HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Summary of Response to Feedback on Environmental Impact Study (EIS) for New Housing Estate in the Mount Pleasant Area

I. Site context & milestones

The Study Area is bounded by Mount Pleasant Road to the north, Bukit Brown to the west, Thomson Road to the east, and the Pan Island Expressway (PIE) to the south. The Study Area covers a total area of approximately 71.6 hectares (ha) (see Figure 1), which is larger than the proposed development area for the housing estate (approximately 33 ha).

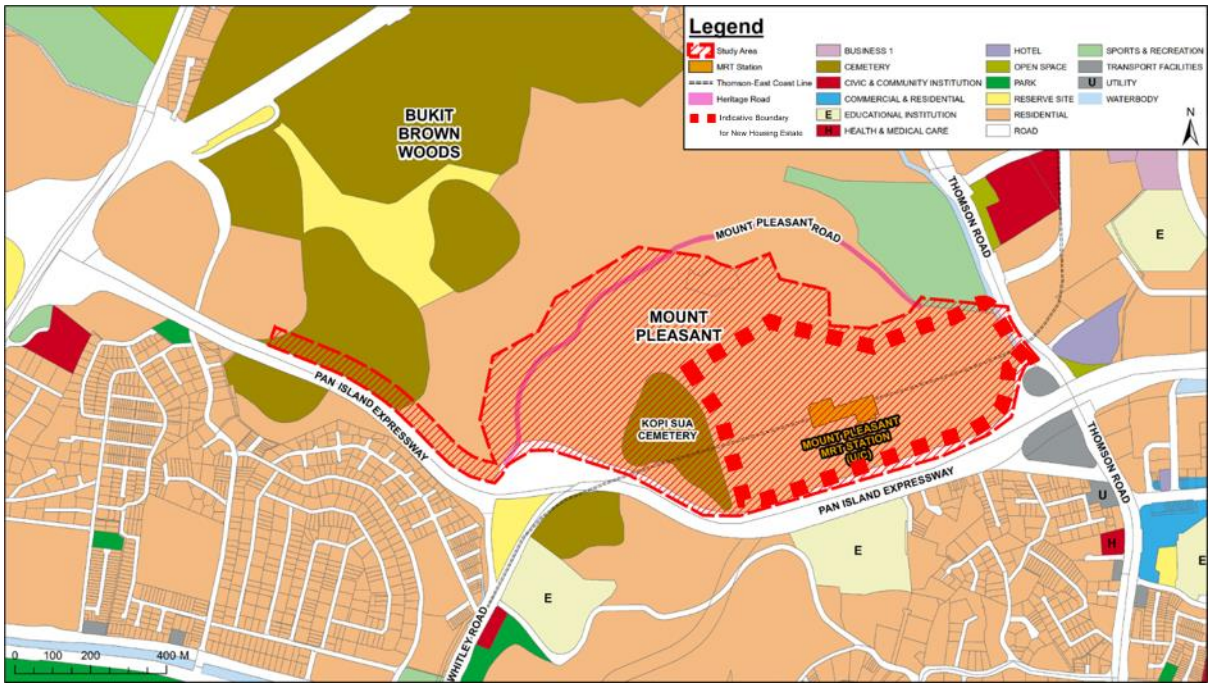

Figure 1: Gazetted Land Use of the Study Area as per URA Master Plan 2019

This development area has been zoned as "Residential (Subject to Detailed Planning)" in URA's gazetted Master Plan since 1998.

In 2019, HDB commissioned an external consultant to conduct an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) for the construction and operational phases of the proposed housing estate with supporting amenities and infrastructure in Mount Pleasant area (for more details, please see the full report here; summary of EIS findings may be found in the executive summary published earlier here).

The purpose of the EIS is to provide an assessment of the nature and extent of potential environmental and cumulative impacts arising from the upcoming development of the area,

and to guide HDB's development plans in a way that would mitigate the potential environmental and cumulative impacts.

The key findings from the EIS are as follows:

a) The study area consist of a partially-naturalised stream (Stream 1), two naturalised streams (Streams 2 and 3), two stormwater drains, and six vegetation types, predominantly abandoned-land forest and managed vegetation including landscape and streetscape plantings, green verges, and managed lawns. Together, they provide a variety of habitats for fauna.

