

**Confirmed Minutes of the 145th Meeting of
the Environmental Impact Assessment Subcommittee
on 20 April 2020 at 2:00 p.m.**

Present:

Professor TAM Fung-yee, Nora, BBS, JP (Chairperson)

Ir MA Lee-tak, SBS (Deputy Chairman)

Ir Cary CHAN, JP

Ir Samantha KONG

Miss LAM Chung-yan

Ms Julia LAU

Dr Michael LAU

Dr Winnie LAW

Professor Albert LEE

Professor Kenneth LEUNG, JP

Ir Professor Irene LO, JP

Dr SUNG Yik-hei

Ms Christina TANG

Mr Simon WONG, JP

Ms Becky LAM (Secretary)

Absent with Apologies:

Professor WONG Sze-chun, BBS, JP

In Attendance:

Mr Owin FUNG	Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (3), Environmental Protection Department (EPD)
Mr Terence TSANG	Assistant Director (Environmental Assessment), EPD
Mr TO King-ho	Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Strategic Assessment), EPD
Mr Matthew CHAN	Senior Environmental Protection Officer (Strategic Assessment)1, EPD
Ms Hyde MAK	Environmental Protection Officer (Strategic Assessment)12, EPD
Mr Simon CHAN	Assistant Director (Conservation), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)
Ms Aidia CHAN	Senior Nature Conservation Officer (North) (Acting), AFCD
Ms TSANG Yu-man	Nature Conservation Officer (Kam Tin), AFCD
Miss Dora CHU	Executive Officer (CBD) 1, EPD
Miss Carman LEUNG	Executive Officer (CBD) 2, EPD

In Attendance for Item 2:

Project Proponent Team

Highways Department (HyD)

Ms Doris YAU, Chief Highway Engineer/Works
Mr Terry CHUNG, Senior Engineer/Kowloon 3
Mr HO Yuk-hong, Engineer/Kowloon 3-2

*Mannings (Asia) Consultants
Limited (Mannings)*

Mr Martin CHEUNG, Deputy Managing Director
Mr William SO, Project Manager
Mr Sam TANG, Project Engineer
Mr CHAN Yan-kit, Assistant Engineer

ANewR Consulting Limited

Mr James CHOI, Director
Mr Adi LEE, Technical Director
Ms Hazel CHAN, Environmental Consultant
Mr Ricky LAU, Assistant Environmental Consultant

Action

The Chairperson welcomed Members to the EIASC meeting held on Zoom with regard to the latest status of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and informed Members that apologies of absence had been received from Professor Wong Sze-chun.

Item 1: Matters Arising

2. The draft minutes of the last meeting held on 20 May 2019 were confirmed by circulation on 26 June 2019 without amendments.
3. The Chairperson reported that the EIA report on “Shuen Wan Golf Course” which had been submitted to the EIASC for discussion on 20 May 2019 was approved by the Director of Environmental Protection (DEP) with conditions on 5 July 2019. Members were informed of the above information by email on 12 July 2019.
4. There was no matter arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

Item 2 : Discussion on EIA report on “Upgrading of Remaining Sections of Kam Tin Road and Lam Kam Road”

(ACE-EIA Paper 1/2020)

5. The Chairperson advised that the meeting would discuss the EIA report on “Upgrading of Remaining Sections of Kam Tin Road and Lam Kam Road”. During the public inspection period from 14 February to 14 March 2020, a total of 3 sets of public comments had been received by EPD and the gist of major issues/concerns was circulated to Members for reference on 8 April 2020. The main concerns raised by the public were related to the potential adverse impact on water quality and stream/river habitats, tree felling, air quality and fly-tipping of

construction and demolition (C&D) waste arising from the proposed construction works.

6. The Chairperson invited declaration of interest from Members. A Member declared that she was engaged as the public engagement expert in the Fan Kam Road Widening Project with Mannings. The project had recently been completed. The meeting agreed that the Member could stay on and continue participating in the discussion.

7. The Chairperson informed that the discussion would be divided into the Presentation and Question-and-Answer Session which would be opened to the public while the Internal Discussion Session would remain closed.

8. The Chairperson reminded Members to keep confidentiality of the discussion on the EIA report.

[The project proponent team joined the meeting at this juncture.]

