

Miss Fiona S.Y. Lung

Secretary

Absent with Apologies

Mr Ivan C.S. Fu

Mr Peter K.T. Yuen

Mr Thomas O.S. Ho

Dr Lawrence K.C. Li

Professor T.S. Liu

Mr Stanley T.S. Choi

In Attendance

Assistant Director of Planning/Board

Ms April K.Y. Kun

Chief Town Planner/Town Planning Board

Mr Kevin C.P. Ng

Senior Town Planner/Town Planning Board

Ms W.H. Ho

Agenda Item 1

[Open Meeting]

Confirmation of Minutes of the 1202nd Meeting held on 14.6.2019

[The item was conducted in Cantonese.]

1. The Secretary reported that the draft minutes of the 1202nd meeting held on 14.6.2019 were sent to Members on 28.6.2019 and tabled at the meeting. Subject to no proposed amendments by Members on or before 1.7.2019, the minutes would be confirmed without amendments.

[Post-meeting Note: As at 1.7.2019, no proposed amendments to the draft minutes were received.]

Agenda Item 2

[Open Meeting]

Matters Arising

[The item was conducted in Cantonese.]

2. The Secretary reported that there was no matter arising.

Sha Tin, Tai Po & North District

Agenda Items 3 to 6

[Open Meeting (Presentation and Question Sessions only)]

Review of Application No. A/NE-TK/643

Proposed House (New Territories Exempted House - Small House) in “Agriculture” and “Village Type Development” Zones, Lots 1028 S.B ss.5, 1034 S.A ss.2 S.C and 1034 S.B ss.5 in D.D. 23, Po Sam Pai, Tai Po

Review of Application No. A/NE-TK/644

Proposed House (New Territories Exempted House - Small House) in “Agriculture” and “Village Type Development” Zones, Lots 1028 S.B RP, 1034 S.A ss.2 RP, 1034 S.A RP and 1034 S.B RP in D.D. 23, Po Sam Pai, Tai Po

Review of Application No. A/NE-TK/645

Proposed House (New Territories Exempted House - Small House) in “Agriculture” and “Village Type Development” Zones, Lot 1034 S.A ss.1 in D.D. 23, Po Sam Pai, Tai Po

Review of Application No. A/NE-TK/646

Proposed House (New Territories Exempted House - Small House) in “Agriculture” and “Village Type Development” Zones, Lots 1034 S.A ss.2 S.B and 1034 S.B ss.4 in D.D. 23, Po Sam Pai, Tai Po

(TPB Paper No. 10553)

[The item was conducted in Cantonese.]

Presentation and Question Sessions

3. The following representative of the Planning Department (PlanD) and the applicants’ representative were invited to the meeting at this point:

Ms Jessica H.F. Chu - District Planning Officer/Shu Tin, Tai Po and
North (DPO/STN), PlanD

Mr Raymond F.W. Yip - Applicants’ Representative

4. The Chairperson extended a welcome and explained the procedure of the review hearing. She then invited DPO/STN to brief Members on the review application.

5. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Ms Jessica H.F. Chu, DPO/ STN, PlanD, briefed Members on the background of the review application including the consideration of the application by the Rural and New Town Planning Committee (RNTPC) of the Town Planning Board (the Board), departmental and public comments, and planning

considerations and assessments as detailed in the TPB Paper No. 10553 (the Paper).

[Mr L.T. Kwok, Mr Elvis W.K. Au, Ms Sandy H.Y. Wong, Miss Winnie W.M. Ng and Mr David Y.T. Lui arrived to join the meeting during the presentation of DPO/STN.]

6. The Chairperson then invited the applicants' representative to elaborate on the review application. Mr Raymond F.W. Yip made the following main points:

- (a) the rejection reasons proposed in the Paper were the same as those in the section 16 applications and similar to the public comments received. The applicants had already provided responses and justifications to address the concerns at the section 16 stage. Besides, relevant government departments had no adverse comments on the applications;
- (a) he doubted the legitimacy of the cautious approach which had tightened the interpretation of the Interim Criteria for Consideration of Application for NTEH/Small House in New Territories (the Interim Criteria). He queried whether the cautious approach had been made known to the Lands Department (LandsD) and Home Affairs Department for proper consultation/notification to Heung Yee Kuk. If the Small House applications would no longer be approved on the ground that land was still available in the "Village Type Development" ("V") zone for Small House development, the villagers should be informed of the latest changes;
- (b) it was unfair to the applicants that their Small House applications would be rejected just because they were not submitted before the adoption of the cautious approach by the Board;
- (c) after the rejection of a previous application in one of the application sites (the Sites), the applicants tried to address the concern of the RNTPC by shifting the Small House footprints into the "V" zone as far as possible; and
- (d) the subject applications would be the final batch of applications straddling the "V" and "Agriculture" ("AGR") zones. Even if the other land owners might submit similar Small House applications, they might not be able to

meet the criterion that more than 50% of the footprint fell within the “V” zone.

7. As the presentation from DPO/STN and the applicants’ representative had been completed, the Chairperson invited questions from Members.

8. The Chairperson and some Members raised the following questions:

- (b) whether it was an established practice to approve all Small House applications with more than 50% of the footprint falling within the “V” zone;
- (c) whether there would be no more potential Small House application straddling the “V” and “AGR” zones;
- (d) whether the cautious approach had been made known to the public; and
- (e) the timing in which the current land owners acquired the land, and whether they were aware of the fact that part of the Sites were outside the “V” zone when they acquired the land.

9. Ms Jessica H.F. Chu, DPO/STN, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, made the following responses:

- (a) according to the Interim Criteria, if more than 50% of the proposed Small House footprint was located outside the village ‘environs’ (‘VE’), favourable consideration could be given if not less than 50% of the proposed Small House footprint fell within the “V” zone, but it would be also subject to whether there was a general shortage of land in meeting the demand for Small House development within the “V” zone and the other criteria could be satisfied. According to the cautious approach adopted by the Board since 14.8.2015, in considering whether there was a general shortage of land in meeting the demand for Small House development, more weighting would be put on the number of outstanding Small House

applications provided by LandsD;

- (b) as shown on Plan R-2b, some Small House grant applications being processed by LandsD to the north-east of the Sites were straddling the “V” and “AGR” zones. Besides, there were also a number of private lots straddling these two zones and planning applications could not be precluded; and
- (c) the minutes of the Board’s discussion on the cautious approach for Small House applications on 14.8.2015 were available at the Board’s website. As the Board had been adopting the cautious approach consistently since August 2015, including the applications in the vicinity of the Sites, those who had paid attention to the Board’s decision on Small House applications should be aware of such approach.

10. Mr Raymond F.W. Yip, the applicants’ representative, made the following responses:

- (a) the Sites were acquired by the applicants in mid-2015. Given more than 50% of the site area fell within the “V” zone and there were existing Small House developments next to the Sites, the applicants did not realize that their Small House applications would be rejected under the cautious approach. It should be noted that even land was still available within the “V” zone, it might not be possible for the applicants to acquire the land due to various reasons; and
- (b) in the subject applications, efforts had been paid by the applicants to shift the Small House footprints into the “V” zone as far as possible. The cautious approach should not be applied on sites with more than 50% of Small House footprint falling within the “V” zone. The applications would not set an undesirable precedent as there would not be similar applications with more than 50% of the Small House footprint falling within the “V” zone. Besides, the impact of the proposed Small House developments on the “AGR” zone on the outline zoning plan was negligible.

[Dr Frankie W.C. Yeung arrived to join the meeting during the question and answer session.]

11. As Members had no further question, the Chairperson informed the applicants' representative that the hearing procedure for the review application had been completed. The Board would further deliberate on the review applications and inform the applicants of the Board's decision in due course. The Chairperson thanked the applicants' representative and the government representative for attending the meeting. They left the meeting at this point.

Deliberation Session

12. A Member said that it had been made clear in the Interim Criteria that even if more than 50% of the proposed Small House footprint fell within the "V" zone, there was no guarantee that the application would be approved. Other relevant factors such as whether there was a general shortage of land in meeting the demand for Small House development in the "V" zone should be considered.

13. Another Member said that the argument of the applicants' representative that the applications would not set an undesirable precedent as there would be no similar application straddling the "V" and "AGR" zone was not convincing. If the subject applications and possible similar applications encroaching onto the "AGR" zone were approved, the cumulative impact on the "AGR" zone would be significant.