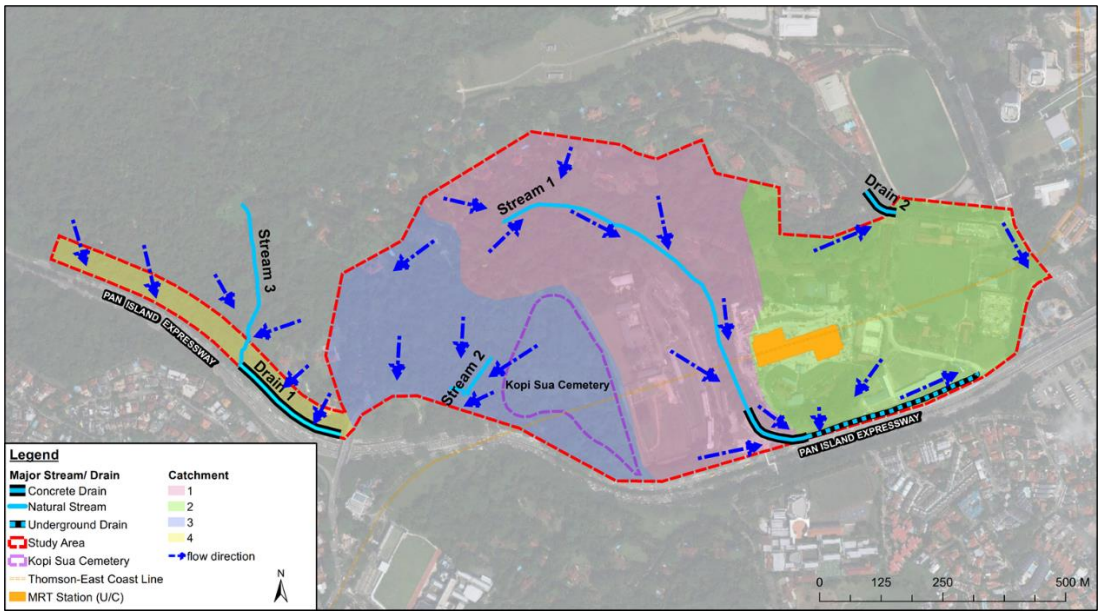

Figure 2: Existing waterbodies comprising three naturalised/partially naturalised streams (Streams 1, 2, and 3) and two stormwater drains (Drain 1 and 2) in the study area

b) A total of 378 plant species including trees, herbs, climbers and shrubs, were found. Close to half of the species are native, of which about half are of conservation significance. More than 2,500 trees, including 225 large trees, palms and bamboos (≥ 3m in girth/spread) were assessed.

c) 197 species were recorded during fauna surveys, and the highest concentration of species were recorded in the Kopi Sua Cemetery area. Overall, 14 species of conservation significance were present, namely 10 birds (e.g. Crested Goshawk, White-rumped Shama), one damselfly (i.e. Collared Threadtail), one butterfly (i.e. Common Rose), one reptile (i.e. Asian Softshell Turtle), and one bat species (i.e. bamboo bats).

II. Engagement with Stakeholders

Together with NParks and URA, HDB engaged various nature group representatives, who had assessed the findings of the EIS report and shared their views on how to refine the plans for the new housing estate to further minimise the potential impact to the environment.

The EIS report was also published online for public feedback from 23 Nov 2021 to 21 Dec 2021. In total, we received four pieces of feedback pertaining to the EIS conducted.

III. Feedback received

We are appreciative of the partnership with the nature groups and the interest and feedback from members of the public. We have reviewed all feedback and suggestions that were submitted. One requested to conserve the natural forests in the area to mitigate climate change, while another requested for HDB to consider the noise/pollution levels and effects. There was also a request to include new nature parks within the estate, and a call to reconsider development of the site.

IV. Responses to feedback

There remains a strong demand for public housing. The new housing estate will add about 5,000 new flats and provide a good geographical spread to meet different housing needs, including those of young families wanting to live near their parents in the area.

We are mindful of the need to develop housing areas sensitively while meeting the strong demand for public housing. Taking into consideration the EIS findings and feedback received, HDB will adopt the following key measures to mitigate the environmental impact from the development of the new housing estate:

A) Retain 2 out of 3 natural streams in the area; partially retain the 3rd stream

- HDB, in consultation with LTA, has revised the plan for the road network and access points for the estate.
- With the adjustment, we are able to avoid affecting two of the three streams in the area (i.e. Streams 2 and 3 as shown in Figure 3 below), as well as Kopi Sua Cemetery.
- We will be able to retain about one-third of the upstream portion of Stream 1, where there were more observations of the nationally threatened damselfly. For this upstream portion, HDB will retain a 35m buffer on both sides.
- For the downstream portion of Stream 1, HDB will study how best to divert and integrate it with the urban drainage network to facilitate flood control, while maintaining the hydrological condition of the upper part of the stream.

