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**Lantau Development Advisory Committee
Fourteenth Meeting**

Date: 18 January 2020 (Saturday)
Time: 9: 30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Venue: Conference Room 6, G/F, Central Government Offices
2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong

Minutes of Meeting

Members Present

Mr WONG Wai-lun, Michael	Secretary for Development	Chairman
Mr CHAN Kai-yip		
Mr CHAN Yung		
Ms CHAU Chuen-heung		
Mr CHOW Yuk-tong		
Mr HA Wing-on, Allen		
Prof HO Kin-chung		
Mr LAM Chung-lun, Billy		
Dr LAM Kin-ngok, Peter		
Prof LAM Kwan-sing, Paul		
Mr LAM Siu-lo, Andrew		
Mr LAU Ping-cheung		
Dr LAU Wai-neng, Michael		
Prof Hon LEE Kok-long, Joseph		
Ms LIAO Shu-hang		

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Dr MAK Hoi-cheung,
Eunice

Hon MAK Mei-kuen, Alice

Prof TAM Fung-yee, Nora

Ms WONG Sin-tung, Elise

Hon YIU Si-wing

Mr YU Hon-kwan, Randy

Mr LAM Sai-hung Permanent Secretary for
Development (Works)

Ms LINN Hon-ho, Permanent Secretary for
Bernadette Development (Planning and Lands)

Mr WONG Chi-cho, Joe Commissioner for Tourism

Ms Mable CHAN Commissioner for Transport

Mr LAU Chun-kit, Ricky Director of Civil Engineering and
Development

Mr LEE Kai-wing, Director of Planning
Raymond

Mr AU Wai-kwong, Elvis Deputy Director of Environmental
Protection (1)

Mr LI Ping-wai, Anthony District Officer (Islands), Home
Affairs Department (HAD)

Mr LUK Kwong-wai, Assistant Director of Housing
Patrick (Project) 1

Mr WU Kwok-yuen, Jacky Principal Assistant Secretary (Works) Secretary
5, Development Bureau (DEVB)

Members Absent (absent with apologies)

Hon CHAN Han-pan

Mr CHAN Ho-ting, Mac

Dr CHU Ting-kin, Kenneth

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Mr KWOK Ching-kwong,
Francis

Mr LAM Fan-keung,
Franklin

Prof LOO Pui-ying, Becky

Mr SO Chak-kwong, Jack

Hon WAN Siu-kin,
Andrew

In Attendance

Mr LIU Chun-san	Under Secretary for Development
Mr MAK Shing-cheung, Vincent	Deputy Secretary for Development (Works) 2
Miss SAIR Ying Ying, Teresa	Press Secretary to Secretary for Development
Mr HUI Hoi-hon, Thomas	Chief Assistant Secretary (Works) 5, DEVB
Mr NG Wa-kin	Assistant Secretary (Works Policies 5) 1, DEVB
Mr WONG Yin-kai, Vincent	Assistant Secretary (Works Policies 5) 3, DEVB
Ms LI Mei-ye, Florence	Senior Executive Officer (Works Policies 5), DEVB
Mr FONG Hok Shing, Michael	Head of the Sustainable Lantau Office (SLO), Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD)
Ms KIANG Kam-yin, Ginger	Deputy Head of SLO (Planning and Conservation), CEDD
Mr WONG Kwok Fai, Alfred	Chief Engineer/Lantau 1, SLO, CEDD
Mr LOK Chi-chung, Andy	Chief Engineer/Lantau 2, SLO, CEDD

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Ms CHENG Nga See, Ellen	Chief Engineer/Lantau 3, SLO, CEDD
Miss TONG Yee-fun, Pauline	Senior Conservation Officer/1 (Lantau), SLO, CEDD
Ms WU Wai Yu, Sharon	Senior Engineer/4(Lantau), SLO, CEDD
Mr CHEUNG Kai Cheung, Henry	Senior Engineer/13(Lantau), SLO, CEDD
Mr LAM Hang San	Technical Officer (Civil)/4 (Lantau)
Mr CHUNG Man-kit, Ivan	Deputy Director of Planning/Territorial
Ms LIU Mei Fong, Kennie	Town Planner/Strategic Planning 12, Planning Department (PlanD)
Ms CHAN Wing-yan, Stephanie	Town Planner/Strategic Planning 13, PlanD
Mr AU Sheung-man, Benjamin	Assistant District Officer (Islands) 1, HAD
Mr Terence FONG	Representative, ERM-Hong Kong Limited

The Chairman welcomed Members for participating in the fourteenth meeting of the Lantau Development Advisory Committee (LanDAC).

Agenda Item 1: Confirmation of the Minutes of the Last Meeting

2. The minutes of the last meeting had been distributed to Members for their perusal prior to the meeting. The Secretariat had made appropriate amendments in accordance with the comments received. There being no further comments from Members at the meeting, the Chairman announced the confirmation of the minutes of the last meeting.

Agenda Item 2: Matters Arising

3. There were no matters arising from the last meeting.

Agenda Item 3: Work Progress of Sustainable Lantau Office (LanDAC Paper No. 01/2020)

4. Mr FONG Hok-Shing, Michael, Head of the SLO of the CEDD, briefed Members on LanDAC Paper No. 01/2020.

5. A Member thanked the SLO for the work done in Lantau and asked when the Government would apply for funding from the Legislative Council (LegCo) for the Studies related to Artificial Islands in the Central Waters. He also asked the Administration about the progress of handling the bends in the road section from Tung Chung to South Lantau, and hoped that the Government would handle the bends properly to facilitate the passage of large vehicles. In addition, he pointed out that as the SLO had built quite a number of new facilities in Lantau, such as the mountain bike trail, he was of the view that the Administration should step up promotion to let the public know about and use such facilities.

