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ACE-EIA Paper 1/2014
For advice on 19 May 2014

Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499)
Environmental Impact Assessment Report
Proposed Residential cum Passive Recreational Development
within “Recreation” (“REC”) Zone and “Residential (Group C)” Zone
at Various Lots in DD 104, Yuen Long, N.T.

PURPOSE

This paper presents the key findings and recommendations of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report for the Proposed “Residential cum Passive Recreational Development within ‘Recreation’ (‘REC’) Zone and ‘Residential (Group C)’ Zone at Various Lots in DD 104, Yuen Long, N.T.” (hereafter known as “the Project”) submitted under Section 6(2) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO) (Application No. EIA-220/2014). Capital Chance Limited (hereafter known as “the Applicant”) and their consultants will present the EIA report at the meeting of EIA Subcommittee.

ADVICE SOUGHT

2. Members’ views are sought on the findings and recommendations of the EIA report.

NEED FOR THE PROJECT

3. The Project is to provide a residential cum passive recreation development at DD104 Yuen Long, N.T.. The residential development of 106 houses will be located in the southern portion, while a landscape pond, open area and some passive recreational and supporting uses will be located in the northern portion of the site.

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

4. The EIA report states that the key environmental benefits with the Project in place include:

- (i) Enhanced landscape through creation of passive recreation uses with supporting facilities including a pond;
- (ii) Planting of 200 new heavy standard trees while preserving over 60 existing trees on the abandoned agricultural land and grassland ; and
- (iii) A coherent development to provide visual enhancement to the neighbourhood in the vicinity.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

5. The Project is to provide a residential development which comprises 106 houses (2-storey about 6.6m high with a basement car park). All 106 houses and a club house will be located in the southern part (48%) of the site; while the northern part of the site (52%) will be landscaped and used for passive recreational with boardwalk, sitting out area, children play area, hobby farm and a management office.

6. The Project site is about 9 ha and falls within the Deep Bay Buffer Zone 2. The site is in a dumbbell shape (See Figure 1). The southern part (4.3 ha, about 48% of total area) was used as a golf driving range previously and is enclosed by Fairview Park and Yau Pok Road. The northern part (4.7 ha, about 52%) is mainly abandoned agricultural land with a seasonal pond (0.5 ha) and is also surrounded by Fairview Park and Yau Pok Road. About 100m of the northern part borders an abandoned agricultural land planned for another residential development.

7. The Project constitutes a designated project (DP) under Item P.1 of Schedule 2 of the EIAO, i.e. *“A residential or recreational development, other than New Territories exempted houses within Deep Bay Buffer Zone 1 or 2”*.

8. For the purpose of public inspection under the EIAO, EPD consider the EIA report meets the requirements of the EIA study brief and the Technical Memorandum on EIA Process.

CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES

9. The EIA report has considered various options for development, including alternative layouts, construction methods and sequence of works in order to avoid and minimise potential environmental impacts. Instead of spreading the 106 houses all over the site, the recommended option has taken into account environmental benefits and site constraints to put all houses in the heavily disturbed southern part which was used as a golf driving range, while leaving the northern part for passive recreation with landscape enhancement and enlargement of the existing pond.

10. The key approaches adopted in the Project by the applicant to avoid and minimise environmental impacts are summarised below:

Avoidance of Impacts

- (i) To avoid disturbance to wintering birds, the installation of site hoarding will not be carried out during bird wintering season.
- (ii) To avoid water quality impact during construction, peripheral drainage channel will be installed on site to divert surface runoff to sand/silt traps and sedimentation basins before discharged into existing storm drains.
- (iii) To avoid urbanising the whole area and depletion of the 0.5 ha seasonal pond, as well as to provide a park feature to minimise the overall visual impact, all residential development will be located in the previous driving range area. The northern part will be landscaped, planted with 200 heavy standard trees, and the season pond will be enlarged to 0.6 ha and re-profiled.

