

Government responds to media enquiries on lease renewal of Fanling Golf Course

In response to media enquiries on the lease renewal of the Fanling Golf Course (FGC), a Government spokesman on September 22 said the following:

According to the established practice of the Government, short-term tenancies (STTs) are granted to non-profit-making organisations at nominal rent for sports purposes.

The Government announced in February 2019 that it fully accepted the recommendations tendered by the Task Force on Land Supply and decided to develop the 32 hectares of land east of Fan Kam Road of the FGC for the purpose of housing development (with emphasis on public housing). The Government commenced the technical study in September 2019. The progress is satisfactory. As announced back then, the 32 hectares of land of the FGC, following the expiry of the current lease in August 2020, are subject to a special three-year holding over arrangement up to August 2023. The 32 hectares of land will then revert to the Government in September 2023. Depending on the results of various studies and the progress of the required procedures, the Government will endeavour to commence land formation works as soon as possible after the 32 hectares of land is returned to the Government to support the public housing development in future.

In accordance with the existing applicable procedures, the special holding over arrangement for the 32 hectares of land of the FGC will be executed by way of STT at nominal rent.

For the remaining 140 hectares of land, the Government will renew the lease up to June 30, 2027 at nominal rent in accordance with the current policy. Upon the expiry of the above lease, the Government will start levying concessionary rent in July 2027 should the lease of the 140 hectares is renewed.

When handling STT applications for sports purposes made by non-profit-making organisations, the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) will, in accordance with the existing mechanism, consider whether to give policy support for the tenancy at nominal rent from the perspective of sports development. The Hong Kong Golf Club (HKGC) has, in recent years, voluntarily opened up its sports facilities to eligible outside bodies, including providing facilities to the Hong Kong Golf Association for squad training and holding golf competitions, as well as promoting golf to primary and secondary schools and providing training courses. Apart from opening up its facilities to eligible outside bodies, the HKGC has also opened up its 18-hole course at the FGC for use on weekdays by members of the public holding valid handicap certificates issued by recognised golf clubs or golfers' associations as well as its driving

range for public use at night. In view of the contribution made by the HKGC in the promotion of sports development, the HAB therefore tendered its policy support to the lessee on the STT for the 32 hectares of land and the lease for the 140 hectares of land at nominal rent.

The sports facilities on the 32 hectares of land as well as the remaining 140 hectares of land of FGC have to be further opened up (i.e. to make available 30 per cent of its total sports and recreational facility capacity to eligible outside bodies and partner with sports organisations to organise sports programmes that are open for enrolment by members of the public with a minimum of 240 sports programme hours per month). A relevant clause will be added to the new lease. The Government will continue to monitor the implementation on the opening up of facilities by the FGC.

The lease of the FGC has to be handled by way of two separate leases which involve more procedures. The relevant departments thus require more time to complete the lease renewal procedures of FGC in accordance with the aforesaid policy directions promulgated earlier. This, however, will not affect the special holding over arrangement of the 32 hectares of land, that is, the STT will remain to end in August 2023.