6. Deputy Head of the SLO (Planning and Conservation) of the CEDD, Ms KIANG Kam-yin, Ginger, said that the relevant departments had completed the improvement works for the bends in the road section from Tung Chung to South Lantau last year.

7. Mr Michael FONG said that the SLO would step up its efforts to promote the Mui Wo mountain bike practice ground which had substantially been completed last December. Moreover, he said that the SLO also planned to build a bike trail network in Lantau, including the building of a bike trail of about 12 kilometres long under the Tung Chung New Town Extension project. The feasibility of building bike trails in suitable road sections would also be explored in the Engineering Study on Road P1 (Tai Ho – Sunny Bay Section) to bring improvements to the whole bike trail network in Lantau.

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8. The Chairman responded that the Government had submitted the funding application for the Studies related to Artificial Islands in the Central Waters to the District Council (DC) and the LegCo Panel on Development last year, and it obtained the support of the LegCo Public Works Subcommittee in May. The funding application was originally planned for immediate submission to the LegCo Finance Committee (FC) for scrutiny but LegCo was suspended after June. The DEVB was currently following the established procedure to submit the funding application to the FC so that it will complete the scrutiny in the second quarter of this year. The Chairman said that he understood that the proposed reclamation near Kau Yi Chau was not supported by everyone but he would like the public to understand that the funding being sought was not intended for the actual reclamation works, but rather for study purposes. The studies would make available more environmental, financial and transport data for reference by the community. The studies would take several years to complete and by then, the public could initiate a rational discussion on the proposal.

9. A Member considered it difficult for the Government to secure funding from LegCo to implement Lantau Tomorrow given the current social atmosphere. He suggested that the Government should identify an alternative way to obtain the resources. He also suggested that reference could be drawn to the method used in the case of City One Shatin in the past, where private developers were invited to bid for the right of reclamation in the waters in a public tender, and when reclamation was completed, the developer was allocated a portion of the land and required to build certain public housing flats. He said that the concept of this method was the same as that of the primary land development in the Mainland. That Member also suggested that the Government should entrust the Mass Transit Railway (MTR) Corporation Limited to construct the Tung Chung Line Extension, including fundraising, so as to reduce the time for seeking funding resources from LegCo. In addition, anticipating that the increase of about 49 000 housing units due to Tung Chung extension would give rise to quite some traffic problems, he hoped that the Transport Department (TD) would offer a timetable for the construction of the Tung Chung Line Extension. He also suggested that the Government should allow more participation by the Mainland's engineering companies in our major

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infrastructure projects.

10. Another Member reflected that the Government initially promoted reclamation in the Central Waters by naming the project “East Lantau Metropolis”. The Government then changed the name to “Artificial Islands in the Central Waters” and obtained support from the Islands DC. After that, the Government again renamed it as “Lantau Tomorrow”, this time causing great repercussions in the community. He said that by renaming it again as “Artificial Islands in the Central Waters” now, the Government might easily cause puzzlement and confusion for the public because the project had appeared under different names before. In addition, since the current Artificial Islands in the Central Waters project would focus on reclamation near Kau Yi Chau and only conduct studies in Hei Ling Chau, he considered this arrangement ideal because it could eliminate the community’s differences over the scope of reclamation. Moreover, he pointed out that residents of outlying islands were very concerned about traffic and road matters and had made a number of proposals. If the Government had not taken into account the related proposals, he was of the view that the implementation of Lantau Tomorrow would see considerable local resistance in the future. That Member also hoped that DEVB would tell him when the land created in phase one of Tung Chung East reclamation would be handed over to the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HKHA) for housing development.

11. The Chairman responded that the first parcel of land created by Tung Chung East reclamation would be handed over to the HKHA in 2020.

[Post-meeting note: The first parcel of land was handed over to the HKHA in March 2020.]

12. That Member was satisfied with the progress of Tung Chung East reclamation. He then asked when Area 54, Tung Chung East, would be ready for the first population intake, and would also like to be informed of the timetable for the Ma Wan Chung improvement works. Moreover, he said that members of the local community all welcomed the construction of a river park but he also noticed that some environmentalists had recently raised quite a number of

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environmental problems that might be caused by the river park construction. Therefore, he hoped that the Government would let him know the progress of the river park construction, particularly the latest timetable for the river bed dredging works and sewage works. That Member also asked whether the \$500 million of the \$1 billion Lantau Conservation Fund (LCF) earmarked for education and promotion would benefit the entire Lantau, and whether the remaining \$500 million would be used to maintain and resurface roads in Tung Chung villages, and connect them to highways.

13. Furthermore, he opined that the biggest problem faced by Tung Chung was the inadequacy of roads. He noticed that other than the MTR, the current connectivity of Tung Chung to the urban area was solely reliant on Yu Tung Road. He pointed out that in the recent six months, whenever MTR services suspended due to social activism, there would be serious traffic congestion in Tung Chung that even ended up in the paralysis of the whole transport network in the area, making it entirely impossible for Tung Chung residents to travel to the urban area. That Member said that the Government had promised to construct a railway in Tung Chung West in the 1990s but the promise had not been made good so far. He continued to say that it was not until now that the Government brought up this plan again but the population had grown significantly in Tung Chung in recent years while there were inadequate bus routes. He hoped that the Government would explore the feasibility of providing other modes of transport, such as a light rail network, and construct and complete the Tung Chung West MTR Station as soon as possible.