Presentation Session (Open Session)

9. Ms Doris Yau gave an opening remark and with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Martin Cheung briefed Members on the need and scope of the project and consideration of alternative options. Mr Adi Lee followed to brief Members on the key environmental issues of the project.

Question-and-Answer Session (Open Session)

Management of C&D materials

10. In response to a Member's suggestion on the reuse of construction and demolition (C&D) materials on-site with a view to minimising disposal at public fill reception facilities, Ms Doris Yau advised that about 2700 cubic metres (m³) of inert C&D materials would be reused on-site for the associated slope works under the project. She said that they would maintain close liaison with the Public Fill Committee under the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) to explore the possibility of delivering the remaining C&D materials to other nearby project sites for reuse as far as practicable.

Land contamination

11. A Member mentioned that due to site access issues as many of the potentially contaminated sites were located in private lots and in operation, only preliminary site appraisal through periphery site surveys was conducted to assess the potential contaminants for the preparation of the Contamination Assessment Plan (CAP). She considered that a more detailed CAP, which included analytical methodology and the chemical parameters for analysis, should be included when the sites became accessible. Given that considerable time would be required for

land resumption before site investigation to be carried out, she was concerned that the overall progress of the project might be affected. Apart from the two commonly adopted remediation measures for potential contaminants proposed in the EIA report, including cement stabilisation for heavy metals and bioremediation such as bio-pile, she opined that other proven methods/technologies should be considered for devising the remediation strategies that best suit for the site conditions and requirements.

12. Ms Doris Yau advised that once the sites would become accessible, a supplementary CAP would be prepared to present the findings of the detailed site appraisal and submitted to EPD for endorsement before site investigation. She said that they would liaise with the existing land users as early as possible in order to facilitate land resumption. As some of the potentially contaminated sites were leased out under short term tenancies, site re-appraisal would be conducted upon expiry of the tenancy contracts.

13. Mr Sam Tang added that the potentially contaminated sites were mainly used as vehicle repairing/dismantling workshops and the corresponding accesses were currently not available for site inspection. While the project was supported by both the Kam Tin Rural Committee and Pat Heung Rural Committee, he said that they would liaise with relevant stakeholders, including Lands Department on land resumption, once the environmental permit had been granted and the locations of contaminated sites had been confirmed.

14. Mr Adi Lee supplemented that according to the preliminary results of CAP endorsed by EPD, there were a total of 44 potentially contaminated sites identified, of which 42 were vehicle repairing/dismantling workshops and the remaining two consisted of an open storage area and a concrete manufacturing plant. With reference to past experience, potential contaminants including petroleum hydrocarbon ranges, heavy metals and organic compounds such as volatile organic compounds, semi-volatile organic compounds and BTEX compounds comprising benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene and xylene were expected to be found in the soil. While there were commercially available and effective remediation methods for the potential contaminants, the potential land contamination impacts were relatively minor since the potential contaminated areas encroaching on the project boundary were small. Mr Lee advised that site investigation for analysing the contaminants in soil would be conducted after land resumption. A Contamination Assessment Report (CAR) and if land contamination was confirmed, a Remediation Action Plan (RAP) would also be prepared and submitted to EPD for endorsement.

Water quality impacts

15. In addition to the implementation of mitigation measures to prevent water pollution from wastewater on-site, a Member opined that a downstream water quality monitoring plan should be devised. While the construction works would be carried out in dry season, in view of the adverse weather conditions such as heavy

rainfall, he considered that there should be some contingency measures. Apart from locating the temporary toilet facilities that was 30 metres (m) away from the watercourses, the Member sought more information on sewage treatment in order to minimise the adverse impacts on water quality.

16. Ms Doris Yau explained that apart from programming the construction works in dry season, other mitigation measures, including the use of precast concrete unit and erection of cofferdam with silt curtain to prevent the surface runoff from rainfall events from directly discharging into the watercourses, would be adopted. The runoff should be properly treated by a sedimentation tank to ensure compliance with the prescribed standards before discharge. She further explained that among the nine road sections with construction work adjoining these watercourses, only three of them were identified to have direct impacts on the watercourses. The water quality of one of the three watercourses (i.e. the semi-natural watercourse near the junction of Lam Kam Road and Route Twisk) was identified to be poor due to the improper discharge of sewage into the watercourse. One watercourse near Shek Kong Barracks was a semi-natural meander for the Ngau Tam Mei drainage channel with low ecological value. As such, the impacts of construction works to the three watercourses were assessed to be minor. Ms Yau said that portable chemical toilets would be provided to avoid direct discharge of sewage into the watercourses and the sewage would be collected for treatment in septic tank before discharge. All surface runoff and sewage from the construction sites would be properly handled in accordance with the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau Technical Circular (Works) No. 5/2005 “Protection of natural streams/rivers from adverse impacts arising from construction works”.

