

SECTION 2 : PROGRAMMATIC BRIEF

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Board has completed an initial feasibility study on the redevelopment of the Singapore Racecourse in 2018. The study proposed a range of sports and recreational offerings and community programming, to transform the Racecourse into a leisure and recreational community space. The preliminary redevelopment intentions for the Racecourse was announced during the URA Draft Master Plan 2019 exhibition in March – May 2019, whereby the Racecourse would have a greater variety of recreational activities and community spaces to attract people from all walks of life.
- 1.2 The objective of this RFP is to develop a more detailed and compelling master plan that can be implemented in phases. There is also the potential now to re-envision the entire Kranji and Mandai area as a leisure or vacation destination for Singaporeans and foreign visitors alike, with new and compelling attractions and activities that are consistent with the rustic theme and complement the cluster of nature based attractions and offerings in the North Region. These new ambitions and requirements necessitate the development of a more comprehensive master plan for the Racecourse as an integrated leisure destination with varied attractions and delightful public spaces for the community.
- 1.3 While the horse racing operations will continue, the intention of the redevelopment masterplan is to re-imagine how the racecourse land and its existing facilities can be rationalised, re-planned and optimised such that the remainder of the site can be redeveloped into an integrated and extraordinary leisure destination with unique offerings and attractions. This may include a diverse range of uniquely curated recreational facilities, theme attractions and accommodations, retail opportunities as well as delightful and endearing community spaces and parks that are meaningful, enjoyable and memorable for all visitors.

2. PRELIMINARY VISIONING CONCEPT

- 2.1 A preliminary visioning concept has been developed by the Board to guide the redevelopment of the Singapore Racecourse. The visioning concept draws from inputs from key stakeholders to date, as well as findings from the initial feasibility study.
- 2.2 Preliminary concept statement
 - 2.2.1 The concept statement distils the Board's preliminary aspirations for the Singapore Racecourse redevelopment:

*An Extraordinary and Inclusive Leisure Destination with a Unique Identity
that celebrates its Equestrian Heritage and Wonderful Green Spaces.*

2.2.2 MDTs have the liberty to review the concept statement, propose a more detailed or compelling vision and narrative, and develop a comprehensive framework of planning objectives and strategies with an appropriate design approach to guide the formulation of the Racecourse Concept Master Plan.

3. KEY PLANNING & DESIGN CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

3.1 Redefining the Identity of the Singapore Racecourse

As the Singapore Racecourse is a purpose-built horseracing venue, the Racecourse is currently almost exclusively dedicated to horse racing and wagering activities and is patronised mainly by punters. There is the existing STC Riding Centre located at the northern end of the site and also a go-kart facility located underneath the MRT viaduct within the site. Other than these, the Racecourse today will generally not appeal to the public at large because there are no other facilities and amenities that cater to the interests and needs of other segments of the population.

The Racecourse Master Plan will need to create a new Identity for itself as a truly integrated leisure destination that can endear itself and attract a wider profile of visitors through new programmes, attractions and activities that will draw the non-punting crowd on a regular basis. The re-imagined identity should take reference to the Racecourse's unique features, which are its equestrian heritage (that are not specific to horse racing) and the natural attributes of the site and its surroundings which are largely green and rustic. The new identity for the Racecourse should be used to guide the design and theming of new proposals, public areas and spaces and the sense of arrival into the Racecourse site.

The Master Plan must include various strategies that cater to local communities. These can include various affordable lifestyle and recreational offerings, to designing freely accessible public spaces with extraordinary, delightful and inspiring experiences that will endear the site to the general public. Well-designed landscapes as well as spaces and activities that involve community participation and stewardship can also be considered to foster emotional connections between the community and the place over time.

3.2 Being Relevant to the Community as a Wholesome Family-Friendly Leisure Destination

A key design challenge for the Master Plan is how can the Racecourse be transformed into an integrated leisure destination suitable for the whole family without inadvertently promoting horse racing and wagering as a leisure activity. To be relevant to the community, the Racecourse should offer a slew of alternative high quality leisure offerings, recreational spaces and experiences that become the major draw for the whole family.

It is not the intention of the Master Plan to promote the enjoyment of horse racing as the focus of community vibrancy for the site. In this sense, the Singapore Racecourse needs to be intentionally differentiated from other urban Racecourses in the world such as those in Hong Kong or Japan.

