



**BY EMAIL ONLY**

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CC

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14 September 2020

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Suspected vandalism in Yuen Tun Ha, Tai Po**

Green Power would like to report a recent case of vandalism in Yuen Tun Ha, Tai Po. The locale subject to vandalism is around 850 m<sup>2</sup> in area, including a 130 m<sup>2</sup> fung-shui pond. We are of grave concern that such vandalism may seriously impact the ecology of Yuen Tun Ha, and degrade the water quality of Tai Po River which is within water gathering ground.

The vandalism was spotted by a Green Power's butterfly surveyor in late-August 2020. We believed that excavation and land filling took place after 12 July 2020 on which we had visited the site where this vandalism had not yet happened. After investigating the site on 4 September 2022 again, we found that massive vegetation around Yuen Tun Ha's ancestral hall was removed. A fung-shui pond previously existed near the ancestral hall was completely reclaimed. In addition, a new muddy access connecting the reclaimed pond was opened up. Please refer to Appendix 1 for the location of the vandalized site, and Appendix 2 for some photos taken at the site before and after the vandalism.

Green Power has been monitoring the butterfly ecology and the environment of Yuen Tun Ha since 2010. In Green Power's Butterfly Surveyor Programme, 179 butterfly species were recorded in Yuen Tun Ha from 2011 to 2020, which accounts for about 67.3% of local butterflies in Hong Kong. Furthermore, 59 "Very Rare" or "Rare" butterfly species have been recorded in Yuen Tun Ha, including Forest Blue (蜚灰蝶 *Taraka hamada*) and Burmese Bush Blue (緬甸燒灰蝶 *Arhopala birmana*) that are continuously spotted around the vandalized site. Given that Yuen Tun Ha is one of the most important butterfly hotspots, any alternations in the landscape would destroy the important niches for wildlife. The area falls within Water Services Department's water gathering ground, any massive excavation and land filling would very likely pollute the drinking water source.

A large portion of the damaged area should be government lands, including the area of the fung-shui pond. It is suspected that the excavation and land filling unlawfully occupied and impaired the topography of government lands. In addition, almost all of the vandalized area is zoned as "Green Belt" in Tai Po Outline Zoning Plan (OZP No. S/TP/28). According to the notes of this Outline Zoning Plan, "*Any filling of pond shall not be undertaken or continued without the permission from the Town Planning Board under section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance*". The current vandalism certainly violates the Town Planning Ordinance if no permission from Town Planning Board is granted.

Unfortunately, suspected unauthorized developments in Yuen Tun Ha have been spotted and reported by our butterfly surveyors in the few years. There is an urgent need to stop repeated vandalism in this treasurable rural area and water gathering ground. We would be much obliged if your department could investigate and take deterrent enforcement actions if any irregularity or illegal activity is involved.