17. Mr Adi Lee supplemented that various mitigation measures would be taken to minimise any potential adverse water quality impacts. As the water quality impacts were considered as minor, no downstream water monitoring plan was considered necessary in the EIA report.

18. A Member observed that there would be an encroachment of about 60 m of the water gathering ground located at the eastern end of the project and enquired whether water quality monitoring would be conducted to detect any adverse water quality impacts.

19. Mr Adi Lee explained that Water Supplies Department had been consulted and the project proponent would comply with the “Conditions of Working within Water Gathering Ground” during project construction. He assured Members that there would be no construction work in the water gathering ground and with the implementation of mitigation measures during the construction phase, no significant water quality impacts were anticipated. As such, he considered that water quality monitoring would be unnecessary.

Ecological impacts

20. A Member mentioned that three watercourses with a total length of about 90 m would be affected by the construction works, including two semi-natural watercourses for extension of existing box culvert and a meander for rehabilitation of gabion wall. He suggested with the support of the Chairperson that the project proponent should take this opportunity to enhance the biodiversity and ecological value of the watercourses, such as adopting box culvert design that would have rugged or uneven surfaces at the bottom and allow sunlight penetration to create a habitat for organisms, and using gabion wall to promote plant growth. This would help to develop a food chain and improve the water quality of the watercourses in order to achieve ecological restoration. The Member referred the project proponent to the successful watercourse rehabilitation projects conducted by CEDD in the past.

21. Ms Doris Yau explained that measures to revitalise the watercourses would be implemented as appropriate depending on the ecological value of the watercourses. She said that the ecological value of the two semi-natural watercourses was considered not high and there was no relevant design proposed for the box culvert at this moment. Nevertheless, the project proponent would take into consideration the suggestions and explore the feasibility of adopting appropriate measures by making reference to similar government projects. She further mentioned that the rehabilitation of gabion wall would cause minor impacts as the construction work would not disturb the bed of meander.

22. A Member raised his concerns on the time coverage of ecological surveys. As the day-time bird survey was conducted between September and February, while the breeding period of most of the bird species in Hong Kong, including Chinese Pond Heron recorded in the survey which was of conservation importance, was between March and August. Butterflies and dragonflies were surveyed between September and December while they were most active in spring. Furthermore, he mentioned that eleven species of amphibians were recorded in the assessment areas with diversity rated as low to moderate. He shared that not many places in Hong Kong where so many species of amphibians could be found and considered that the survey results might underestimate the ecological value of the project site and ecological impacts caused by the proposed construction works. He suggested that regular site inspection at downstream of the watercourses should be conducted by experienced experts, especially after the event of adverse weather conditions such as heavy rainfall. While there were few ecological assessments on freshwater turtles conducted under the existing EIA mechanism, the Member drew the meeting's attention to threatened species of freshwater turtles in which they might be found at sampling point F7 near Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden.

23. Ms Doris Yau explained that experienced experts would be engaged to conduct regular site inspection at downstream of the watercourses, in particular after heavy rainfall to ensure no adverse impact on the water quality. Mr Adi Lee supplemented that the ecological surveys were conducted in accordance with the

requirements as set out in the EIA study brief and close collaboration with AFCD was maintained throughout the surveys, including the survey methodology. A nine-month ecological survey was conducted which should have covered important timing and both wet and dry seasons. He said that regular site inspection would be conducted in both the construction sites and nearby habitats to assess any impacts caused by the construction works under the Environmental Monitoring and Audit (EM&A) programme.

24. Addressing a Member's suggestion on the introduction of road and watercourse wildlife corridors, which should involve wildlife-friendly design of railings and slopes, Mr Sam Tang said that suitable railings would be proposed in accordance with the relevant guidelines from the Transport Department. Simple design of railings, such as the use of bollards with chains would be adopted as far as practicable to enhance wildlife movement, while conventional railing design would still be adopted in some road sections in view of road safety concern. Ms Doris Yau added that they would take into consideration the adaptability of wildlife to the environment in the design.