14. Another Member pointed out that Lantau Tomorrow had aroused strong responses from Lantau residents, and the Islands DC of the last term could only conditionally support it. He agreed with what had been earlier said by the other Member that Lantau Tomorrow had to address the transport development needs in Lantau in order to gain support from the Islands DC. He said that the island residents expected that after the Government had implemented major infrastructure projects near their residential areas, it would build associated facilities in the district for their benefit. Without additional facilities provided under Lantau Tomorrow to benefit the island residents, such as a new road connecting to Mui Wo or between Pui O and Tung Chung, the island residents

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could hardly fully support the proposal.

15. Moreover, that Member also agreed with the suggestion made by the other Member earlier that the Government could explore using new ways to identify resources for land creation. Regarding the bend improvement works in the road section from South Lantau Road to Keung Shan Road mentioned by the other Member, he said that he had noticed that the bend improvement works in K10 had been completed and the traffic flow was now very smooth. However, he was disappointed that the Administration had only carried out simple remedial works at the other 20 bends. He cited the Fat Wah Yuen junction works completed before Lunar New Year as an example and said that the bend was still not wide enough. He suggested that the Administration should test again whether two buses could pass through at the same time. That Member further pointed out that even if all the bends had been improved and safety enhanced, if residents could only use that road section to go out, it would still be heavily congested during holidays, hindering Tai O residents from spending time with their families. He believed that if the traffic problem was not properly handled, it would be difficult to attract young people to stay in Tai O. With a continuously ageing population in Tai O, the Tai O fishing village would also be deserted in 20 or 30 years.

16. That Member was also concerned that the Study on Traffic, Transport and Capacity to Receive Visitors for Lantau would be too theoretical. Should that be the case, Tai O population and visitors would be assessed as insufficient for the construction of a coastal highway connecting Tung Chung to Tai O, and only improvement works on the bends in some road sections would be regarded as necessary to solve the traffic problems. Moreover, he pointed out that even though the option of constructing a coastal highway from Tung Chung to Tai O would eventually be assessed as infeasible, he still hoped that the Government would consider constructing a one-tube-two-way traffic tunnel at the bend in K10 or in another place to connect to Ling Yan Monastery and Tung Chung, despite it not being the option preferred by residents. That Member also enquired whether the Government would carry out studies on other road sections when conducting the Engineering Study on Road P1 (Tai Ho – Sunny Bay Section). He hoped that the Government would provide a timetable

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for the studies.

[Post-meeting note: The CEDD plans to apply for funding from LegCo for the Engineering Study on Road P1 (Tai Ho – Sunny Bay Section) in late 2020 or early 2021. Subject to funding approval, the CEDD plans to commence the engineering study in the second half of 2021, which is anticipated to be completed in 30 months.]

17. That Member remarked that he himself and the island residents basically agreed with the conservation needs of Pui O and Shui Hau. He said that the current land uses of Pui O and Shui Hau wetlands often caused strong urban-rural contradictions because some non-indigenous residents considered that the wetlands had high ecological significance and therefore found it deeply disturbing that the indigenous residents were dumping mud on the wetlands. He expected the Government to invoke the Lands Resumption Ordinance to resume the Pui O and Shui Hau wetlands for conservation so as to eliminate divergence among residents. At last, that Member said that while the Government was aiming to develop Lantau into a leisure and entertainment destination of choice, the current operators of the campsites in Lantau were facing the risk of being charged and as such, he suggested that the SLO and the licensing department should discuss how to inform the campsite operators of the procedure and requirements for application for licences to operate campsites.

[Prof Hon LEE Kok-long, Joseph attended the meeting at this juncture]

18. The Chairman thanked Members for proposing to explore ways other than the LegCo's process to secure resources to implement the relevant measures recommended under Lantau Tomorrow. He agreed that it was a challenging task to seek funding from LegCo given the current social atmosphere but the Government would continue its effort. He said that in view of the immense scale of Lantau Tomorrow, it might not be appropriate to have it implemented according to the method used in the development of City One Shatin in the past. The Chairman remarked that the Government still cherished the hope of securing LegCo's funding approval for the Studies related to Artificial islands in the Central Waters before the second quarter of 2020. On

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the other hand, the Chairman welcomed companies around the world, including those on the Mainland and in other regions, to participate in the infrastructure projects under Lantau Tomorrow. The Chairman also responded that given the controversial nature and difficulty involved in the resumption of land for conservation through the Lands Resumption Ordinance, it was necessary for the Government to consider it carefully.

19. In response to a Member's enquiry regarding the progress of the Tung Chung East reclamation project, the Chairman said that the project had already commenced on 31 December 2017. He was confident that the first batch of land could be handed over to the HKHA for the construction of 10 000 public housing units around the middle of this year, i.e. 2020. The target was to have the first population intake in 2023 to 2024. He said that this example showed that with the current reclamation techniques, the time needed from reclamation to the commencement of the construction of buildings could be significantly reduced from the previous five to ten years to less than three years. He also said that Tung Chung East reclamation was the first large-scale public works project that adopted the method of "deep cement mixing" for reclamation in Hong Kong. As this reclamation method did not involve the dredging of marine mud, but only the injection of cement into the seabed to support high-density high-rise development, this new reclamation method was more environmentally friendly than the traditional method. The Chairman pointed out that, with the new reclamation techniques as the basis, if the Kau Yi Chau reclamation project could obtain funding in 2025 according to the original timetable, the first batch of land could be ready in 2028 for the commencement of infrastructure works so that the first population intake could take place in 2032. However, since the Government had yet to obtain funding from the FC to commence the Studies related to Artificial Islands in the Central Waters, he believed that the first population intake would be delayed even if funding for the works at Kau Yi Chau would be approved in the future. The Chairman then invited Ms Mable CHAN, Commissioner for Transport, to respond to Members' views on Tung Chung East and Tung Chung West railway stations.

