

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT OPTIONS

4.1 SITE LOCATION

The proposed development site is approved by the *Pejabat Daerah dan Tanah Jerantut* is located on Lots PT4951 – PT4955 and PT4987 - PT4991 in Mukim Tembeling in the District of Jerantut, Pahang. The site can be easily accessed via a major road in the District of Jerantut. This will reduce management costs. It is also adjacent to an existing palm oil plantation and thus is compatible in terms of landuse in the surrounding environment.

The project site will share the nursery, other support facilities and amenities with the existing facilities in the adjoining oil palm plantation which is developed by THP Agro Management Sdn Bhd. The EIA reports for the existing TH oil palm plantations has been approved on 9th March 2017 ("Proposed Oil Palm Plantation Development on 1618.74 Hectares (4,000 acres) Land on PT 4858 and PT 4859 in Mukim Tembeling, District of Jerantut, Pahang Darul Makmur") and 2nd March 2018 ("Proposed Oil Palm Plantation Development on 2428.114 Hectares (6,000 acres) Land on PT 4856, PT 4857 and PT 4860 in Mukim Tembeling, District of Jerantut, Pahang Darul Makmur").

4.2 BUILT OPTION

The development of this Project will generate economic benefits by providing employment opportunities to the local community. Currently, many of the youngsters work outside of Jerantut because of limited job opportunities locally. This development will provide the impetus for the local people to work here and stay in their existing settlements and townships.

Developing the area from a no-activity area to an oil palm plantation would enhance efforts of the State to increase the value of the land. In addition, the local community will be able to participate in the economic development and benefit from the potential new employment and business opportunities. The development of this Project will also contribute towards the upgrading of facilities locally such as the construction of a bridge across Sg. Jelai which would ensure a safer and faster journey for the local people. With

the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, the least environmental impacts can be achieved during project development and operation.

Overall, the Project will uplift the quality of life of the people in the area which is a key issue in the sustainability platform. It is pertinent to note that growth of the oil palm industry has led to significant improvements in the social structure of rural communities which rely on plantations as a source of employment and income.

As such, the built option is better (than the “no project option”) as it balances economic and environmental considerations resulting in net benefits for the industry concerned, for the local people and also for the environment.

4.3 NO PROJECT OPTION

A “**No Project**” option will cause the project site to remain as a logged-over forest. There is possibility of encroachment into the land area for illegal development. This potentially can result in more damage to the environment since the activities are not properly planned and possibly will not be properly managed.

In terms of ecology, the logged-over forest will take 100 years to return as climax forest under natural conditions. Leaving the land idle is a step backward towards economic development. The local communities will not be able to participate in the potential economic development and there will be missed benefits in employment and business opportunities.

4.4 TECHNOLOGY, RAW MATERIALS, CONSTRUCTION METHOD AND OPERATION OPTIONS

THP have proven records in organizing favorable expansion and development of proven technologies in similar plantation projects since 1972 to date. They have developed about 32 oil palm plantations spread out throughout Malaysia. It is a product of a committed and dedicated management coupled with tried development alternative which have been adopted.

THP is steadfast in their responsibility to ensure conservation of high carbon stock in the development of new areas and minimizing undue deforestation activities. Beginning in April 1999, Asean countries have adopted a “Zero Burning Policy” and concurrently they have SOPs in place on land development and plantation operations which incorporate

strict guidelines on zero-burning at all their operations in Malaysia and Indonesia. Zero burning will minimize air pollution, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and promote ecological and economic sustainability. Other than that, THP has developed and implemented Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) guidelines in their plantations.

To enable more precise agricultural management (construction and operations), THP has deploy cutting-edge technology. Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) is being used to better plan and operate their plantations to minimize adverse environmental impacts.