Minimisation of Impacts

- (i) To minimise construction noise and vibration impacts on sensitive receivers by percussive piling, alternative construction methods such as the use of continuous flight auger which induces no shock or vibration would be employed.
- (ii) To minimise construction air quality impact on sensitive receivers, the site formation works is divided into phases. The whole area will be divided into smaller sub-zones, and only one sub-zone will be under construction at any one time. Completed construction area will be compacted, covered by tarpaulin sheet and hydroseeded before work starts in another sub-zone.

SPECIFIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS TO HIGHLIGHT

Ecological Impact

11. The site is zoned as “Recreation” and “Residential” under the Town Planning Ordinance, and mainly consists of grassland/abandoned agricultural land, urbanised area and a seasonal pond. The ecological values of different parts of the site are considered to be “Low” to “Low to Moderate”. With the preservation of the northern part of abandoned agricultural and season pond for passive recreation, and the development of the heavily disturbed southern part (former golf driving range) for residential development, the ecological impact is expected to be minimal.

12. In addition, to avoid potential bird collision on the proposed noise barrier, a bird collision analysis has been conducted and recommends that the noise barriers should be opaque and non-reflective to avoid potential bird collision.

Noise Impact

13. During construction phase, there would be potential construction noise exceedance if unmitigated. In addition to the use of quiet equipment and movable noise barriers, a 9-metre tall temporary noise barrier would be installed to further protect the Bethel High School. With these measures, the construction noise would be within the noise criteria of 75 dB(A) at dwelling and 70dB(A) at school. Moreover, noisy construction activities will only be carried out outside school examination period. The Applicant has committed and started community engagement and will continue to liaise with Bethel High School and other stakeholders on work schedule and design of the temporary noise barrier.

14. During operational phase, traffic noise from nearby road and petrol filling station at Fairview Park would affect residents of the proposed development. Noise barriers of 2.5m to 4.5m tall will be installed at the southern boundary of the Project. With mitigation in place, the road traffic noise criterion of 70dB(A) and the night-time industrial noise criterion of 45dB(A) will be complied with.

Landscape and Visual Impacts

15. The visual impact of the proposed noise barriers at the southern end of the Project will be ameliorated through planting and the use of opaque and non-reflective materials with appropriate colour scheme to blend in with the environment. With the enlarged landscape pond, more trees planting and other passive recreational facilities at

the site, the Project is expected to bring positive impact on existing landscape resource during the operational stage.

16. Regarding the 9-metre tall temporary noise barrier in front of Bethel High School during the construction stage, screen planting of fast growing tree and shrub species would be provided. The Applicant would also continue to engage the Bethel High School and relevant stakeholders on the design of the barriers to take into consideration their views when finalising the visual design of the barrier.

Sewerage Impact

17. The effluent discharge from the Project will be conveyed to public sewer and treated at the Yuen Long Sewage Treatment Plant. The Applicant undertakes in the EIA report that no population intake will be allowed until commissioning of the public sewer.

Other Environmental Impacts

18. Other environmental impacts including air quality, waste management, fisheries and cultural heritage have been satisfactorily addressed in the EIA report. With the implementation of the recommended mitigation measures, the Project will comply with the relevant requirements under the TM.

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND AUDIT

19. The EIA report includes an Environmental Monitoring and Audit (EM&A) Manual which recommends an EM&A programme during the construction and operational phases of the Project. Key EM&A requirements cover water quality and ecological aspects during construction phase, and landscape & visual aspects during both construction and operational phases.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