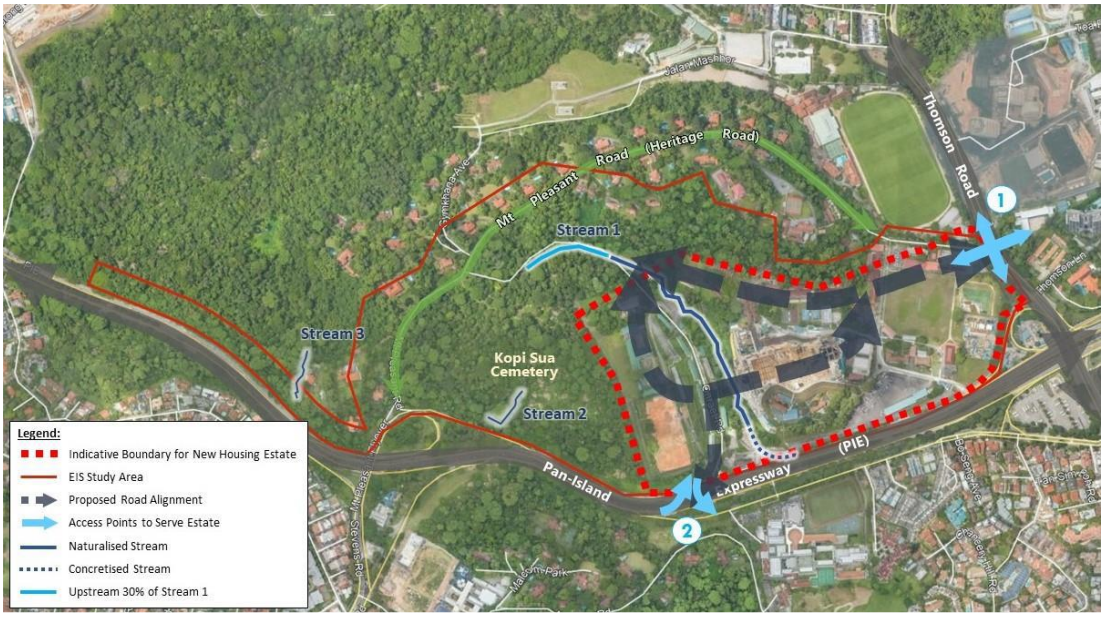

Figure 3: The road network has been revised to take access via the existing Onraet Road off PIE. With this adjustment, two of the three streams (Streams 2 and 3) will be fully retained, and the adjacent Kopi Sua Cemetery will not be affected.

B) Minimise the potential impact on flora and fauna in the surrounding areas

- In line with feedback to conserve the natural assets in the area, the existing natural and heritage assets up to 10m on either side of Mount Pleasant Road (a gazetted Heritage Road under NParks' Heritage Road Scheme) will not be affected. HDB will mark out the Heritage Road buffer during the construction phase of the Project to ensure that there is no damage or removal of vegetation within the buffer. HDB will also establish Tree Protection Zones (TPZ) to minimise the impact of construction activities on large trees.
- HDB will plant multi-layered vegetation along the edge of Bukit Brown to serve as a natural barrier to light and noise, and air pollution. The buffer from Kopi Sua Cemetery and Bukit Brown will help to provide clearer air from the air quality impact from road vehicles.
- HDB will also phase clearance activities to avoid the bird breeding season.

C) New green spaces within the estate

- As there are existing natural and heritage assets in the vicinity, the proposed vision for the new housing estate is to interweave heritage and nature elements within homes and community of the new estate.
- Per the feedback received from nature groups and the public, there will be new park spaces with facilities for residents to enjoy. Additionally, sky/ roof gardens will be part of the blocks, and we will weave in lush greenery and key pedestrian spines in the estate for better connectivity.

D) Environmental Monitoring and Management Plan (EMMP)

- An EMMP has been developed for each environmental parameter, which will be implemented during the construction and operational phases, to ensure the effectiveness of the proposed mitigation measures.