20. Ms Mable CHAN stated that she understood Members' concerns about the issues such as the future population growth, housing development and

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transport infrastructure in Tung Chung. She pointed out that the Government had already raised in the Railway Development Strategy 2014 that it would like to design and conduct studies on a number of proposed railway lines, including the Tung Chung Line Extension. She said that the Government was very concerned about how to enhance the mass transit system in the process of Tung Chung development. In the Policy Address last October, the Chief Executive specially mentioned that the MTR Corporation Limited would be invited to commence detailed planning and design for three proposed railway lines, including the Tung Chung Line Extension, in the coming year. Since late last year, the MTR Corporation Limited had started to prepare the preliminary design consultancy contract for the Tung Chung Line Extension, including Tung Chung East Station and Tung Chung West Station, and invited interested parties to participate in tender prequalification. She expected that the MTR Corporation Limited would carry out relevant environmental impact assessments, conduct detailed studies on costs and revenue, and proceed with the tender exercise in the first quarter of 2020. In addition, as the construction of Tung Chung East Station might involve changes to the existing Tung Chung Line, studies would have to be conducted carefully. She said that the Government had heard the views of all Members, the TD would reflect Members' views on railway matters when the Transport and Housing Bureau discussed related issues and received briefing from the Board members of the MTR Corporation Limited in the future.

21. Ms CHAN continued to respond to Members' opinions on bus routes, saying that there were already 39 franchised bus routes in Tung Chung to cope with its population growth. She indicated that the Government had noticed the busy traffic conditions in Tung Chung and was aiming to improve resource allocation and journey time through rationalisation of routes in the future. In addition, she said that the relevant departments had been gradually carrying out improvement works for the road bends in the South Lantau section with some of the road improvement works completed, and the TD was also monitoring the bus trips going through the road section. She said that while double-decked buses could effectively divert traffic, she understood that the residents might worry about the possibility of accidents resulting from double-decked buses going around the bends. In this connection, the TD was doubling its efforts in negotiating with the bus operators in Lantau so that if the environment permitted,

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the Government would, as far as possible, increase bus lay-bys for bus-stops, straighten the road sections for buses, and monitor the growth of roadside trees. Ms CHAN said that drivers of Lantau buses were welcomed to provide comments on the road sections to the TD and it would reflect them to relevant departments as soon as possible.

22. In response to the comments on land creation at Tung Chung East, Mr LUK Kwong-wai, Patrick, Assistant Director of Housing (Project)1, pointed out that the foundation works for Tung Chung East Areas 99 and 100 were in the tender process and these two parcels of land were expected to be handed over for housing development in the middle of this year, with the population intake scheduled for 2023 to 2024. As to Area 54, the housing works were scheduled for completion and population intake in 2021 to 2022.

23. The Chairman said that thanks to the co-ordination efforts inside the Government, the HKHA had commenced the preliminary work for housing development before the land creation was completed, thus expediting the progress of public housing supply. The Chairman continued to invite the SLO to respond to the comments on the Ma Wan Chung improvement works and the Tung Chung River Park, and the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) to respond to environmental protection issues.

24. Mr Michael FONG, Head of the SLO, said that they planned to apply for funding from LegCo late this year or early next year for the first phase of infrastructure works in Tung Chung East and Tung Chung West, including improvement works in Ma Wan Chung and the revitalisation of a section of the Tung Chung Stream that had been channelised as the first phase of the works of Tung Chung River Park. The rest of the works of the Tung Chung River Park project would take a longer time as land resumption was involved. It was planned tentatively to seek funding approval from LegCo in 2023.

25. Mr AU Wai-kwong, Elvis, Deputy Director of Environmental Protection (1), explained that according to the current policy of the Government, the Government would not resume land or make compensation for the sole purpose of nature conservation because of the large amount of financial and land

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resources involved in land resumption, the process of which also involved complicated property rights matters. He pointed out that the Government currently had no plans to change the prevailing policy. However, to encourage owners of private land to conserve sites of ecological value, the Government had introduced the Nature Conservation Management Agreement Scheme to provide funding support for competent non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to enter into management agreements with landowners of priority sites for enhancing conservation. This management agreement had already been successfully implemented in seven sites in Hong Kong, including sites with particular ecological value such as Sha Lo Tung, Lai Chi Wo, Long Valley and Sai Wan. The EPD was currently promoting this concept in Lantau to encourage NGOs and landowners to implement this management agreement scheme.

26. The Chairman added that, as Mr AU Wai-kwong had mentioned, the Government would not forcibly resume land. The future LCF or the current fund under the Environment Bureau could create room for co-operation to subsidise landowners to carry out conservation. With reasonable financial support, landowners would be able to co-operate and launch appropriate conservation projects such as eco-tourism. The Chairman pointed out that in the future the community could further exchange views about transport issues in Lantau, including road alignments. Even after the Study on Traffic, Transport and Capacity to Receive Visitors for Lantau had been completed, the findings of the study could still be discussed. If the transport improvement options preferred by the residents could not be realised due to various constraints, the Administration would still consider other feasible proposals put forward by the residents.

