

How the patch evolved, and was erroneously cleared

In Parliament yesterday, Trade and Industry Minister Chan Chun Sing outlined the background and chronology of development at a site near Kranji Road and how a patch of woodland was erroneously cleared without approval.

2011



TIMELINE

2011

- Land for the former Keretapi Tanah Melayu (KTM) railway line, including the Kranji woodland site comprising mainly scrubland, is returned to Singapore. The site is earmarked for future development works but left vacant, and non-native albizia trees grow there over the years.

2015

- Following the Urban Redevelopment Authority's (URA) review of the plans for the KTM land parcels, the Rail Corridor is realigned out of the Kranji parcel to preserve it as a green corridor, so the rest of the site can be redeveloped for industrial use. The plan is publicly exhibited and community stakeholders are generally receptive to the proposal. The site is later earmarked for the development of the Agri-Food Innovation Park (Afip) as part of the larger Sungei Kadut Eco-District (Sked) development.

2019

- JTC appoints CPG as its consultant to carry out planning and design works for the site. An environmental impact assessment (EIA) is not required at the time as the site is dominated by scrubland vegetation and non-native albizia trees. It is also not close to sensitive nature areas.
- CPG submits building plans for the Afip to the National Parks Board, including proposals to fell trees. On Aug 29, 2019, NParks issues a written direction to approve the tree felling for three plots out of the 18 within the site.
- JTC's development plans for the Afip with the green corridor are publicly exhibited in URA's Draft Master Plan 2019 and the Sked Master Plan exhibition in February 2020.

2020

March

- Tree felling commences for one of the three approved plots, measuring 1.9ha of land.

Aug

- CPG submits updated building plans to NParks, including a new drain with discharge and flow into Sungei Pangsua. As the drain could potentially cause sediments from the site to flow into Sungei Pangsua and impact wildlife in the vicinity, NParks instructs JTC and CPG to conduct a fauna baseline study and environmental monitoring and management programme (EMMP).

Nov

- The consultant asks for permission to clear four more plots of land on Nov 3, but NParks approves only partial clearance of one plot on Nov 6. The approved portion is then cleared.

Dec

- The remaining two plots out of the three that were approved in August 2019 – around 2.1ha – are cleared on Dec 15.
- The consultant for the fauna study and EMMP is engaged by JTC on Dec 23.
- Further land clearance amounting to 4.5ha of land is carried out by the contractor without approval, from end-December until Jan 13, 2021.

2021

Jan 13

- JTC's project manager visits the site and discovers the wrongful land clearance. He immediately suspends all clearance works at the site, which remain suspended today.

Jan 15

- JTC issues a stern warning to the contractor.

2019