14. Members generally considered that the rationales for the cautious approach for consideration of Small House applications had been made clear in the discussion of the Board on 14.8.2015 and had been adopted consistently in considering Small House applications since then. The minutes of the Board's meetings were available in the public domain. In the subject applications, the applicants had not provided strong justification for a departure from the planning intention of the "AGR" zone, and the applications could not meet the relevant criteria that there was a general shortage of land in meeting the demand for Small House development as land was still available within the "V" zone of Po Sam Pai and San Tau Kok which was primarily intended for Small House development.

15. After deliberation, the Board decided to reject the applications on review for the following reasons:

- “(a) the proposed development is not in line with the planning intention of the “Agriculture” zone for the area which is primarily to retain and safeguard good quality agricultural land/farm/fish ponds for agricultural purposes. It is also intended to retain fallow arable land with good potential for rehabilitation for cultivation and other agricultural purposes. There is no strong planning justification in the submission for a departure from this planning intention; and
- (b) land is still available within the “Village Type Development” (“V”) zone of Po Sam Pai and San Tau Kok which is primarily intended for Small House development. It is considered more appropriate to concentrate the proposed Small House development within the “V” zone for a more orderly development pattern, efficient use of land and provision of infrastructure and services.”

[Dr Lawrence W.C. Poon arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

Agenda Items 7 to 8

[Open Meeting]

Request for Deferment of Review of Application No. A/NE-TT/9

Proposed House (New Territories Exempted House - Small House) in “Green Belt” Zone, Government land in D.D. 289, Ko Tong, Tai Po

Request for Deferment of Review of Application No. A/NE-TT/10

Proposed House (New Territories Exempted House - Small House) in “Green Belt” Zone, Government land in D.D. 289, Ko Tong, Tai Po

(TPB Paper No. 10554)

[The item was conducted in Cantonese.]

16. The Secretary reported that on 10.6.2019, the applicants' representative wrote to the Secretary of the Town Planning Board (the Board) and requested the Board to defer making a decision on the review application for two months to allow time to consult relevant government departments with a view to preparing further information (FI) to address their comments. It was the first time that the applicant requested deferment of the review hearing.

17. Members noted that the justifications for deferment met the criteria for deferment as set out in the Town Planning Board Guidelines on Deferment of Decision on Representations, Comments, Further Representations and Applications made under the Town Planning Ordinance (TPB PG-No. 33) in that the applicant needed more time to prepare FI in response to departmental comments, the deferment period was not indefinite and the deferment would not affect the interests of other relevant parties.

18. After deliberation, the Board agreed to defer a decision on the review application for two months as requested by the applicants, and the review application would be submitted to the Board for consideration within three months upon receipt of the further information from the applicants. If the further information submitted by the applicants was not substantial and could be processed within a shorter time, the applications could be submitted to an earlier meeting for the Board's consideration. The Board also agreed to advise the applicants that two month was allowed for preparation of submission of further information and no further deferment would be granted unless under very special circumstances.

19. The Chairperson suggested to discuss Item 11 first.

Agenda Item 11

[Confidential Item] [Closed Meeting]

20. The item was recorded under confidential cover.

[Ms Lilian S.K. Law arrived to join the meeting during the discussion of Item 11.]

[The meeting was adjourned for a short break of 5 minutes.]

[Mr Philip S.L. Kan arrived to join the meeting and Mr Stephen L.H. Liu and Mr David Y.T. Lui left the meeting at this point.]

21. As the representatives of Item 10 had arrived, the Chairperson suggested to discuss Item 10 first.

Agenda Item 10

[Open meeting]

Pilot Study on Underground Space Development in Selected Strategic Urban Areas - Stage Two Public Engagement

(TPB Paper No. 10558)

[The item was conducted in Cantonese.]