27. A Member echoed the view that there was a need for Hong Kong to solve housing problems through development but he hoped that the Government would achieve a balance between Lantau development and ecological conservation. He pointed out that 2019 witnessed a lot of climate change issues with many records broken while the bushfires that broke out in south-east Australia in September last year were still burning without being extinguished, resulting in environmental pollution and the deaths of numerous species. He said that there were still a lot of repercussions in society caused by the Artificial

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Islands in the Central Waters, which was not merely because of the huge capital involved, but due to the inability of the project to tackle the housing problems at hand as it could only provide housing after a long period of time. Hence, the public expected the Government to procure land through more efficient and lower-cost means. Taking into consideration the public concerns, the Member suggested that in promoting Lantau Tomorrow, the Government should explain clearly to the public the necessity of Lantau Tomorrow and the future land uses so that the public would better understand the benefits of it.

28. In addition, that Member was pleased to see efforts of the SLO and relevant departments to follow up on the problem of spoil dumping. He would like to know about the progress of amendment of the related regulations. Also, he mentioned that certain ecological sites such as Pui O and Shui Hau in South Lantau were not all-natural environments but rather those that had evolved from land that had been farmed and later abandoned by local villagers in the early period. As such, he considered these land sites of both ecological and cultural values. He pointed out that if they could be conserved for eco-tourism, it would not only protect the environment but also preserve the culture and boost local economy. He cited the examples of Tung Chung River Park and Long Valley Nature Park, which could achieve the benefits of leisure and tourism through conservation. He suggested that more resources should be committed to the development of similar projects.

29. A Member suggested that the Government should publicise its work in conservation and transport through more short videos, photographs and other channels, so that the public could have a deeper understanding of the Government's planning in Lantau apart from paying attention to the completed facilities and projects during their visit to Lantau. Moreover, he believed that, instead of spending time on discussing the advantages and disadvantages of various options, it would be better for the community to let the Government test different options so as to learn from experience and obtain actual data for formulating options for the future.

30. A Member stated that he understood that it would be difficult and challenging to implement "Lantau Tomorrow" under the current social

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atmosphere. He was pleased that the Government had no intention to shelve the project for the time being. He believed that the project could be useful to solve the long-term housing problem in the community. Moreover, he hoped that the Government would explore the feasibility of enhancing waterway transport in the study related to the transport capacity of Lantau, so as to increase the transport capacity of Lantau in the short to medium term. Besides addressing residents' demand for transport, he believed that there was a greater need for the Government to address the difficulties faced by waterway transport operators in the study. In addition, he pointed out that as the transport system in South Lantau was a closed system, it would be very suitable for the building of a smart city. The concept of smart city could then be extended to smart countryside. That Member also said that he agreed with another Member that the Government needed to have a comprehensive policy to conserve Lantau, which had to cover nature and cultural conservation. He cited Pui O as an example, saying that as cattle were no longer needed to assist in farming, the conservation policy would need to address how to handle the cattle in a holistic manner.

31. Another Member remarked that it was a political decision as to whether, how and when to pursue the Studies related to Artificial Islands in the Central Waters. He opined that pending the funding application to the FC, the Government could consider giving the public more explanations on issues related to the Studies so as to create an environment conducive to the pursuit of the Studies. He cited an example that the Government could explain to the public the deep cement mixing mentioned by the Chairman to let the public know this eco-friendly and efficient reclamation method and change their impression of reclamation. In addition, he suggested that the Government should continue to enhance communication with professional bodies from the engineering and planning sectors so that they could in turn illustrate the benefits of the artificial islands in the Central Waters to the community

32. The Chairman responded that according to the PlanD's "Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030", Hong Kong would need a total of 1 million residential flats over the next 30 years. As it was believed that the Government could only provide 600 000 flats in the

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future through various measures including the construction of “squeeze-in buildings”, there was still a need to identify land that could accommodate 400 000 flats. Kau Yi Chau was able to create 150 000 to 260 000 flats, which would be an enormous amount.

33. He pointed out that the existing reclaimed land in Hong Kong accounted for 6% of the total land area. If other known reclaimed land sites including Kau Yi Chau, Sunny Bay, Lung Kwu Tan and even the Three-Runway System were included, the figure would only rise to 10%, which was far smaller than that in other places. He cited Singapore as an example where the reclaimed land accounted for about 25% of the total land area. If the known reclaimed land sites were included, the figure would rise to over 30%. As regards Macao, over a half of its current land was created from reclamation. He said that rather than unlimited or massive reclamation, reclamation in Hong Kong was carried out on an appropriate scale as compared with other places.

34. In addition, the Chairman said that he agreed with Members on the need for environmental protection during land identification. He pointed out that it was noteworthy that Kau Yi Chau artificial islands could achieve near-zero carbon emission, meaning that the energy consumed by the islands could be offset by producing the energy on the islands using various methods including solar energy production. The Chairman said that the Government was now explaining the situation to the public, including various professional bodies, and would step up its efforts in the future to help the community understand that reclamation would not create enormous harm to the environment as they imagined.

