



長春社 Since1968

The Conservancy Association

會址: 香港新界葵涌貨櫃碼頭路 77-81 號 Magnet Place 一期
13 樓 1305-6 室

Address: Units 1305-6, 13/F, Tower 1, Magnet Place, 77-81 Container Port
Road, Kwai Chung, New Territories, H.K.

網址 Website: www.cahk.org.hk

電話 Tel.: (852) 2728 6781 傳真 Fax.: (852) 2728 5538

電子郵件 E-mail: cahk@cahk.org.hk

2nd September 2021

Town Planning Board
15/F North Point Government Offices
333 Java Road
North Point
Hong Kong

By e-mail: tpbpd@pland.gov.hk

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: Representations relating to the Draft Tsing Yi Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/TY/31

Regarding the captioned, The Conservancy Association (CA) OBJECTS to the proposed amendments Item A.

1. Loss of function of Green Belt

According to the Draft Tsing Yi OZP (No. S/TY/30), the planning intention of “Green Belt” (GB) “*is primarily for the conservation of the existing natural environment amid the built-up areas/at the urban fringe, to safeguard it from encroachment by urban type development, and to provide additional outlets for passive recreational activities. There is a general presumption against development within this zone*”¹. The Explanatory Statement also states that the GB “*serves the purpose of protecting the existing ridgeline which provides physical barriers separating the oil depots in the south and west of Tsing Yi from residential developments in the north-east*”².

In general, the government has completed GB review covering sites based on a basic

¹ Planning intention of GB in Tsing Yi OZP

https://www2.ozp.tpb.gov.hk/plan/ozp_plan_notes/en/S_TY_31_e.pdf#nameddest=GB

² Section 7.9.1 of Explanatory Statement in Tsing Yi OZP

https://www2.ozp.tpb.gov.hk/plan/ozp_plan_notes/en/S_TY_31_e.pdf



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principle that “*though vegetated, they have relatively less buffering effect and lower conservation value. Moreover, as these sites are close to supporting infrastructure facilities such as transport, water supply and sewerage, they are considered as having good potential to be rezoned for housing purposes, and are clear choices for urban expansion*”³. We note that the proposed GB site for rezoning and the surrounding areas is still performing good buffer function of GB. The site is not fragmented habitat and has close linkages with adjacent habitats. Approving the proposed amendment would set an undesirable precedent for similar amendment in future and affect the integrity of habitats in different districts.

2. Adverse impact on woodland

From our observation, the proposed GB site and its adjacent hillslope are still well-wooded (Figure 1). The proposed amendment would turn this GB into housing development area, leading to a loss of approximately 2.73 hectares of GB and its corresponding functions performed. While it is estimated that 1,264 trees⁴ would be removed, this estimation did not include some young trees with less than 95 mm in diameter at breast height (DBH) and they would not be reflected in the current document. Moreover, the site formation plan has revealed that the works boundary would be larger than the rezoning boundary. Additional work outside the rezoning boundary, such as diverted stream, maintenance access (3.5m wide) and hiking trail (1.5m wide) at the western part would also involve tree felling and vegetation clearance.

While no detailed vegetation survey and tree survey are currently available for public inspection, we worry that if adverse impact on woodland would be still under-estimated. It seems that vegetation clearance in large scale, if rezoning the proposed GB for housing and road work, would be inevitable, and this would lead to fragmentation of woodland habitat in the area.

Similar to GB rezoning case in other districts, we have grave concern that the

³ LCQ7: Changes in planned uses of sites, 14 December 2016
<http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201612/14/P2016121400612.htm?fontSize=1>

⁴ Section 4.4, MPC Paper No. 1/21,
https://www.info.gov.hk/tpb/en/papers/MPC/665-mpc_1-21.pdf



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existing mechanism for tree compensation and transplantation would be adopted to so-called meeting the target of tree compensation. It might, to a certain extent, help preserve individuals trees but certainly it would not re-create an equivalent ecological value and integrity of a habitat.

3. Adverse impact on stream

Stream diversion within the site is necessary according to the proposed development, but we are very doubtful how the current proposal would help minimize or mitigate potential ecological impact. From the site formation section attached in the Interim Report⁵, it happens as if the proposed diverted stream, with vertical stream banks on both sides, is merely an engineered, channelized watercourse (Figure 2). The report mentioned that “*Gabion walls are recommended instead of concrete banks to allow the diverted stream to naturalize over time and to create and increase availability of micro-habitats for wildlife*”⁶. However, what we worry is that vertical gabion wall leaves no space for soil and water so that not many plants would be able to grow. We also worry that the stream bed would also be formed by gabion and then the stream section would be dried out eventually. Quite often the channelized watercourse would turn out to be an ecologically-dead zone grown with invasive species.

We have to reiterate that two endemic freshwater crabs *Cryptopotamon anacoluthon* and *Nanhaipotamon hongkongense* were recorded in the stream. Stream diversion work would pose direct impacts on these endemic species. Based on the details in the Interim Report, we do not think that it is justified to say that the existing aquatic ecology can be compensated, not to say enhanced.