22. The Secretary reported that AECOM Asia Co. Ltd. (AECOM) and the University of Hong Kong (HKU) were the consultants of the Pilot Study on Underground Space Development in the Selected Strategic Urban Areas (the Study). The following Members had declared interests on the item:

Professor S.C. Wong (Vice-chairperson)	- having current business dealings with AECOM and being the Chair Professor of the Department of Civil Engineering of HKU and the Associate Dean of Faculty of Engineering of HKU
Mr Ivan C.S. Fu Mr Thomas O.S. Ho] having current business dealings with AECOM]
Mr K.K. Cheung Mr Alex T.H. Lai] their firm having current business dealings with AECOM and HKU]

- Mr Wilson Y.W. Fung - being the Chairman of the Accounting Advisory Board of School of Business, HKU
- Dr C.H. Hau - having current business dealings with AECOM and being an Honorary Associate Professor and Principal Lecturer of the School of Biological Sciences, HKU; and his spouse being a staff in the Policy for Sustainability Lab of HKU was a member of the consultancy team
- Ms Lilian S.K. Law - being the Adjunct Associate Professor of the Department of Social Work and Social Administration, HKU
- Dr. F.C. Chan - being the Adjunct Professor of the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering, HKU
- Professor John C.Y. Ng - being the Adjunct Professor of the Department of Urban Planning and Design, HKU
- Mr Franklin Yu - having past business dealings with AECOM

23. Members noted that Mr Ivan C.S. Fu and Mr Thomas O.S. Ho had tendered apologies for being unable to attend the meeting. As the item was a briefing to Members as part of the public engagement (PE) exercise, Members who had declared interests on the item should be allowed to stay in the meeting and participate in the discussion.

24. The following government representatives and consultants of the Study were invited to the meeting:

Planning Department (PlanD)

- Mr Lawrence Y.C. Chau - Chief Town Planner/Studies and Research (CTP/SR)

Mr Derek P.K. Tse - Senior Town Planner/Studies and Research 3

Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD)

Dr Julian S.H. Kwan - Chief Geotechnical Engineer/Planning
(CGE/P)

Mr Jeffrey C.F. Wong - Senior Geotechnical Engineer/Underground
Space Development (SGE/UD)

AECOM

Dr Johnny Cheuk - Deputy Project Manager (DPM)

Mr Fred Ng - Senior Project Manager (SPM)

Ms Ebby Leung - Associate Director, Urban Planning

Mr Clifford Chow - Associate Director, Transportation

Mr David Mak - Associate, Geotechnical

Ms Joan Lo - Associate, Landscape Design

Mr Ivan Wan - Project Environmental Consultant

25. The Chairperson extended a welcome and invited the study team to brief Members on the Paper.

26. Mr Lawrence Y.C. Chau, CTP/SR, PlanD said that the Study was commissioned in June 2015 to explore the potential for underground space development (USD) in the four Strategic Urban Areas (SUAs), namely Tsim Sha Tsui (TST) West, Causeway Bay, Happy Valley and Admiralty/Wan Chai SUAs. The Study aimed at proposing suitable conceptual

schemes with potential for future implementation. There were two stages of PE under the Study. The Stage One PE (PE1) was conducted from 7.11.2016 to 6.2.2017 and the Board was consulted on 2.12.2016. In light of the public views received and the follow-up study, it was suggested according priority to develop the area underneath Kowloon Park (the Park) in TST West. The Stage Two PE (PE2) commenced on 22.5.2019 and would last for three months.

27. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Dr Johnny Cheuk, DPM of AECOM, briefed Members on the major public views received during PE1, conceptual scheme for the Park and relevant broad technical assessments as detailed in TPB Paper No. 10558 (the Paper) and the PE2 Digest (Appendix 2 of the Paper). The following main points were highlighted:

Major Public Views Received during PE1

- (a) at the TPB meeting on 2.12.2016, Members supported the objectives of the Study to improve pedestrian connectivity and space creation through USD in general, and provided comments on the use, design and management of USD, provision of community facilities and parking facilities, interface issues with surroundings/new development areas, possible impacts on local people, existing environment and traffic, as well as the cost and implementation arrangement;
- (b) the public generally agreed that proper utilisation of underground space and provision of all-weather pedestrian network could alleviate the overcrowded street-level environment and improve pedestrian connectivity. They also favoured the adoption of a holistic planning approach to create underground space for diverse beneficial uses of the community;

The Kowloon Park Conceptual Scheme

- (c) priority would be given to develop the area underneath the Park to offer solution space for mitigation of the overcrowded pedestrian environment and accommodation of the much needed community facilities in the district;