25. A Member mentioned that 756 and 43 trees would be felled and transplanted respectively under the project. He considered that the ecological values of compensatory planting and tree transplantation in the affected Conservation Areas (CA) would be higher than that along the roadside. He further suggested that the project proponent should report the details on compensatory planting and tree transplantation, including the monitoring and success rate in the EM&A.

26. Ms Doris Yau stated that among the 1199 roadside trees and 850 trees in the two tree groups which would be affected, 1250, 756 and 43 trees would be retained, felled and transplanted respectively. She said that tree planting in the nearby secondary woodland had been considered, but there was access issue making the tree planting and subsequent management/maintenance of trees difficult. As such, the compensatory planting for felled trees and transplantation of trees would be mainly conducted along the widened roadside with a view to keeping the semi-rural landscape condition of Kam Tin Road and Lam Kam Road. Ms Yau further explained that if the receptor locations were not ready for transplantation, the transplanted trees would be temporarily kept at a transit nursery and tree conditions would be monitored on a weekly basis with the results recorded in the monthly EM&A reports prepared for the project.

27. Addressing a Member's concern on the safety risks of tree failures posed to pedestrians, Ms Doris Yau advised that HyD would consult relevant government departments including the Agricultural, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and Lands Department with a view to identifying proper locations for compensatory planting.

Noise impact

28. In response to a Member's enquiry regarding the design of the proposed noise barriers, Mr Terry Chung explained that the current design was preliminary subject to refinement during the detailed design stage. Ms Doris Yau supplemented that the design of the noise barriers would take into account of various considerations, including site constraints, benefits from noise mitigation, visual impacts, road safety and bird collision risks etc. The project proponent would adopt a noise barrier design compatible with the surrounding environment with a view to blending in with the semi-rural setting of Kam Tin Road and Lam Kam Road. The design would be submitted to the Advisory Committee on the Appearance of Bridges and Associated Structures (ACABAS) for vetting.

29. A Member suggested that as the noise barriers would stretch over a certain length, the design of the proposed noise barriers should vary according to the context of different sections with a view to blending in with the surrounding environment.

30. In response to two Members' queries on the need for erecting noise barriers, Ms Doris Yau explained that while the increase in noise level after road widening would be insignificant, i.e. less than 1 dB(A) increase at all noise sensitive receivers, the existing traffic noise levels at nearby residential premises exceeded the noise criteria of 70 dB(A) and called for mitigation measures. Addressing a Member's concern regarding the narrowness of the footpaths, she said that the existing footpath along Kam Tin Road and Lam Kam Road would be widened to two metres as far as possible, which would be sufficient to accommodate the proposed noise barriers. Mr Adi Lee supplemented that the traffic flow, composition and speed would remain unchanged after the road improvement works.

31. Considering the associated visual impacts and other potential problems, a Member opined that noise barriers should only be used when there were no better alternatives. Ms Doris Yau explained that low noise road surfacing had been proposed for application to a total of 2.1 kilometres road sections and its use had already been maximised. Due to durability reasons, it would not be feasible to apply low noise road surfacing to areas with frequent sharp turns/brakes, steep gradients, roadside parking areas, distances between junctions/signalized crossings/zebra crossings and jointing on concrete pavement etc., and thus noise barriers had been proposed at these locations.

32. Given that each mitigation measure was subject to different engineering and site constraints, Mr Adi Lee added that the implementation of noise mitigation measures had been reviewed at every interval with a view to optimising the noise abatement efficiency while minimising disturbance to the environment.

33. In reply to a Member's question on the noise abatement efficiency of low noise road surfacing, Mr Adi Lee advised that the application of low noise road

surfacing would reduce the traffic noise level by 2.5 to 3 dB(A).

34. Addressing the concern of a Member regarding the compatibility of noise barriers with the rural environment, Ms Doris Yau replied that the design of the noise barriers would take into account the visual impacts and harmony with the surrounding environment. The structure could be softened via the use of planting and/or adoption of suitable colour schemes.

35. A Member suggested constructing footbridges with a view to further enhancing the traffic flow and reducing the associated air and noise impacts on the nearby sensitive receivers. Ms Doris Yau replied that while footbridges were not considered in this project, the provision of public transport laybys would help smoothing the general traffic flow.