For instance, the Happy Valley Racecourse in Hong Kong is located next to the CBD and serves as a convenient leisure destination for the after-office crowd. The Singapore Racecourse on the other hand is located in a far-flung location away from both the city and nearby residential areas. There is no intention therefore to benchmark the Singapore Racecourse against racecourses in dense urban areas such as in Hong Kong or Tokyo where horse racing itself may be considered a lifestyle offering and a main draw for visitors. In any case, the social and cultural context with regards to horse racing in Singapore is different from these other jurisdictions. There are social safeguards in place in Singapore to ensure that minors are not exposed to horse racing. It is also not the Board's intention to explicitly or implicitly promote horse racing and wagering as a leisure activity.

3.3 Creating a Compelling Integrated Leisure Destination that Complements other Nature Related Spaces and Attractions in the North

In terms of programming, the new forms of leisure developments proposed for the Racecourse shall be compelling and differentiated from others found in Singapore and the surrounding countries. This is important as Singaporeans and visitors are well travelled and they could easily discern if their experiences are just "more of the same" or not very different from existing ones they have visited in nearby countries. In particular, there is increasing interest from the local community for experiential and immersive activities and attractions that are unique, yet authentic and relevant to our local context. These facilities should be uniquely designed with reference to the tropical environment, equatorial climate and vegetation found in Singapore. These new visitor experiences will need to be curated in such a way that they become unique destination attractions in their own right and are extraordinary and highly appealing to both local and foreign visitors.

Other amenities such as accommodation, retail and F&B may be considered as part of the leisure offerings at the Racecourse. There should be a balance such that certain amenities such as F&B shall cater to the broad appeal of Singaporeans to ensure loyal and consistent local footfall. Other amenities can be based on unique, market-tested development concepts that address existing market gaps or offer novel experiences for visitors. The physical design of the attractions and amenities will need to integrate with other elements of the Master Plan, including the public spaces and landscapes, so as to maintain a clear and cohesive identity for the entire development.

3.4 Connecting with the Surroundings

MDTs who are shortlisted for Stage 2 RFP shall be provided with a preliminary transportation proposal to link the Racecourse with other attractions in the region.

Teams are free to incorporate or adjust such connections to dove-tail with their respective master plans for the Racecourse.

The MDTs shall also come up with design proposals to seamlessly connect the Racecourse with the adjacent Rail Corridor in order to support and enhance the role of the latter as a 24 km long community belt spanning the width of the country from Tanjong Pagar Railway Station at the edge of the city in the south to Kranji and Woodlands in the north.

3.5 Optimizing Landscape and Public Realm Design for Better Connectivity and Greater Visitor Experience

The Racecourse Master Plan shall transform the Racecourse precinct into a highly delightful and walkable district in which most members of the visiting public are expected to arrive through the Kranji MRT station. Hence, creating a great sense of arrival as the first impression for the visiting public coming by MRT is a key strategy in creating a new Place Identity for the Racecourse.

MDTs should consider using landscapes and the design of the public realm to create better connectivity and pleasurable visitor experiences for this very extensive site. Public spaces and the pedestrian network leading from the MRT station shall be attractively landscaped, comfortable to use and universally accessible. The design of the public pedestrian network starting from the MRT station area shall closely examine various existing site constraints, including terrain differences as well as existing service roads, and propose feasible and creative solutions that can transform these constraints into opportunities.

3.6 Ensuring No Disruption to Horse Racing Operations while Implementing the Master Plan

While there is flexibility to consider relocation and consolidation of horseracing related back-of-house (BOH) facilities in order to optimize overall land use within the existing site, the need to maintain continuity of horse racing activities throughout the implementation of the Racecourse Master Plan is a sine qua non. The Master Plan must be capable of being phased to take into consideration various horse racing related requirements, including stabling provisions, BOH provisions, as well as horse movements and horse training requirements. Further details on horseracing related provisions will be provided to shortlisted MDTs in Stage 2 RFP.

3.7 Reviewing the Use of Sub-optimal Assets

Currently, the Grandstand is only 40-50% occupied on race days. Similarly, the purpose-built multi-storey car park (MSCP) is at most 60% occupied on peak race days. Details of both facilities are given in Appendix A. In developing the Racecourse Master Plan, MDTs should critically look at the use and provision of these facilities in the longer term to ensure land and building use optimization within the site.