Guiding Planning and Design Principles

- (i) the overall planning and design strategy was to capitalize the “single site, multiple use” model to create a district-wide, multi-functional, all-weather and attractive underground space network in TST West area;
- (ii) to adopt a holistic planning approach to synergise with the diversified urban setting and vibrant community in the surrounding areas with a view to enhancing walkability and connectivity by creating a multi-level pedestrian network and providing a safe and quality pedestrian environment;
- (iii) to create key activity hub to meet community needs by providing a multi-functional space with suitable development mix of community, retail/food and beverage (F&B) and mainly ancillary car parking and loading/unloading (L/UL) facilities;
- (iv) to re-establish a sustainable and inclusive green park by reinventing the “Blue and Green System” networks through integration of existing and planned green resources in a holistic manner and providing a quality public realm and landscape linkages with surrounding areas;

Pedestrian Connectivity Enhancement

- (v) to provide seamless connections to the footpaths along Austin Road, Haiphong Road, Nathan Road and Kowloon Park Drive, and the adjoining Mass Transit Railway (MTR) TST Station concourse, as well as provisioning for future connections to adjoining/new developments, e.g. West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD);

Space Creation for Various Uses

- (vi) to form a multi-level USD of over 50,000 m² in floor area for various uses, including the all-weather pedestrian network (about

14,000 m²), a two-level community hub at the central portion of the Park (about 6,400m²), a covered public space in the middle three levels of the USD (about 2,600m²), modest retail/F&B facilities (about 5,500 m² to 6,000 m² on each of the middle three levels), and underground car parking and L/UL facilities (about 17,000 m²);

Opportunities for Facelifting Kowloon Park

- (vii) to upgrade/facelift the Park with new and contemporary facilities, and strengthen the vertical integration and synergy between the USD and the Park through thematic landscape and architectural designs of the holistic multi-level pedestrian network;

Construction Method

- (viii) to adopt “top-down” construction method to build the foundation of the underground structure and its capping deck at park surface level first, so as to enabling the earliest restoration of the affected park areas. Trenchless excavation and phased development in suitable locations would be adopted, with measures to minimise possible construction nuisance;

Technical Assessments

- (d) various board technical assessments, including traffic, environment, drainage, fire safety, geotechnics, sewerage and utility infrastructures, had been conducted. No insurmountable technical problem was identified; and

Stage 2 PE

- (e) Yau Tsim Mong District Council (DC) was consulted on 30.5.2019 and the DC members generally welcomed USD. The comments would be taken into account in the Study, where appropriate. Briefing sessions for other relevant advisory/statutory bodies/committees and focus group meetings with

different stakeholder groups were conducted/being arranged. Roving exhibitions at various locations were also being conducted.

28. As the presentation of CTP/SR and DPM of AECOM was completed, the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members.

Holistic Vision and Design Concept

29. Some Members raised the following questions and comments:

- (a) there was a lack of a holistic vision and design concept for the USD, in particular, there was no mentioning of how to take the opportunity to revitalize the adjacent areas, nor proposal of exciting development concepts to enhance the characteristics of the whole district. For a holistic design concept, consideration should be given to creating a new identity for the district, strengthening the connection between the Park and the adjacent areas, enhancing spatial experience of different users and addressing the needs of community;
- (b) the conceptual design was rather conventional without a clear vision and an appealing characteristic. As the Park was not only serving TST, but also of territorial importance for Hong Kong, opportunity should be taken to uplift the function of the Park and the image of Hong Kong as an international city through the USD;
- (c) the integration between the USD and the existing developments should be enhanced with a view to providing a seamless underground city and avoiding fragmented USD to be linked with underground pedestrian passageways; and
- (d) the development experience of Les Halles in Paris had demonstrated that the USD was evolving over time and a placemaking approach was essential for its success. For USD at the Park, a placemaking approach should be adopted to integrate the Park and the surrounding areas to enhance the urban experience through architectural design. With better

vertical integration, provision of active/passive uses and arts/sports facilities, as well as introduction of natural sunlight, the USD could be developed as a bustling and attractive place to provide a vibrant public space and enhance the image of the whole district.

30. Mr Lawrence Y.C. Chau, CTP/SR of PlanD and Dr Johnny Cheuk, DPM of AECOM, made the following responses:

- (a) according to the comments received during PE1, the public had a strong view to preserve the existing facilities and functions of the Park, with the USD as solution space to address local community needs and alleviate the overcrowded street environment; and
- (b) the Study had adopted a holistic planning approach to address the long-term needs of the community, climate change and aging problems by creating a key activity hub and a multi-functional space with suitable development mix of community, retail/F&B and ancillary facilities. It would also provide a district-wide, multi-functional, all-weather and attractive underground space network to enhance walkability and connectivity in the TST West area.