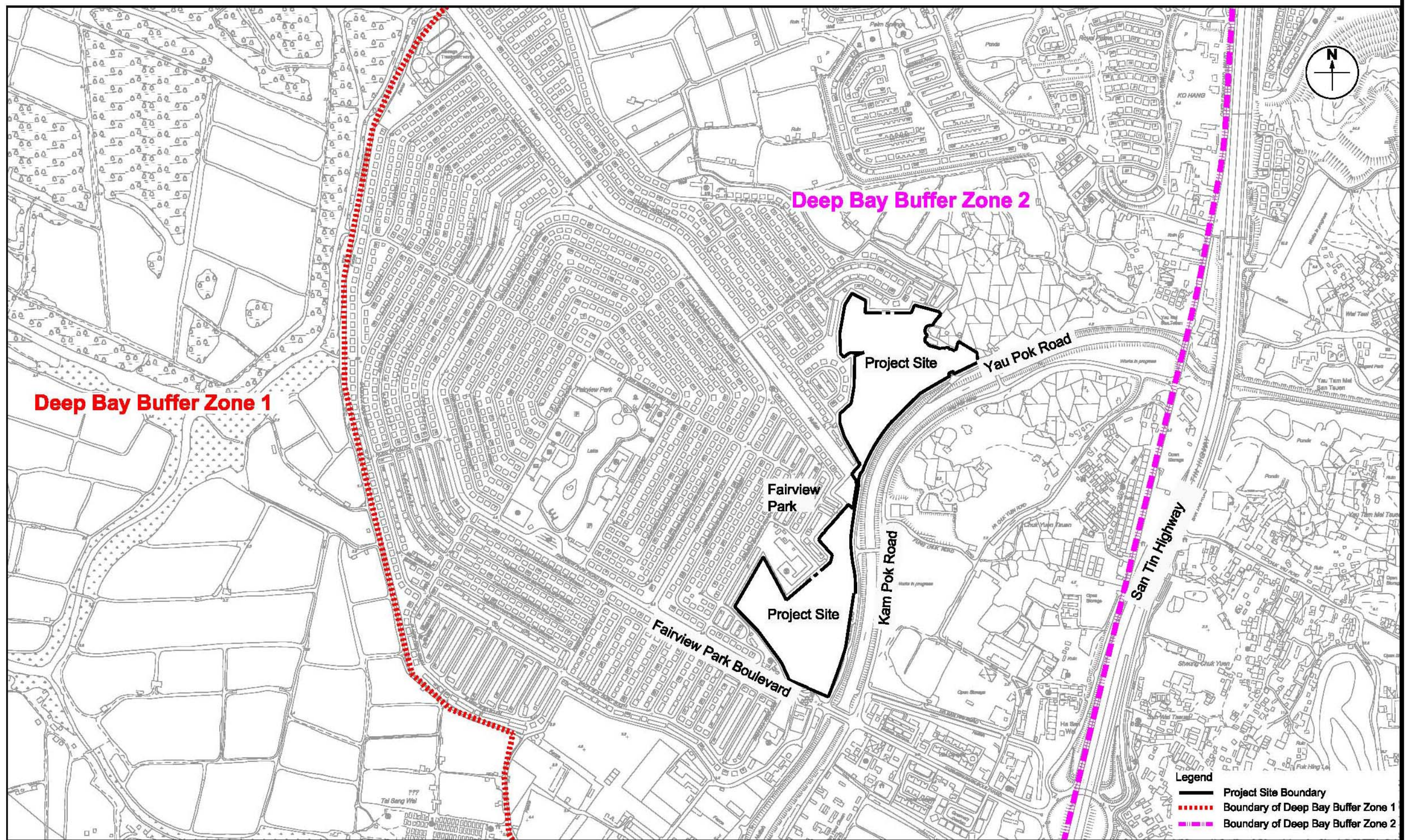
20. The applicant has made the EIA report, EM&A Manual and Executive Summary available for public inspection under the EIAO from 21 March 2014 to 19 April 2014. During the inspection period, a total of 9 public comments have been received by the Environmental Protection Department. The main concerns raised by the public are related to land use compatibility, ecological issues, construction impacts,

air ventilation and traffic impacts arising from the Project. These main concerns will be summarised in a gist to be provided separately.

May 2014

Environmental Assessment Division

Environmental Protection Department



Project Title: Proposed Residential cum Passive Recreational Development within “Recreation” (“REC”) Zone and “Residential (Group C)” Zone at Various Lots in DD 104, Yuen Long, N.T.

Figure 1: Project Location
(based on Figure 1-1 of the EIA Report)

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Figure 2: Project Layout
(based on Figure 11-19 of the EIA Report)

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