35. Regarding spoil dumping, the Chairman pointed out that due to historical reasons, the PlanD currently did not have relevant authority to handle spoil dumping in South Lantau that was not in compliance with the relevant planning. The Government hoped to empower the PlanD to enforce the law by amending the current planning ordinance. He said that the Government had intended to consult LegCo on the proposal earlier on. However, due to the suspension of the LegCo meetings, it would take a longer time to handle the matter. In addition, the Government was currently taking the lead to specify in

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the contracts for larger-scale public works the installation of Global Positioning System (GPS) on dump trucks to facilitate the tracking of cases of illegal spoil dumping. The Government would explore the feasibility of extending the GPS installation requirement to cover private works.

36. The Chairman said that he understood Members' expectations of the \$1 billion LCF. He pointed out that the LCF could create room for collaboration to turn some conservation projects from impossible to possible. The Chairman said that the funding proposal had been submitted to the LegCo Panel on Development earlier for consideration. If the Budget was passed, the Government would be able to implement conservation work under the Fund. The Chairman appealed to Members to convey the public's conservation proposals, including those raised by members of the local community, to the Government. In addition, the Chairman stated that the Government would continue its work regarding Lantau's waterway transport. He also thanked Members for suggesting the installation of a smart system in South Lantau. He noticed that the society now had reservations about the development of smart systems. However, he believed that it would be easier to promote the development of smart systems if the Government could explain to the public that their privacy could still be protected in a smart city.

37. A Member reiterated his/her wish that the Government could forego its plan to seek funding from LegCo to implement Kau Yi Chau reclamation, and turn to the private market in search of suitable partners.

38. A Member concurred with the other Member, saying that by making reference to the development of Shatin and Tin Shui Wai, the Administration could invite private companies to participate in the construction of the artificial islands in the Central Waters through an impartial, open and fair tender process, with the preservation clauses stated in the tender documents as advocated by environmentalists.

39. The Chairman said that the Government did not ignore the capability of the private market in planning and development and that was why the Land Sharing Pilot Scheme was in place. The Government had to strictly comply with relevant requirements in the public works tendering process to ensure its

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fairness. The Chairman also reiterated that at the moment, the Government still pinned its hopes on securing funding from LegCo to commence the Studies related to Artificial Islands in the Central Waters.

Agenda Item 4: Ecological Study for Pui O, Shui Hau, Tai O and Neighbouring Areas - Feasibility Study
(LanDAC Paper No. 02/2020)

40. Ms CHENG Nga-see, Ellen, Chief Engineer/Lantau 3 of the SLO, CEDD, and Mr Terence FONG, representative of ERM-Hong Kong Limited briefed Members on LanDAC Paper No. 02/2020.

[Mr LAU Ping-cheung left the meeting at this juncture.]

41. A Member stated that he was pleased to see the Government conducting the Ecological Study for Pui O, Shui Hau, Tai O and Neighbouring Areas - Feasibility Study. He pointed out that although this study was the most comprehensive ecological study he had seen in his six years serving the LanDAC, it still had some shortcomings. He said that the Government did not have a strategic environmental assessment and sustainability impact assessment of Lantau. He pointed out that the study had microscopically assessed Pui O, Shui Hau and Tai O, etc as sites of ecological value, but had not macroscopically discussed the connection among the sites. The Member said that most of Lantau was a country park which would directly affect the wetlands. Since these wetlands were connected to the sea, land and sky, the ecology of other places could also be affected. He hoped that the Government would conduct related studies from a macroscopic perspective in the future to explore the connection between the ecology of various places.

42. Moreover, he believed that Lantau had to be developed with innovative ideas. He had high hopes for the future of Lantau and hoped that it would become a new place with new vitality. However, in the development process, with changes in the social situation, the focus had gradually shifted to solving housing and transportation problems. If the development of Lantau was positioned as an innovative, energetic and vibrant project with added social,

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economic and cultural elements, he believed that it would be easier for the Government to garner support for the project. He added that Lantau was an island with development value as it was the tenth largest island in China. If the reclamation area was taken into account, it would be the eighth largest island in China.

[Hon MAK Mei-kuen, Alice attended the meeting at this juncture.]

43. Another Member thanked the Government for conducting an in-depth study on the sites of Pui O, Shui Hau, etc. He considered the findings of great reference value, and would like to give several comments on the study. Firstly, he pointed out that the study was a survey on species conducted in a more conventional approach. He hoped that in the future, the Government would adopt a new mindset in the course of the study to discuss ecological services functions and explore possibility to develop economic activities during the conservation process. He pointed out that there were currently many ecological studies which also explored the ecological services functions in the areas concerned before assessing the health of the habitats based on the number and condition of species, as well as discussing the reasons that affected the ecological health and making proposals on conservation management. Secondly, he hoped that the Government would in the future consult stakeholders on study approaches before carrying out relevant studies, and release findings on a regular basis during the studies to increase their transparency. Thirdly, he indicated that a habitat did not exist independently as it involved a lot of human activities and as such, he suggested that the Government should consider the connection between ecology and humanity when conducting ecological assessment of an area. He thought that before implementing ecological management, the Government should first evaluate the current human activities in order to come up with suitable management proposals. Fourthly, he found it necessary for the study to give attention to the known endangered species and invasive species. Lastly, he expected the Government to enhance communication not only with stakeholders but also with the public. He believed that it will certainly be conducive to future conservation efforts if the Government could raise public awareness of ecological habitats and learn more about the amount of financial resources that the public were willing to be devoted to environmental protection.

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44. A Member concurred with the view that the Government should release data obtained in an appropriate way during the study so as to let the public know about its work and provide timely advice to enrich the details of the study and fill any gap that existed, which could avoid belated discovery of having any important species or data overlooked in the study after it had reached a conclusion.

