

**Summary of issues discussed by the Environmental Impact Assessment  
Subcommittee at the meeting on 18 November 2016**

The Environmental Impact Assessment Subcommittee (EIASC) discussed the EIA report on “Proposed Low-rise and Low-density Residential Development at Various Lots and their Adjoining Government Land in D.D. 104, East of Kam Pok Road, Mai Po, Yuen Long, N.T.” at the meeting on 18 November 2016. The issues discussed are summarized below.

***Impact on waterbirds***

2. In response to a Member’s enquiry on the possible underestimation of impacts on *Black-faced Spoonbill* and other birds foraging in the Ngau Tam Mei Drainage Channel (NTMDC), the project proponent explained that the ecological profile of the bird species of conservation importance was established from literature review and ecological surveys, and methodology adopted in the ecological surveys was reviewed by AFCD. Waterbirds, mostly *ardeids* were observed foraging in NTMDC during low tides in winter. The project proponent suggested that based on the results, ecological value of NTMDC was ranked as “moderate”. Furthermore, there was no direct impact on NTMDC associated with the project; in fact, the major impact was associated with the disturbances during construction phase which was temporary and reversible. As such, mitigation measures were proposed to address the construction disturbances, including installation of hoardings before construction phase, the use of movable noise barriers and quiet type equipment and construction method.

***Noise impact***

3. A Member was concerned about the visual obstruction associated with the 4.5m tall noise barrier along the eastern site boundary. In addition, he expressed concern about the slender structure proposed to be adopted and its associated wind blockage effect.

4. The project proponent explained that the major source of noise pollution came from the eastern part of the project site. Part of the 4.5m tall retaining wall was associated with a landscape berm that provided support

underneath. Having consulted the Planning Department, they had come up with the current design with a combination of factors including the need to minimize noise impact, landscape and visual factors.

***Tree planting as buffer zone for waterbirds***

5. A Member considered that trees planted alongside NTMDC would act as a buffer zone to the waterbirds and provide screening effect against construction disturbance. Therefore, he asked if the tree planting area at the project site would be further enhanced after the commencement of the project.

6. The project proponent explained that 190 trees would be preserved on-site and 84 would be transplanted to the proposed landscape area, hence approximately 75% of existing trees would be retained. The project proponent supplemented that the total project area was 3.8 hectare and 0.3 hectare was mapped out as the plantation area. After commencement of the project, the plantation area would be developed to 1.1 hectare.

7. As regards the impact on waterbirds foraging in the NTMDC, the project proponent said that during construction phase, hoardings would be erected along the boundary of the project area that could act as a buffer zone. He further explained that NTMDC was located at a landscape lower than KPR, the embankment of the channel had already provided some screening effect. *Black-faced Spoonbill* was not a big bird and hence erecting site hoardings would be sufficient to provide screening and buffering effects for the waterbirds.

***Construction and Demolition waste (C&D waste)***

8. A Member enquired about the amount of C&D waste generated from the project site that would be reused and recycled. The project proponent explained that most the excavated soil would be re-used and recycled locally for pond filling and land leveling.

9. The project proponent further explained that the existing ground level would need to be raised to the proposed site formation level by imported fill materials.

### ***Visual impact***

10. A Member doubted whether a single layer of peripheral planting alongside KPR could achieve the purpose of disguising the housing development. The project proponent explained that it would depend on the tree species that was planted. The selection of appropriate plant species such as *Ficus microcarpa* and *Hibiscus tiliaceus* could provide a continuous peripheral planting.

### ***Sustainability***

11. A Member enquired whether environmental targets for the design and construction of buildings would be set. He further questioned if the Building Environmental Assessment Method (BEAM) or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) assessment criteria would be adopted as well as setting emission targets for embedded carbon at the construction and operational stages.

12. The project proponent explained that the project was aimed to achieve the BEAM Plus (New Buildings) at “Gold” rating or above for the project, subject to the final project design.

### ***Sewage Treatment***

13. A Member further enquired if there would be any contingency plan during possible breakdown of the operation of the STP. The project proponent explained that a sewage holding tank would be provided for temporary storage of sewage for a maximum of three days in case of outage of the interim STP, in addition to the emergency response plan covering other possible emergency situation.

14. The project proponent explained that during construction, the contractor would be required to apply a discharge licence under the Water Pollution Control Ordinance (WPCO) and the discharge should comply with the terms and conditions of the licence and the discharge standards for effluents specified in the licence. Treated construction site runoff would be discharged into nearby existing stormwater drains and eventually discharged into NTMDC. During operational phase, the interim STP would be used for treatment of sewage generated from the proposed development site until the operation of public sewerage system.

15. A Member enquired if there would be sufficient quantity of water abstraction from NTMDC for treatment for the two projects, in particular during dry seasons. The project proponent explained that they considered the water quantity of NTMDC be sufficient for water abstraction. He added that for the “REC Site” Project, it was assumed that there would be no population intake until the commissioning of the planned local public sewerage system. As such, there would have no adverse water quality impact due to sewage discharge of this Project.

### ***Recommendations***

16. Members agreed to request the project proponent to devise a detailed operation and emergency response plan for the STP to ensure no net increase in pollution load to the Deep Bay; and to submit the plan to the DEP for approval before commencement of the operation of the STP.

17. A Member suggested the project proponent to review the needs of deploying the 4.5 metres tall noise barrier at detailed design stage, to explore alternatives and consider adopting a less obstructive design to reduce the visual impacts and to minimize the wind channel effect.

18. Members agreed to set targets for achieving environmental sustainability in the design and construction of buildings for the project, devise measures to minimize the carbon footprint and energy consumption, explore the feasibility of renewable energy generation, and provide mechanisms for waste separation and resource recovery.

19. A Member suggested that the project proponent should consider appropriate tree species for landscape planting with a view to enhancing screening effect to the waterbirds at NTMDC.

20. A Member proposed the project proponent to conduct a detailed assessment of potential land contamination within the project site before commencement of the construction works and implement remediation action plan as appropriate to ensure decontamination of the site.

### ***Conclusions***

21. The EIA Subcommittee deliberated the captioned EIA report and recommended the full Council to endorse the EIA report with conditions and recommendations.

**EIA Subcommittee Secretariat**  
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