3.8 Segregating Between Wagering and Non-Wagering Crowd and Activities

It is worth repeating that it is not the objective of the Racecourse Master Plan to rejuvenate interest in horse racing and to increase the pool of punters to the racecourse over time. It is also not the intent of the Master Plan to promote wagering in horse racing as a leisure activity. The Racecourse Master Plan needs innovative design strategies to segregate the punting crowd from the non-punting crowd, and to encourage a wider segment of the population to visit the Racecourse to enjoy various leisure and recreational offerings without inadvertently exposing them to and promoting greater interest in horse racing among the general public (see item 5 of Appendix A).

Given the profile of punters are different from non-punters, appropriate design solutions should be developed to creatively segregate the routes taken by punters from routes taken by visitors to the other on-site attractions during Race Days. This segregation shall be considered for arrivals from the Kranji MRT station and if necessary from the public car parks within the site. It should be noted that Race Days generally take place over only 2 days of a week.

4. MARKET FEASIBILITY ASSESSMENTS

4.1 The MDTs will need to provide market feasibility assessments to substantiate the economic case for any major leisure attractions, accommodation and retail opportunities that are proposed in the submissions. Shortlisted MDTs entering Stage 2 RFP are allowed to enlarge their team to include potential developers and operators of attractions, programmes and activities in order to lend added credence to their submitted proposals. MDTs shall seek the Board's approval for any changes to the composition of the Team.

4.2 It is important to note that the Kranji racecourse location is not intended to be redeveloped into another major retail destination. The Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA)'s polycentric strategy is to deliberately cluster the major retail opportunities outside the city into designated regional centres and town centres that are served by high population catchments. The nearest regional centre to the Racecourse is Woodlands Regional Centre and the nearest town centres are Choa Chu Kang Town Centre and Bukit Panjang Town Centre. Any retail proposals and concepts for the Racecourse will need to be rigorously justified to show that it shall not lead to cannibalisation of the retail market in these heartland commercial centres as well as those major retail districts in the city.

5. SIGNATURE PUBLIC PARK

5.1 A Signature Public Park shall be proposed as an integral component of the Racecourse Master Plan to reflect the re-positioning of the Racecourse identity as an inclusive space that is welcoming to a wide segment of the community of all ages, abilities and

backgrounds. As a key landmark in the remaking of the Racecourse, the design and use of the Park will define the community's experience of this new identity. The current plan is to implement the Park within the first phase of the Racecourse redevelopment, in order to catalyse its physical transformation as well as the public's perception of its image.

- 5.2 The Park should have a richly imagined landscape that is inspired in part by the site's identity and heritage as well as its surroundings, creating a new place identity for the Racecourse. The landscape should be delightful and engaging and give residents, particularly those staying in the North region, good reasons to visit and enjoy the Park through-out the year. The Park may also be integrated with appropriate amenities to serve the needs of visitors and residents. The design of these amenities should be integrated with the overall landscape design to create a cohesive character that is unique to the Racecourse site.
- 5.3 The Park shall be situated in a highly accessible and prominent location near the Kranji MRT station, and potentially integrated with the Sungei Mandai canal that runs within the Racecourse site. It shall also be linked across Woodlands Rd to the adjacent Rail Corridor Kranji Node. The Park should form part of a system of connected landscapes that contributes to a highly attractive public realm throughout the Racecourse site. The public realm could include both outdoor and indoor spaces with appropriate design measures used to segregate the general visitor traffic from mingling with punters attending the races on Race Days.
- 5.4 MDTs have the flexibility to propose the actual scale and extent of the Signature Public Park, in line with the overall proposed Master Plan for the Racecourse.