45. A Member agreed that the methodology adopted in this study was rather conventional. He pointed out that there were numerous species in Lantau and some of the insects had not yet been studied in detail in Hong Kong. He believed that the Administration should consider how to include the new species under the study. As there were not definite research parameters for this research mode, he said that it would be more difficult to do the research through a consultant. He pointed out that in this digital age, almost every member of the public had a smartphone and could take photographs of creatures anytime anywhere. Besides, there were many mobile applications in the market that provided a platform for the public to upload the photographs of creatures for identification by experts around the world. Therefore, he believed that the Government had ways to increase public participation. He suggested that the SLO should organise a small-scale activity to encourage the public, local residents and students to pay more attention to creatures in Lantau when visiting there or going out. He said that the amount of resources this approach required would be less than that required by hiring a consultant to conduct a study, and this approach might lead us to many surprising discoveries.

46. Another Member agreed with the above Member that public participation should be an integral part of the study.

47. A Member stated that he was aware that shrubland had grown in some wetlands in Shui Hau in the process of natural evolution. He queried whether it was necessary to use artificial means to convert them back into wetlands, especially when there were already quite a lot of wetlands in Hong Kong. Moreover, he agreed that the study did not discuss the role played by humans in the habitat. He hoped that the Administration would discuss it in the

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study and publish the findings. He cited an example that many people currently lived next to the mangroves in Tai O and he believed that the Administration should consider the relationship between mangroves and humans in the study. He pointed out that the existing mangroves in Tai O had been planted artificially as compensation planting for the construction of the airport in Chek Lap Kok. He understood that environmentalists would like to conserve the mangroves, but he reflected that the current lack of proper management had led to the accumulation of rubbish at the mangroves, creating hygiene problems such as mosquito infestation for local residents. He said that as mangroves grew in water but not in the sea, both the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the Marine Department would not handle the hygiene problems created by mangroves. The responsibility was given to the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) which could only clear the mangroves once a month due to a lack of manpower. He said that conservation was a beautiful thing but it might create another environmental problem if supervision was not enough. Therefore, he believed that the Administration had to have more discussion of the human role in ecology when conducting the study, and to listen to the views of various parties during consultation. In addition to environmental groups, the voices of local residents must also be heard.

48. A Member supported the view that the study approach was rather conventional. He said that the study did not mention some key issues, including local residents' awareness of conservation, garbage problems and how ecological sites can serve people. He indicated that the study could explore the feasibility of positioning the relevant area as an educational base or the advantages of promoting eco-tourism in the local area. He suggested that the Administration should first conduct educational and tourist activities in pilot sites to enhance public awareness of conservation and consider promoting eco-tourism on the websites of the Hong Kong Tourism Board and other organisations to inform tourists of the diversified tourist activities in Hong Kong.

[Dr LAM Kin-ngok, Peter left the meeting at this juncture.]

49. A Member opined that the consultant could maintain enhanced communication with the AFCD and the EPD in the course of the study. He said

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that being responsible for managing country parks, these two departments understood better which species were of ecological interest and could thus advise on the priorities of the study. He hoped that when deciding whether or not to preserve a species or a place, the Government would consider whether the species or the place in question could benefit humanity, such as exploring the feasibility of boosting local eco-tourism through carrying out road improvement works to enhance the external traffic connectivity of the relevant area. He also suggested that the Government should collect views from residents through the Islands DC when necessary. He hoped that the consultant would be able to recommend practical ways to the Government so that the conservation initiatives could benefit local residents.

50. A Member was delighted to see that the Government was actively managing the ecological sites. Meanwhile, that Member hoped that the Administration would avoid “rough” management. He said that on his frequent visits to Tai O, he noticed a number of invasive mangrove species affecting the ecology of sandflat, together with global climate change, the river training works at the upstream had caused continuous shrinking of the freshwater wetland. In addition, he noted the mention of agricultural symbiosis by the consultant. According to that Member, in order to achieve agricultural symbiosis, the river training works at the upstream should be handled properly. Furthermore, he advised the Administration to maintain proper management to reduce conflict between people and nature, which included proper tackling of the problem of cattle, particularly those in Pui O. He deemed it necessary for the Administration to clearly understand the impact caused by the number of cattle on Lantau.

51. A Member stated that he strongly supported the Government to conduct ecological studies. But he believed that, at the same time when it conducted an ecological study, the Government should take one more step forward to promote the study to the public, including students, through various channels to encourage them to learn more about Hong Kong’s natural ecology, and incorporate their views in the study. Moreover, he said that Lantau, as our precious resources, belonged to the whole society, he hoped that the Administration would listen to the views of not only the stakeholders but also

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the general public when holding public engagement activities.

52. Another Member pointed out that many Members had proposed new directions for the study. He hoped that the Government would consider whether to accept the views. Also, he felt that the Administration had mainly focused on organising activities in schools to promote conservation. He hoped that the Administration would organise public engagement activities to expand the target audience to include the general public.

53. A Member said that great details were provided in the report without discussing issues such as the relationship between humans and nature, external environmental factors and public education. He pointed out that the report also did not mention that organisms would change over time, and it was possible that in the process of change, different organisms might compete with each other. He also said that an important mangrove area in Zhuhai was now used for education and viewing purposes, with tour guides to introduce to visitors the characteristics and uses of different species. He particularly appreciated that the tour guides would tell visitors that mangroves had to be cleared properly every year to prevent competition among them. The Member pointed out that mangroves in Hong Kong were currently left to grow naturally without proper management, resulting in the breeding of mosquitoes and insects, accumulation of rubbish, and obstruction to water flow. He also said that Lantau was not a suitable place for the *Acacia confusa* planted in South Lantau. Therefore, he had proposed a few years ago that the Government should replace the trees with other species when they aged. However, his proposal was not adopted. He also mentioned that the study did not discuss the threat of cattle in Lantau posed to the lives and property of residents. Lastly, he pointed out that conservation did not mean not monitoring and not dealing with nature at all, but rather taking better care of it.