4. Adverse visual impact despite mitigation

A total of 11 public viewing points (VP) have been selected to present the visual changes, but according to the summary of visual impacts after mitigation⁷, “slightly to

⁵ Figure CE51/IR/203, Final Interim Report for Rezoning – Issue 2.0, Site Formation and Infrastructure Works for Public Housing Developments in Tsing Yi Road West, Tsing Yi – Feasibility Study

⁶ Section 10.8.2, Final Interim Report for Rezoning – Issue 2.0, Site Formation and Infrastructure Works for Public Housing Developments in Tsing Yi Road West, Tsing Yi – Feasibility Study

⁷ Table 10.10.1, Final Interim Report for Rezoning – Issue 2.0, Site Formation and Infrastructure Works for Public Housing Developments in Tsing Yi Road West, Tsing Yi – Feasibility Study



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moderately adverse” visual impact would be resulted in only one VP. For the remaining 10 VPs, visual impact after mitigation is considered to be within a range of “significantly adverse” to “moderately adverse”. More importantly, potential visual impacts before and after mitigation remain unchanged in all affected VPs (Figure 3).

Mitigation measures are proposed to alleviate the potential visual impact, such as *“the provision of amenity planting/landscape treatment, building separation of not less than 15m wide between the building blocks, as well as adoption of sensible building design with use of finishing materials/colour/façade which is compatible with the surrounding public housing developments”*⁸. Referring back to the summary of visual impacts, we worry that potential visual impact brought by the development cannot be simply solved by any mitigations measures.

In conclusion, we have to reiterate that provision of adequate housing and environmental conservation are not contradictory. Planning Department should withdraw this GB rezoning proposal, and consider alternatives on land supply, including the use of brownfield and idle lands.

Yours faithfully,

Ng Hei Man

Campaign Manager

The Conservancy Association

⁸ Section 4.12, MPC Paper No. 5/2021



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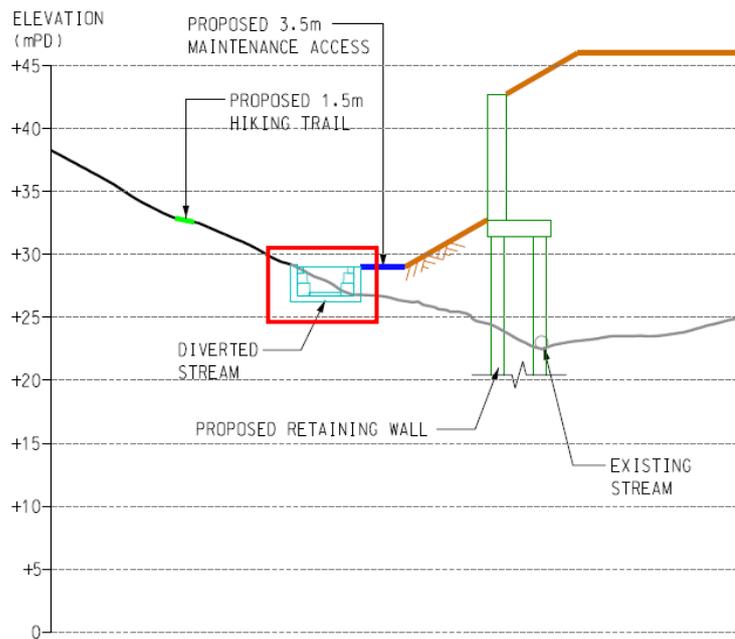
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Figure 2 From the site formation section attached in the Interim Report⁹, the proposed diverted stream has vertical stream banks on both side (marked in red)



⁹ Final Interim Report for Rezoning – Issue 2.0, Site Formation and Infrastructure Works for Public Housing Developments in Tsing Yi Road West, Tsing Yi – Feasibility Study



Figure 3 Potential visual impacts before (marked in red) and after (marked in blue) mitigation remain unchanged in all VPs

Table 10.10.1 Summary of Visual Impacts

VP	VP Name	Sensitivity of VP (High / Medium / Low)	Potential Visual Impacts (before mitigation) (Enhanced / Partly enhanced & partly adverse / Negligible / Slightly adverse / Moderately adverse / Significantly adverse)	Proposed Mitigation Measures			Potential Visual Impacts (after mitigation) (Enhanced / Partly enhanced & partly adverse / Negligible / Slightly adverse / Moderately adverse / Significantly adverse)
				During & After Construction	During Construction	After Construction	
VP1	Footbridge by Tsing Yi Road West Park	Medium	Significantly adverse	MM1	MM2, 3, 4	MM6, 7	Significantly adverse
VP2	Footbridge by Tsing Wah Playground	High	Significantly adverse	MM1	MM2, 3, 4	MM6, 7, 9	Significantly adverse
VP3	Footbridge by Liu To Road	Medium	Moderately adverse	MM1	MM2, 3, 4	MM6, 7	Moderately adverse
VP4	Footbridge by Greenview Villa	Medium	Moderately adverse	MM1	MM2, 3, 4	MM6, 7	Moderately adverse
VP5	Footbridge by Chung Mei Road	Medium	Moderately to significantly adverse	MM1	MM2, 3, 4	MM6, 8	Moderately to significantly adverse
VP6	Tsing Yi Nature Trails	Medium	Slightly to moderately adverse	MM1	MM2, 3, 4	MM6, 8	Slightly to moderately adverse
VP7	Liu To Road Garden	High	Significantly adverse	MM1	MM2, 3, 4	MM6	Significantly adverse
VP8	Tai Wong Ha Playground	Medium	Moderately adverse		MM2, 3, 4	MM6	Moderately adverse
VP9	Tsing Yi Road West Park	Medium	Significantly adverse	MM1	MM2, 3, 4	MM6	Significantly adverse
VP10	Kwai Tsing Celebration of Reunification Education Trail	Medium	Significantly adverse		MM2, 3, 4	MM6	Significantly adverse
VP11	Ching Hong Road	Medium	Significantly adverse	MM1	MM2, 3, 4	MM6, 7	Significantly adverse