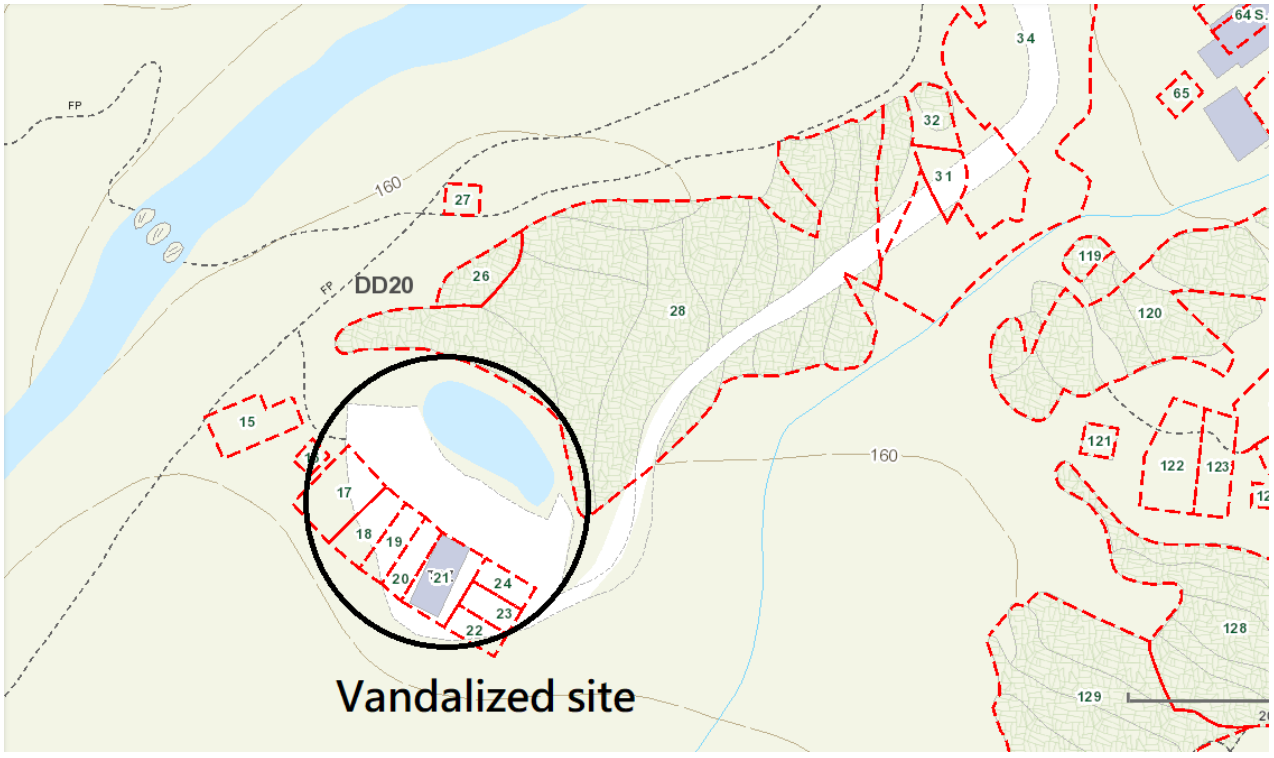
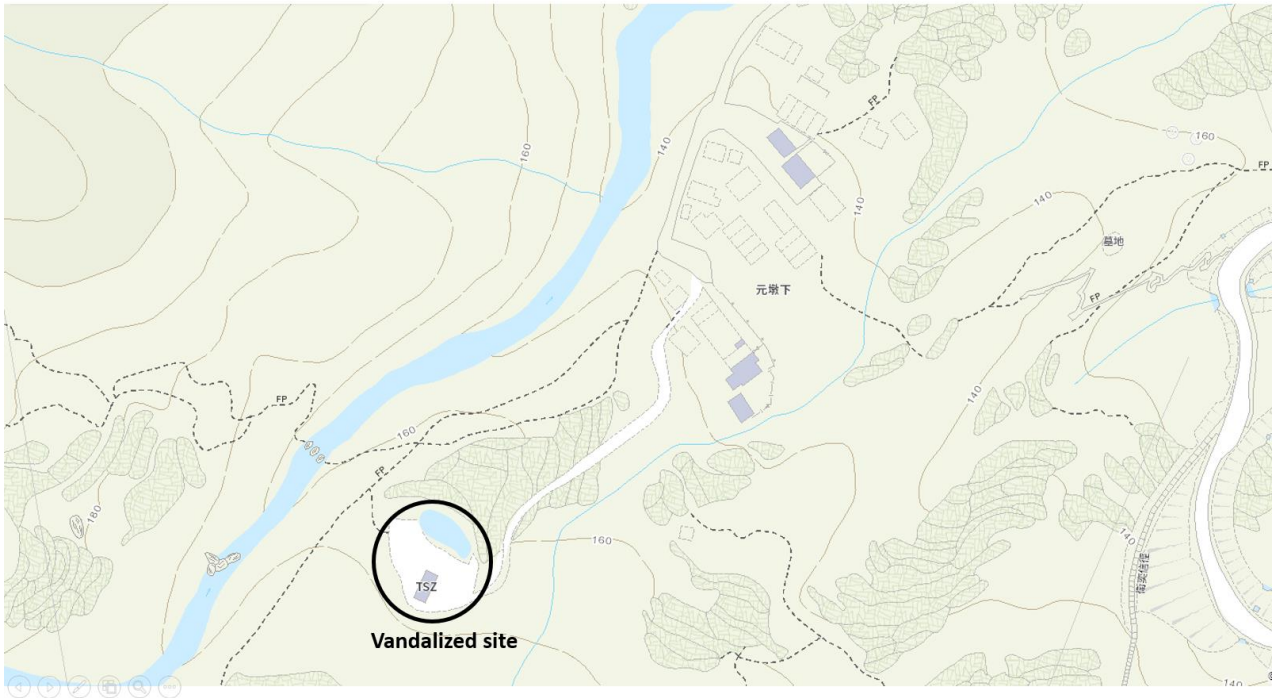
Should you have any inquiries or need any further information, please contact Mr. SIN Kar Wah, Matthew at 3961 0202 or via email [matthews@greenpower.org.hk](mailto:matthews@greenpower.org.hk) . Thank you very much for your kind attention.

Yours faithfully,



Sin Kar Wah, Matthew  
Green Power

**Appendix 1. Maps showing the location of the vandalized site and filled pond at Yuen Tun Ha**



**Appendix 2. Photos taken at Yuen Tun Ha before and after the vandalism**

Before vandalism (taken in August 2010)	After vandalism (taken in September 2020)
	
	
	
	

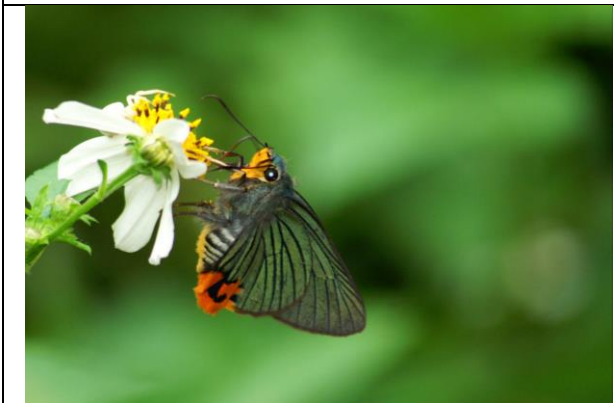
Appendix 3. Photos of butterfly species recorded in Yuen Tun Ha



蚬灰蝶 *Taraka hamada*



緬甸嬌灰蝶 *Arhopala birmana*



綠弄蝶 *Choaspes benjaminii*



黑斑傘弄蝶 *Bibasis oedipodea*