54. Another Member thanked the above Member for clarifying that a mangrove area was not just a place to hide filth and dirt. He said that he had been involved in the construction of the Tai O salt pans mangrove area, which was intended to be a destination for public appreciation where people can enjoy leisure time and cleanse their mind. Unfortunately, due to lack of management,

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the mangrove forest was accumulated with rubbish. He pointed out that the mangrove forest was not a natural formation and hence required greater effort in sustainable conservation management, which should not be suspended due to resource considerations. He hoped that the Administration would conduct proper management of conservation practices and resources in the future. In addition, while he understood Members' concerns about the relationship between the ecosystem and human beings, he hoped that the Administration would also attach importance to the capacity of the ecosystem and carry out related studies to identify ways to achieve a balance between eco-tourism and protection of vulnerable habitats.

55. Mr FONG Hok-shing, Michael, Head of the SLO, CEDD, responded that the aspiration of the Government in conservation had remained unchanged and currently officers from different professional sectors in the SLO were responsible for conservation-related duties. He stressed that the ecological study at hand was a baseline survey, which was the first step in conservation. He said that there had been a considerable amount of views received earlier, which said that the Government should look into the current situation of the ecosystem first before carrying out any conservation work, and thus it conducted the study as suggested. He pointed out that the Administration and Members were both equally concerned about the relationship between humanity and nature and as such, the department would explore this subject in its next step of study. Moreover, the CEDD planned to release information of the ecological survey to the public in due course and also explore ways to engage different people in Lantau conservation in the future. The \$1 billion LCF was mainly used to promote conservation of rural Lantau and related work. Half of the Fund (i.e. \$500 million) would be used for supporting NGOs, the community and land owners to interact and collaborate with one another for the implementation of conservation and related projects for private land or buildings that were of conservation value, and for the promotion of community engagement activities, educational or research projects. The other \$500 million would be spent on minor local improvement works to be carried out by the Government on government land in rural Lantau to preserve or improve its rural environment.

56. Mr FONG also mentioned the importance of publicity and education,

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and that the SLO had been working hard in this regard. He said that although the LCF had not been established yet, resources were available under the Environment and Conservation Fund for conservation initiatives for the time being. He said that in the two years between 2018-19 and 2019-20, this Fund had approved 11 environmental protection education and community engagement projects about South Lantau conservation. The SLO also had conservation professionals for the implementation of conservation education, for example, organising guided eco-tours for schools to educate students about the ecology in places such as Shui Hau. He said that the SLO would focus on stepping up conservation education in the future and welcome suggestions from all parties.

[Mr YU Hon-kwan, Randy left the meeting at this juncture.]

57. The Chairman added that the DEVB strongly agreed that it was necessary to publish the information of the study to the public. He also hoped that the information could be put online for easy public access, but he pointed out that the information must be checked to ensure its accuracy before being put online. Moreover, he said that this ecological study had provided baseline information to enable further exploration of the relationship between humans and the ecology of these sites. In addition, he said that the Government would consider using various ways to support conservation efforts. Apart from financial support, the Government would consider granting land to interested NGOs to enable them to engage in economic activities related to conservation and cultural promotion, thereby creating an income to continue their operation. The Chairman pointed out that Kwun Tong Promenade was operating on this mode, which could provide flexibility to facilitate the introduction of new conservation and management methods. He said that the DEVB was planning to develop an old bus terminus in Whampoa into a park, and was considering to invite social enterprises and NGOs to operate it. He noticed that whenever an operator could turn a profit, the mode of operation used would be criticised as collusion between the Government and business operators. Nevertheless, he believed that it would be worthwhile for the Government to break through the constraints and introduce new ideas. He further pointed out that, in the future, the feasibility of managing the mangroves on this mode could

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be explored. For example, the Administration could hand over the mangroves to the operator, and allow the public to visit the mangroves without affecting the ecology. The operator could then use the income earned to conduct conservation and cultural promotion, or use it for daily operational expenses, such as paying for the clean-up of mangroves.

[Hon MAK Mei-kuen, Alice left the meeting at this juncture.]

58. In response to the need to consider the capacity of an ecological site during the promotion of eco-tourism as mentioned by a Member, the Chairman said that while he understood that some ecological sites were not suitable for being fully open, it could be considered to emulate the managed open model adopted for Mai Po. For example, the sites would only be open for public visit within a specified period every day or every year to allow sufficient rest for the ecosystem.

59. In the time ahead, the Chairman would like to obtain funding from the Budget to set up a \$1 billion LCF for the gradual implementation of different conservation proposals. He hoped that there would be wider communication and interaction with the public when the proposals were being implemented. It would be a significant step forward if conservation projects could be brought to fruition and carried on into the future.

Agenda Item 5: Any Other Business

60. The Chairman said that this was the last meeting of the LanDAC under the current term of the Government, and on behalf of the Government, he would like to thank Members for the suggestions and valuable advice they had offered in the past and monitoring the implementation of various policies together with the Government.

61. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12 p.m.