Environmental sustainability

36. A Member suggested the project proponent adopt environmental-friendly methods and materials in the construction and maintenance of the project with a view to achieving environmental sustainability and minimising the carbon footprint.

37. Ms Doris Yau advised that HyD would procure low-carbon and environment-friendly materials as far as possible, and the contractor would be required to use quality machinery and equipment to minimise the carbon footprint of and environmental impacts arising from the project.

Construction works programme

38. Noting that the tentative construction works programme would span over four years, a Member was concerned that this might lead to prolonged disturbance and impacts on the environment. He suggested that a review on the construction works programme should be conducted during the detailed design stage with a view to formulating a reasonable and practicable schedule for the minimisation of negative environmental impacts arising from the construction of the project.

39. Ms Doris Yau replied that HyD aimed to complete the project as early as possible with a view to alleviating the existing road safety problems. Due consideration had been given to minimisation of environmental impacts to various sensitive receivers when drawing up the construction works programme. A review would be conducted during the detailed design stage to explore the feasibility for further shortening the programme with a view to minimising the environmental impacts due to construction works.

Collating and addressing public views

40. In reply to a Member's enquiry on whether progress reports and updates would be provided to stakeholders, Ms Doris Yau advised that HyD had maintained

close communication with the District Councils, the Rural Committees and other stakeholders and would consult them upon implementation of the project.

Conclusion

41. As invited by Ms Doris Yau, Mr Terence Tsang presented to Members an immersive 360° video showing the site conditions and surrounding environment with the aid of the Cave Automatic Virtual Environment (CAVE) System recently installed at the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO) Register Office in Wanchai. He welcomed Members, after the COVID-19 outbreak was subdued, to visit the new CAVE System to experience the innovative visualization means which would provide better understanding of projects and facilitate discussion on outcomes and recommendations of EIA studies. The Chairperson expressed appreciation towards the efforts of EPD in developing new technologies for facilitating stakeholders engagement in EIA process.

42. There being no further questions from Members, the Chairperson thanked the project proponent team for their presentation and detailed clarification on the project.

[The project proponent team left the meeting at this juncture.]

Internal Discussion Session (Closed-door session)

43. The Chairperson advised that the EIA Subcommittee could make recommendations to ACE on the EIA report with the following consideration:

- (i) endorse the EIA report without condition; or
- (ii) endorse the EIA report with conditions and / or recommendations; or
- (iii) defer the decision to the full Council for further consideration, where issues or reasons for not reaching a consensus or issues to be further considered by the full Council would need to be highlighted; or
- (iv) reject the EIA report and inform the project proponent of the right to go to the full Council.

44. The Chairperson proposed and Members agreed to endorse the EIA report with conditions and recommendations which were detailed below.

Land contamination assessment and remediation

45. A Member pointed out that the project proponent had only included two of the commonly adopted remediation methods for potential contaminants in the EIA report. Considering that there was a wide range of remediation techniques adopted worldwide, she opined that the remediation measure for a site should be determined on a case-by-case basis rather than opting for the most common remediation methods. She mentioned that while cement stabilisation/solidification had its merits, the stabilised mass typically had a much greater volume than the

original contaminated soil and its reuse in-situ might not always be practicable.

46. Mr Terence Tsang agreed and assured Members that EPD would assess whether the proposed remediation methods were appropriate based on the Contamination Assessment Report (CAR) to be prepared by the project proponent. The CAR would be available for public inspection. He advised that there were established guidance on the selection of appropriate treatment methods for remediation of a site. Taking into account of Members' comments, EPD would require the project proponent to explore alternative remediation methods/technologies depending on the nature and degree of the contamination as well as many other factors before reaching a decision on the most appropriate treatment method.

47. The Chairperson proposed with the support of Members that the project proponent should be required to submit a Contamination Assessment Plan and if land contamination was confirmed, a Remediation Action Plan for the approval by the Director of Environmental Protection (DEP). The Contamination Assessment Plan shall include details of analytical methodology and the chemical parameters for analysis. Latest international practice and proven methods/technologies should be considered in the Remediation Action Plan for devising the remediation strategies that best suit for the site conditions and requirements.

Waste management

48. With reference to the views of a Member, the Chairperson suggested and Members supported to recommend the project proponent to reuse C&D materials generated from the project in-situ as far as practicable.