Facelifting the Park

31. The Chairperson and some Members raised the following questions and comments:

- (a) how the Park would be affected by the USD;
- (b) opportunity should be taken to maximize the function of the Park, including to enhance the facilities and characteristics, avoid segregation of different components and improve accessibility of the Park;

- (c) the heritage buildings in the Park e.g. Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre, should be preserved. The disused air-raid tunnels should be revitalized for public enjoyment; and
- (d) the guiding principle to retain the existing Old and Valuable Trees (OVTs) and densely vegetated areas from the development footprint was supported. Given the high ecological value of tree groups, the preservation value of trees should not be assessed individually according to their trunk diameters, but the group of trees planted closely together so as to minimize the loss of tree crown which was an important natural habitat. Tree should be preserved from the perspective of restoring the landscape, as well as the ecological value of the area.

32. Dr Johnny Cheuk, DPM of AECOM, made the following responses:

- (a) given one of the guiding principles for the proposed USD was to minimize its potential impact on the Park, a balance would be struck between taking forward the USD and preserving the Park;
- (b) it was proposed to adopt a holistic multi-level design concept to enhance integration between the USD and the Park. While most of the existing facilities and landscape areas of the Park would remain intact, new and contemporary facilities would be provided to upgrade/facelift the Park. For example, consideration could be given to providing the children playground and retail/F&B facilities near the MTR TST station entrance at Haiphong Road; and
- (c) part of the disused air-raid tunnels would be considered for opening as display areas for the public to appreciate their history.

Pedestrian Connectivity

33. Some Members raised the following questions and comments:

- (a) the guiding principle of USD for improvement of pedestrian connectivity in four directions of the Park was welcome. To take a step further, opportunity should be taken to provide more passageways in different directions so as to provide a more comprehensive pedestrian network with the surrounding areas. For example, enhancing pedestrian connectivity between the core areas of TST and the Xiqu Centre of WKCD and China Hong Kong City, improving accessibility for wheelchair users such as avoiding steep gradient and staircases, and providing all-weather pedestrian environment to enhance walkability between of the Park and the adjacent areas;
- (b) to improve walkability, the study area should not be confined to the Park, but the community as a whole. Studies should also be conducted to find out the origins and destinations of the users from the neighbouring communities so as to facilitate the design of pedestrian network;
- (c) a good design in vertical connectivity was important to connect the underground space and the at-grade park/streets, as well as different levels within the USD. As the USD covering several levels was a large enclosed area, better signage should be provided to help users identify direction; and
- (d) while the proposed east-west underground passageways could help improve pedestrian connectivity from the MTR TST Station to the TST west areas, better design should be adopted for the passageways with related improvements to the MTR TST Station concourse to avoid pedestrian overflow.

34. Dr Johnny Cheuk, DPM of AECOM, and Mr Fred Ng, SPM of AECOM, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, made the following responses:

- (a) a comprehensive study had been conducted with a view to capitalizing the integration of the Park and the USD to enhance the connectivity and walkability of the whole TST West area. New connections in all directions of the Park had been explored to maximize the connectivity of

the whole area;

- (b) making reference to overseas examples, one of the key successful factors for USD was its vertical integration with the above-ground developments so as to create a seamless spatial experience. This was enabled by strengthening vertical integration and synergy between the USD and the Park through thematic landscape and architectural designs, as well as lifts and escalators;
- (c) to improve the connectivity with WKCD, reservation of a connection point at the proposed community hub of the USD to facilitate future connection to possible footbridge over Canton Road linking up WKCD/Xiqu Centre would be provided; and
- (d) as the area of the USD was constrained by space limitation, the proposed connection with the MTR TST Station was an optimized scheme. According to the liaison with MTR Corporation Limited, the proposed connection with the MTR TST Station would be sufficient to facilitate pedestrian flow.