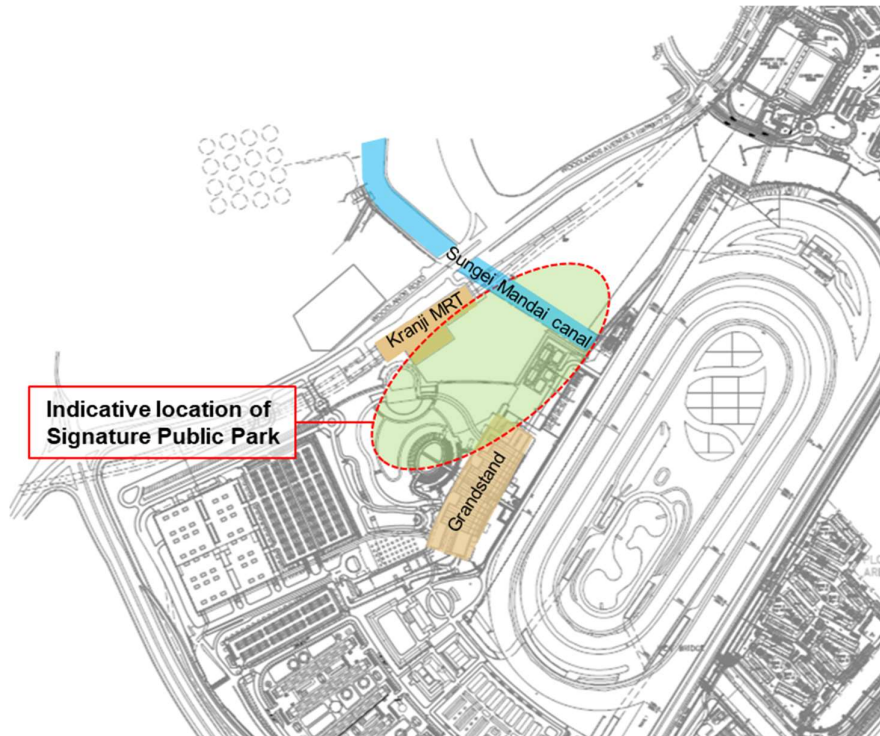


Figure 1. Indicative location of the Signature Public Park

6. OTHER PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

6.1 MDTs are to also take into consideration the following planning requirements. Further detailed planning requirements will be provided to shortlisted MDTs in Stage 2 RFP.

6.2 GFA quantum

6.2.1 The maximum GFA quantum allowable in the lease parameters for the Racecourse as detailed in the table below, may be adopted as parameters for the purpose of the Master Plan study. Proposed GFA quantum in excess of existing quantum will be subject to planning consideration and approval by the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA).

GFA	Total	Commercial (% of Total quantum)
Max. allowable in lease parameters	455,000 sqm	136,000 sqm (30%)
Existing	181,000 sqm	23,000 sqm (13%)

Remainder of max. allowable quantum per lease parameters not used up	274,000 sqm	113,000 sqm (41%)
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6.2.2 MDTs should note that the objective of the Master Plan study is not to maximise the allowable GFA quantum per lease parameters. Overall GFA quantum should be proposed to support the redevelopment needs of the Racecourse, and in line with the proposed concept of the Master Plan. In particular, MDTs should justify the proposed commercial GFA quantum in relation the vision and proposals in the master plan. Excessive retail GFA will be a concern and will need to be justified rigorously in the light of concerns over the cannibalization of the retail market in other parts of the island, particularly in the heartland commercial areas as well as major retail districts in the city.

6.3 Repurposing of the existing facilities at STC Riding Centre

6.3.1 The existing facilities at the STC Riding Centre are to be repurposed to take on a wider range of equine related activities, including horseback riding and equine therapy. MDTs shall take note that the STC Riding Centre facilities will remain at its existing location. The Board is also unlikely to further invest significantly in its development as the facilities were purpose-built for holding the Youth Olympic Games in 2010 and there are enough stabling facilities to take in more horses from elsewhere. However, the MDTs are encouraged to propose appropriate strategies to integrate the Riding Centre physically with other public spaces and programmes in the Racecourse master plan.

6.3.2 Further details on the proposed repurposing of the existing facilities at the Riding Centre will be provided in Stage 2 RFP.

6.4 Transport planning requirements

6.4.1 The transport planning for the Racecourse redevelopment shall be fully integrated upfront as part of the Master Planning process, so that visitor access will be designed and incorporated as part of the overall visitor experience. Transport planning should adopt a balanced approach by catering for normal day traffic, while ensuring that visitor experience will not be compromised by additional traffic demands due to events such as major horse racing tournaments especially on weekends.

6.4.2 The Racecourse redevelopment should also be car-lite. The infrastructure and environment should be designed to encourage trips to be made via walk, cycle and/or public transport, especially during the development peak period. MDTs can also look at options for retaining/replacing car parking structures to optimize land use while taking into consideration life cycle costs of

infrastructure and practical constraints such as not disrupting racing operations during redevelopment.

6.5 Environment Sustainability

- 6.5.1 The Racecourse redevelopment should incorporate economically feasible and environmentally sustainable infrastructure and green features to minimize or reduce carbon footprint within the site. These should be integrated as part of the comprehensive design proposals for the site. Solutions to be considered could include, but are not limited to District Cooling System, on-site energy generation technologies such as solar farms, as well as animal waste-to-energy technologies.