

Ed Rainbow
17C Verdant Court
Peninsula Village
Discovery Bay

Mr. Honson YUEN,
Principal Transport Officer/ Ferry and Paratransit
14/F, South Tower, West Kowloon Government Offices,
11 Hoi Ting Road,
Yau Ma Tei,
Kowloon

12th July 2021

Dear Sir,

The minutes of the 10th June 2021 meeting of the Hillgrove Village Owners' Committee ("VOC") recorded the displeasure of the owners and residents with the recent decision by Transport Department to allow Discovery Bay Transport Services Ltd. to substitute the overnight ferry services with a bus service. The loss of the 24hr Ferry Service is particularly impactful on Hillgrove Village owners and residents given the Village's proximity to the pier, superior comfort, shorter transit duration, and overall convenience that the ferry offered relative to the bus. In previous communications from the Village to the Transport Department, you were informed of the negative ramifications of substituting late night transport services.

We note that Transport Department made its decision when Covid-19 measures are still in place, making it impossible to determine "normal" demand for the late-night ferry. During COVID-19 restrictions, almost all late-night, social events were prohibited, suspended, or severely constrained – obviously conditions that do not reflect true demand for late night transport. Hillgrove residents supported the temporary introduction of the overnight bus in good faith as one of many measures to be borne as long as the Covid-19 problems affected the demand for overnight transport services.

Hillgrove residents were pleased that the popularity of the 24hr-hour ferry service was confirmed by the overwhelming majority of Discovery Bay residents according to an earlier survey. Unfortunately, the Department seems to have placed more weight on a later survey which suggested support had switched to the bus alternative from the ferry alternative. The Hillgrove VOC strongly doubts the results of the later survey to be representative of the majority opinion of the owners and residents of Discovery Bay.

Moreover, VOC members expressed the following concerns:

- No alternatives to the overnight bus service were offered. While cost reductions and increased frequency of the bus service were touted, it is unacceptable that no counteroffer was contemplated. For example, under the Government audit was the maintenance cost of an adequate 24hr ferry service, including ferries better selected for efficiently proportioned ferries, even considered?
- The Hillgrove VOC understands that the bus service could be altered, or entirely eliminated, without reference to the Transport Department. Is this a correct interpretation of the Transport Department's future role in the administration of overnight transport services?
- Has the Transport Department conducted a proper review of long-term demand for ferry services, including the demand from the extra 1,400 units to be constructed on a new lot of land offered to HKRI, noted in its 2020-2021 Annual Results? HKRI has stated the following:

"With the basic terms and land premium amount of Master Plan 7.0E for Discovery Bay offered by the Government being accepted in May 2021, the Group's residential land portfolio in Hong Kong will increase by over 1.3 million square feet, providing over 1,400 units."

Respectfully,
Ed Rainbow
Chairman of Hillgrove Village Owners Committee