Car Parking, Retail/Food and Beverage Facilities

35. Some Members had concern on the reservation of large underground space for car parking and retail/F&B facilities and raised the following questions and comments:

- (a) the latest urban design concept was to promote walkability so as to alleviate the traffic congestion problem and provide a safe and enjoyable walking environment. The provision of more car parking facilities in the already congested urban area might attract more traffic flow and aggravate the existing traffic problems which was undesirable. It was proposed to convert some of the car parking facilities to other meaningful uses; and
- (b) whether the provision of F&B facilities was to make the USD financially viable.

36. Some Members, on the other hand, supported the provision of more car parking and F&B facilities. Their views were:

- (a) there was an acute shortage of car parking facilities in TST to meet the needs of commercial activities and users/workers. While there was general traffic congestion problem in Hong Kong, the issue should be tackled by appropriate traffic policy such as limiting the growth of private vehicles rather than limiting the number of car parking spaces. Opportunity should be taken to provide more car parking facilities to address the problem in TST; and
- (b) given TST was a very popular district in Hong Kong with enormous people flow including local residents, workers and tourists, the existing F&B facilities fell short to meet the daily needs in particular at lunch time. More F&B facilities were necessary to alleviate the existing problem.

37. Mr Lawrence Y.C. Chau, CTP/SR of PlanD, Dr Johnny Cheuk, DPM of AECOM, and Mr Fred Ng, SPM of AECOM, made the following responses:

- (a) according to the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines, about 150 car parking spaces were required to support the USD. Besides, due to the closure of the Middle Road Multi-storey Car Park, it was requested by Yau Tsim Mong DC that more car parking spaces should be provided. A balance would have to be struck between providing more car parking spaces and avoiding traffic congestion;
- (b) the current proposal for car parking facilities, which was derived from a conceptual design, could be further reviewed subject to further assessments of the feasibility to increase parking space provision, as well as comments received in PE2; and
- (c) retail/F&B facilities were proposed along the underground passageways with a view to introducing interesting walking experience and enhancing

the vibrancy of the underground space. The proposed retail/F&B facilities only amounted to a small proportion as compared with those in TST as a whole.

Community Facilities

38. Some Members raised the following questions and comments:

- (a) the needs of the local residents in terms of community facilities;
- (b) according to the distribution of proposed uses in underground space, about 40% of the area would be used for community facilities, pedestrian passages and covered public space. What the breakdown of those facilities was; and
- (c) as the USD could provide solution space for old urban areas to accommodate environmental facilities, the feasibility of providing recycling facilities in underground space could be explored.

39. Mr Lawrence Y.C. Chau, CTP/SR of PlanD, and Dr Johnny Cheuk, DPM of AECOM, with the aid of the visualizer and some PowerPoint slides, made the following responses:

- (a) according to the demand and provision of major government, institution or community (GIC) facilities in Yau Tsim Mong area, there was no deficit of major GIC facilities except community hall, meeting rooms and elderly facilities. Opportunities had been taken to provide a community hub in USD to offer different community facilities needed to meet local/district needs;
- (b) as the proposed community hub would be located underneath a knoll, part of the facilities would be provided on ground level. A three-dimensional design would be adopted with a view to introducing

natural sunlight to the USD and providing large green roof for enjoyment of the general public;

- (c) the proposed floor areas for community facilities, pedestrian passages and covered public space were 6,400m², 14,000m² and 2,600 m² respectively; and
- (d) the feasibility to provide environmental and recycling facilities could be explored in further studies.

Construction Method and Implementation Issues

40. Some Members raised the following questions and comments:

- (a) as compared with the conventional construction method, what the advantage of the “top-down” construction method was and whether it would impose constraints on the construction of above-ground structures; and
- (b) the implementation and management agent for the proposed USD.

41. Dr Johnny Cheuk, DPM of AECOM and Dr Julian S.H. Kwan, CGE/P, CEDD, made the following responses:

- (a) the “top-down” construction method would be applied to build the foundation of the underground structure and its capping deck at park surface level first, so as to enable the earliest restoration of the affected park areas for reopening to park users, in parallel with excavation and construction of structure underground. The trenchless excavation method could be adopted to further minimise open excavation where site situations permitted, but the application would be limited by the excavation dimensions, such as for single-level passageways only. Notwithstanding that, open excavations for above-ground structures such as ventilation shafts and access would still be required;

- (b) no matter “top-down” or conventional construction method was adopted, it would not affect the design and construction of above-ground structures. The “top-down” construction method could minimise the time of the possible disruption to the Park and expedite part of the reinstatement works for public enjoyment; and
- (c) three possible options of the implementation mechanism, including government project, public-private-partnership and private development, which could be adopted for new developments were briefly introduced in the PE2 Digest for seeking public views. The management agent of the USD, which would be closely related to the implementation mechanism to be adopted, would be proposed after refinement of the proposed conceptual scheme taking into account the comments received in PE2.