Water quality monitoring

49. Even though mitigation measures were proposed and no cumulative water quality impact was anticipated, a Member considered that there was a need to monitor downstream water quality in case of surface runoffs arising from unforeseeable events, such as rainstorms.

50. A Member suggested and other Members supported that the project proponent be required to submit a water quality monitoring plan as part of the EM&A Manual to detect potential adverse water quality impacts at downstream of the watercourses directly affected by the project. The Chairperson followed that the plan should be submitted to DEP for approval before commencement of construction of the project and should include details on the locations of the monitoring locations, monitoring frequency, parameters to be monitored and additional measures to be taken in the event of adverse weather conditions such as heavy rainfall.

51. To facilitate the prevention of water quality impacts arising from the project, Mr Terence Tsang recommended and Members agreed that the monitoring

plan should focus on the three watercourses directly affected by the proposed construction work.

Ecological enhancement measures

52. Referring to the comments of two Members, the Chairperson suggested and Members supported that the project proponent be recommended to adopt an environmental friendly design for the watercourses directly affected by the Project, such as box culvert design that would allow sunlight penetration and introducing rugged / uneven surfaces on the bed of the watercourses with a view to enhancing the biodiversity of the watercourses. The Member suggested the project proponent consult the Drainage Services Department (DSD) and CEDD who were experienced in revitalising watercourses.

53. A Member echoed the suggestion of another Member that wildlife corridors should be introduced such that wild animals could gain access to the watercourses. The Chairperson agreed and proposed with the support of Members that the project proponent be recommended to introduce road and watercourse wildlife corridors to enhance wildlife movement and habitat connectivity.

Ecological impact

54. Addressing a Member's enquiry on whether the duration of the ecological surveys conducted were adequate to assess the impacts on avifauna and freshwater turtle species, Ms Aidia Chan replied in the affirmative. She mentioned that there were no egretries within the assessment area, and thus the project proponent was not required to conduct surveys during the ardeid breeding season. As regards the freshwater turtle species, she advised that the project proponent had conducted additional surveys on amphibians and reptiles from March to May in 2019 which covered the active seasons of freshwater turtles.

55. A Member opined that the survey conducted between September and December might not be adequate to assess the impact on butterflies and dragonflies. Another Member concurred and added that the survey did not include the peak flying seasons such that no dragonflies were recorded at the watercourses. Given that the magnitude and area of impact posed by the project on the watercourses were insignificant, the Member considered that further studies or surveys were not necessary. Improvement on the ecological survey timing and methodology should be explored for future EIAs.

56. The meeting agreed that no conditions or recommendations were necessary in the aspect of ecological impact assessment.

57. A Member suggested and other Members agreed to recommend the project proponent to devise a detailed plan for the implementation of the compensatory planting and monitoring of the plantation.

Visual impacts of noise barriers

58. Mr Terence Tsang advised that the traffic flow and traffic noise level was not anticipated to increase after the completion of the road widening works by the project. However, according to the policy on mitigating traffic noise on existing roads introduced in 2000, engineering solutions, by way of retrofitting of barriers and enclosures, and resurfacing with low noise material, should be implemented where practicable at existing excessively noisy roads (e.g. traffic noise exceeding 70 dB(A) for residential premises). As such, the erection of noise barriers had been proposed at various road sections to mitigate the existing road traffic noise. The design and arrangement for the noise barriers would be examined in the design stage with regard to the site conditions.

59. The Chairperson suggested the project proponent be recommended to consider erecting noise barriers only if there were no better alternatives, and the design of the noise barriers should harmonise with the surrounding rural environment.

60. A Member suggested that the design of noise barriers of different road sections should vary according to the context of surrounding environment. Considering that the noise barriers were permanent structures, she opined that a condition should be imposed instead to ensure there would be no adverse visual impacts.

61. A Member further suggested that the project proponent could consider using natural noise barriers such as dense bamboo hedges which would blend in with the rural context and provide better ventilation. The structure would also be more visually appealing to pedestrians.

62. A Member opined that the provision of guiding principles would suffice as some specific suggestions might not be applicable to the local context. Another Member agreed and suggested that guiding principles regarding the compatibility with the surrounding environment, visual effects and ventilation of the noise barriers should be provided to the project proponent for devising an optimised design.

