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ACE-EIA Paper 6/2022
For advice on 18 July 2022

Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499)
Environmental Impact Assessment Report

**Technical Study on Partial Development of
Fanling Golf Course Site – Feasibility Study**

PURPOSE

This paper presents the key findings and recommendations of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report on “Technical Study on Partial Development of Fanling Golf Course Site – Feasibility Study” (“the Project”) submitted under Section 6(2) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO) (Application No. EIA-282/2022). The Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) (“the Applicant”) and its consultants will present the report at the meeting of the EIA Subcommittee.

ADVICE SOUGHT

2. Members’ views are sought on the findings and recommendations of the EIA report. The Director of Environmental Protection (DEP) will take into account the comments from the public and the Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE) in deciding whether or not to approve the EIA report under Section 8(3) of the EIAO.

BACKGROUND

3. On 20 February 2019, the Government accepted the recommendation of the Task Force on Land Supply to study on the resumption of 32 ha of land of Fanling Golf Course to the east of Fan Kam Road (hereinafter referred to as “**The FGC site**”) for housing development to relieve shortage in land in short-to-medium term. The Applicant commissioned the “Technical Study on Partial Development of Fanling Golf Course Site - Feasibility Study” (the Study) to explore the housing development potential of the FGC site and to determine the associated infrastructure to support the development.

4. The Applicant submitted the EIA report for the Project under Section 6 of the EIAO. DEP, in consultation with relevant authorities, considered that the EIA report met the requirements in the EIA Study Brief and the Technical Memorandum on EIA Process (TM), for the purpose of its exhibition for public inspection under Section 7(4) of the EIAO.

NEED FOR THE PROJECT

5. The proposed housing development will provide approximately 12,000 housing units, alleviating scarcity of housing supply in Hong Kong.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

6. The FGC site covers a 32 ha elongated shaped area and can be divided into 4 Sub-Areas (See attached Location Plan in **Figure 1**). The Project is a designated project (DP) under Item 1, Schedule 3 of the EIAO, i.e. an engineering feasibility study of urban development projects with a study area covering more than 20 ha.

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

7. According to the EIA report, the recommended development option will fully comply with the EIAO requirements with no adverse residual environmental impacts. There are also opportunities of bringing about the following positive environmental elements to the FGC site:

- (i) **Ecological Conservation and Enhancement:** The proposed housing development will be confined to Sub-Area 1 and will avoid areas of higher ecological values at Sub-Areas 2 to 4.

The management plan to be formulated at detailed design stage will provide opportunities to conserve and enhance the ecologically sensitive habitats in Sub-Areas 2 to 4 by protecting ecologically important habitats/species (e.g. *Glyptostrobilus pensilis* (水松)), maintaining hydrology in the area, conserving the existing ecological corridors, and planting of larval food plants for the butterfly species of conservation importance.

- (ii) **Adoption of Green Initiatives:** A number of green initiatives have been proposed, including adoption of green building design, screen planting to soften the built structures, energy-efficient features, renewable energy technologies, and the use of reclaimed water for toilet flushing.

CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

8. The Applicant has considered alternative options for the development of the Project, including scale, design, construction method and construction sequence to avoid and minimise environmental impacts.

9. The development scale is constrained by the traffic capacity in nearby Tai Tau Leng roundabout and Fan Kam Road. Even with the junction improvement at Tai Tau Leng roundabout, the highest attainable flat yield of the FGC site would range from 11,000 to 13,000 public housing units. Under the selected development option, about 9 ha of Sub-Area 1 would be developed for public housing to provide about 12,000 flats for 33,600 populations, with supporting facilities (e.g. school, kindergarten, neighbourhood elderly centre, child care centre, local retail, etc.). Sub-Areas 2 to 4 are intended for conservation cum recreation uses and only recreational and ancillary facilities with minimal new structure/change to existing site conditions are proposed.

SPECIFIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS TO HIGHLIGHT

Ecology

10. Ecological surveys were carried out from November 2019 to May 2021, covering both the wet and dry seasons, with a view to establishing the ecological characteristics of the site and to ascertain the presence of ecologically important features. The key findings of the ecological impact assessment are summarised below -

(i) Sub-Area 1

The overall ecological value of the Sub-Area 1 was found to be **low to medium**, which is relatively lower than the other three Sub-Areas. While fauna species of conservation importance (e.g. Chinese Pond Heron (池鷺), Japanese Pipistrelle (東亞家蝠), Scarlet Basker (赤斑曲鈎脈蜻)) were identified, they were found in low numbers and these species are mobile and widely distributed throughout Hong Kong. No roosting or breeding habitats for these species were found. Flora species of conservation importance including *Aquilaria sinensis* (土沉香) and *Ardisia villosa* (雪下紅) were found in Sub-Area 1. Encroachment upon these species will be avoided as far as possible in the detailed design of the project layout. In case on-site preservation is not feasible, they will be transplanted before commencement of site formation works. The proposed development in Sub-Area 1 will affect about 4.1 ha woodlands which will be compensated by re-creating about 5.1 ha woodland, tentatively in Sub-Areas 2 and 3.

(ii) Sub-Areas 2 to 4

The overall ecological value of Sub-Area 4 is assessed to be **medium to**

high, since it contains ecologically important habitats (including swampy woodland and marsh), and an ecologically important species (*Glyptostrobus pensilis*, recorded in the China Red Data Book and listed in Category I of the List of Wild Plants under State Protection, and globally Critically Endangered species by IUCN). The cluster of *Glyptostrobus pensilis* found in Sub-Area 4 is relatively large and is difficult to re-create due to its old age. The overall ecological value of Sub-Areas 2 and 3 are **medium**. Apart from some habitats/species of ecological importance (e.g. *Aquilaria sinensis*, Red Muntjac (赤麂)) found in the area, they also act as an ecological corridor connecting to Sub-Area 4. In order to preserve the ecologically sensitive habitats/species in the Sub-Areas, the EIA study recommended that only minor works for conservation and recreation purposes will be carried out in Sub-Areas 2 and 3 and no work is proposed in Sub-Area 4.

11. Based on the proposed development option which has avoided areas of higher ecological values at Sub-Areas 2 to 4 and with the adoption of proposed mitigation measures, adverse ecological impact is not anticipated.

Landscape and Visual

12. The EIA assessed and concluded that the overall landscape and visual impacts of the Project are “**acceptable with mitigation measures**” during construction and operation. Key mitigation measures include the followings -

- (i) The proposed public housing will adopt staggered building height and form corresponding with the nearby existing high-rise buildings (e.g., Ching Ho Estate, Cheung Lung Wai Estate). External finishes of public housing will be designed to ensure that its colour, texture and tonal quality would be compatible with the existing environment; and
- (ii) Approximately 996 existing trees to be felled in Sub-Area 1 would be compensated at Sub-Areas 2 to 3, or other suitable locations. None of the trees to be felled is registered Old and Valuable Tree (OVT) or of conservation important species. A tree compensation plan will be submitted during the detailed design stage to finalise the receptor site for compensatory trees.

Cultural Heritage

13. No built heritage/declared monument would be affected by the Project. One clan grave of Qing dynasty within Sub-Area 1 may be affected under the current proposal. Possibility of avoiding relocation of the clan grave would be explored during the detailed design stage. Preservation by record would be made, in case relocation cannot be avoided.

14. While the presence of widespread archaeology within the FGC site is unlikely, archaeological field survey will be carried out after the land is handed over

to the Applicant so as to ascertain the archaeological findings. Construction works would not commence prior to completion of the detailed archaeological survey. The overall cultural and heritage impact is assessed to be **acceptable with mitigation**.

Other Environmental Impacts

15. Other environmental impacts including air quality, noise, water quality, waste management, sewerage, land contamination are relatively minor and have also been addressed in the EIA report. With the implementation of the recommended mitigation measures, the Project will comply with the relevant requirements of the EIA Study Brief and TM.

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND AUDIT

16. The EIA report has included an Environmental Monitoring and Audit (EM&A) Manual, which recommends an EM&A programme during the construction and operation phases of the Project. Key recommended EM&A requirements cover ecology, landscape and visual, cultural heritage, water quality, waste management, air quality and noise issues.