[Ms Lilian S.K. Law, Professor Jonathan W.C. Wong, Mr Lincoln L.H. Huang, Frankie W.C. Yeung, Mr Stephen H.B. Yau and Mr Andy S.H. Lam left the meeting during the question and answer session.]

42. The Chairperson concluded the discussion and asked the study team to take into account the comments/views of the Members in further developing the concept/proposals. She thanked the study team for attending the meeting to brief Members on the Study and answer/respond to Members’ questions and comments. They left the meeting at this point.

[Miss Winnie W.M. Ng and Mr K.K. Cheung left the meeting at this point.]

Agenda Item 9

[Open Meeting]

Releasing Digital Planning Data of Statutory Plans

(TPB Paper No. 10549)

[The item was conducted in Cantonese.]

43. The following representatives from the Planning Department (PlanD) were invited to the meeting:

Mr Ernest C.M. Fung - Senior Town Planner/Information Systems 1
(STP/IS1)

Ms Christine C.M. Cheung - Senior Town Planner/Town Planning Board
7
(STP/TPB7)

44. The Chairperson extended a welcome and invited PlanD's representatives to brief Members on the Paper.

45. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Ernest C.M. Fung, STP/IS1, and Ms Christine C.M. Cheung, STP/TPB7, briefed Members on the proposal to release planning data in digital form to the general public through the Statutory Planning Portal 2 (SPP2) on Town Planning Board's (the Board) website as detailed in TPB Paper No. 10549 (the Paper). The following main points were highlighted:

- (a) to release the digital planning data for public access, including (i) planning scheme area; (ii) land use zonings; (iii) building height control areas (e.g. building height restrictions as shown on plan and non-building area); and (iv) amendment items to statutory plans;
- (b) the digital data would be released in Geographic Information System (GIS) formats so as to allow various computer applications and would be updated upon each gazettal of statutory plans. This would allow data analysis/compilation, which might facilitate the preparation of planning applications and carrying out of researches;
- (c) a set of guidelines and a data dictionary were prepared to facilitate the use of such data. A set of Terms & Conditions would be available on the website to remind users of the technical limitations with disclaimer to safeguard the interest of the Board from any legal dispute; and

- (d) the digital planning data would be made available for free public download in July 2019.

46. As the presentation of PlanD's representatives was completed, the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members.

47. Some Members raised the following questions and views:

- (a) the proposal to release planning data in digital form for public use was supported;
- (b) whether the potential users had been consulted regarding the proposal; and
- (c) possible measures to enhance user friendliness such as improving the graphic design of relevant web page, and providing hyperlinks to relevant information such as definition of terms (DOT) and suitable software for GIS data analysis.

48. Mr Ernest C.M. Fung, STP/IS1, PlanD made the following responses:

- (a) according to PlanD's constant liaison with the industry, it was noted that planning data in digital form could facilitate their preparation of planning applications and carrying out of researches. The release of GIS data for the statutory plans was in response to the industry's request; and
- (b) the design of the Board's website including SPP2 would be reviewed and improved constantly with a view to improving user-friendliness. Currently, the Notes and Explanatory Statement of the statutory plans were available in SPP2 while the DOT could be found at the Board's webpage. Opportunities could be taken to add more hyperlinks in SPP2 in the next round of review. Regarding the software for GIS data analysis, there was currently freeware in the internet that the public could download and use freely. To add hyperlink for the freeware at the

Board's website might involve the copy right issue.

49. After deliberation, Members agreed that digital planning data together with relevant Notes and Explanatory Statement (in searchable PDF format) of statutory plans would be made available for free public download at the Board's website together with the Guidelines and Data Dictionary and Terms & Conditions of Use as attached in July 2019.

50. The Chairperson thanked PlanD's representatives for attending the meeting. They left the meeting at this point.

Agenda Item 12

[Open Meeting]

Any Other Business

[The item was conducted in Cantonese.]

51. There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 1:20 p.m.