63. Mr Terence Tsang reminded that project proponent would be required to satisfy the conditions stipulated in an Environmental Permit (EP). It was therefore important for any proposed conditions to be relevant and enforceable. He pointed out that it would be difficult to determine whether a plan or design was optimal when there were multiple guiding principles.

64. The Chairperson proposed and Members agreed that a condition should be imposed to require the project proponent to submit a Noise Mitigation Measures Plan to the satisfaction of DEP. The plan should review the traffic noise mitigation requirements, location and extent of the noise barriers and provide a design of the noise barriers if confirmed necessary. Apart from mitigating traffic noise, the

design of the noise barriers should take into account of various factors, including but not limited to aesthetic effects and compatibility with the surrounding rural environment.

Environmental sustainability

65. With reference to the suggestion of a Member, the Chairperson suggested and Members supported recommending the project proponent to use environmental-friendly construction materials and maintenance methods for the project with a view to achieving environmental sustainability and minimising the carbon footprint of the project.

Construction programme

66. A Member proposed and other Members supported recommending the project proponent to review the construction programme during the detailed design stage by devising a reasonable and practicable schedule with a view to minimising potential adverse environmental impacts arising from the construction of the project.

67. There being no other comments from Members, the meeting agreed that the EIA report could be endorsed with three conditions and six recommendations. The project proponent team would not be required to attend the full Council meeting scheduled for 11 May 2020.

[Post meeting note: The list of proposed conditions and recommendations was circulated to Members for comments on 24 April 2020.]

Item 3 : Any other business

Report on Members' comments on project profiles

68. The Chairperson informed the meeting that information on the following Project Profiles submitted under EIAO for application of EIA Study Brief had been circulated to ACE since the last EIASC meeting:-

- (i) Revised Austin Road Flyover;
- (ii) Relocation of Diamond Hill Fresh Water and Salt Water Service Reservoirs to Caverns;
- (iii) Technical Study on Partial Development of Fanling Golf Course Site;
- (iv) Revitalisation of Fo Tan Nullah;
- (v) Revitalisation of Tai Wai Nullah;
- (vi) Upgrading of Tai Po Sewage Treatment Works;
- (vii) Drainage Improvement Works in Ta Kwu Ling;
- (viii) Improvement of Lion Rock Tunnel;
- (ix) Establishment of Fish Culture Zone at Wong Chuk Kok Hoi;

- (x) Establishment of Fish Culture Zone at Outer Tap Mun;
- (xi) Establishment of Fish Culture Zone at Mirs Bay;
- (xii) Establishment of Fish Culture Zone at Po Toi (Southeast); and
- (xiii) New Contaminated Sediment Disposal Facility to the West of Lamma Island.

The Chairperson thanked Members for their submission of comments on the above Project Profiles to EPD.

Review of Guidance Notes and guidelines

69. In reply to the Chairperson's enquiry on the latest progress of the on-going review of the Guidance Notes for ecological assessment, Mr Terence Tsang advised that a comprehensive review was underway which involved reviewing previous EIA cases and liaising with EIAO User Liaison Groups members including project proponents, consultants and contractors. While a few meetings with EIAO User Liaison Groups members had been scheduled earlier this year, the progress had been greatly affected by the recent COVID-19 epidemic. EPD would pick up the pace once the outbreak was subdued and would report the progress after gauging the views of EIAO User Liaison Groups members. He mentioned that EPD had been proactively working to improve the EIA process, such as by organizing refresher courses for EPD and AFCD staff on baseline assessment.

70. A Member suggested EPD provide Members with the preliminary findings even when the review had not been completed so as to gauge their views before some Members would retire from ACE by year end. Another Member concurred and expressed his appreciation towards EPD's continuous efforts in conducting the review.

71. A Member recalled that the subject matter had been first raised by Members a few years ago and he urged EPD to complete the review as soon as possible with a view to enhancing the sustainability of future EIA projects.

72. A Member suggested that EPD should report the review findings to Members at different stages, so as to gauge Members' views at an early stage.

73. There was no other business for discussion at the meeting.

Item 4 : Date of next meeting

74. The Chairperson advised Members that the EIASC meeting on 18 May 2020 would be cancelled. The next EIASC meeting was scheduled for 15 June 2020 and Members would be advised on the agenda in due course.

EIA Subcommittee Secretariat
June 2020