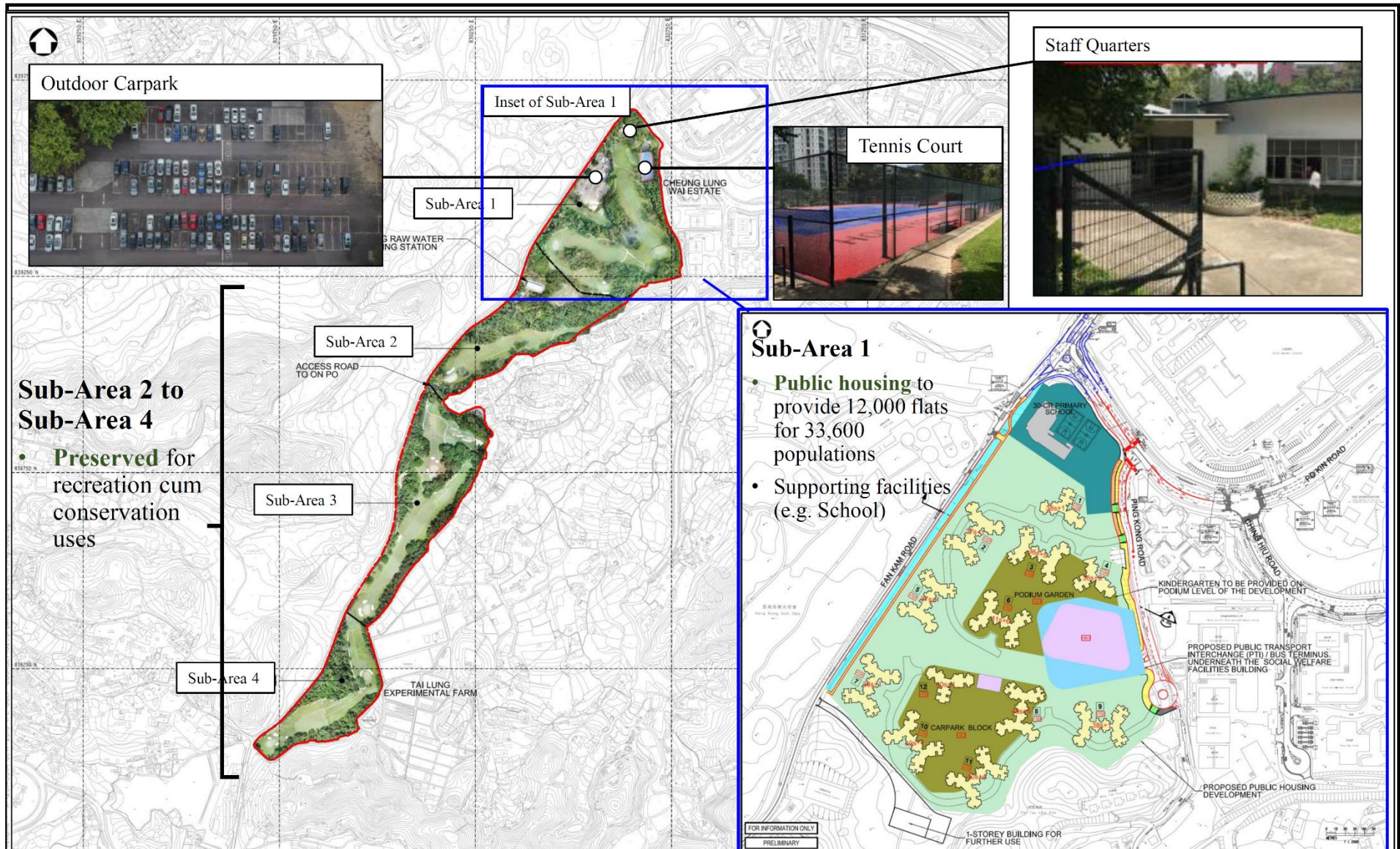
PUBLIC CONSULTATION


17. The Applicant has made the EIA report, EM&A Manual and Executive Summary available for public inspection under the EIAO from 20 May to 18 June 2022. A summary of all public comments received by the Environmental Protection Department during the public inspection period and a gist of the main concerns raised in the public comments will be provided separately.

July 2022

Environmental Assessment Division

Environmental Protection Department



Project Title:	Technical Study on Partial Development of Fanling Golf Course Site – Feasibility Study	EIA Application No.:	
Figure 1	General Layout of the Project	EIA – 282/2022	