

**SPEECH BY MR LAWRENCE WONG, MINISTER FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SECOND MINISTER FOR FINANCE, AT THE LAUNCH OF THE PUBLIC EXHIBITION ON JURONG LAKE GARDENS CENTRAL AND EAST ON 26 NOVEMBER 2016, 9.05AM, CANOPY @ J LINK**

Ms Grace Fu,  
Advisor for Yuhua Grassroots Organisations

Mr Kenneth Er  
CEO, NParks

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very good morning to all of you. I am happy to join you for the launch of the public exhibition on Jurong Lake Gardens Central and East.

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### **Our Jurong Lake Gardens**

2 At present, we have two national gardens. The first national garden we have is the Singapore Botanic Gardens.

That is our oldest national garden. It is more than 150 years old and is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The second national garden is Gardens by the Bay. It is a beautiful new garden, very modern looking and is also a very popular place.

3 Now, we will have a third national garden in the heartlands. It is Jurong Lake Gardens (JLG), right here in the Jurong community. We have been working on this for some time, engaging all of you with ideas and feedback, and I am very happy that the plans are now starting to take shape.

4 There are three parts to Jurong Lake Gardens – the West, Central, and East. The Western part is where we have started work first. We have engaged many of you in town hall sessions over the past year or so. We have received plenty of feedback, close to 18,000 suggestions, and we have incorporated them, and they have helped us to fine-tune plans for JLG West. The works for JLG West has started and will be

completed by 2018. By 2018, you will be able to see developments on JLG West, which is along Yuan Ching Road.

5 So, we've moved on to the Central and Eastern parts. In July this year, we short-listed 6 design consultants. They have engaged many of our residents here, and have taken in your feedback and suggestions. Today, we are very happy to present the winning design, and that is by our home-grown architectural firm, Liu & Wo Architects. This is their plan, on which they have worked together with all of you, and taken in your feedback. They have developed something beautiful for Jurong Lake Gardens Central, and East. I will describe some of the key features of their plans, and you can take a look at their exhibits later.

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6 I will highlight some of the key features, starting with the Central part. JLG Central is where we have the existing Chinese and Japanese Gardens today. These were built in the mid-70s. I think many of our Jurong residents would have fond

memories climbing up the Seven-storey Pagoda to see the skyline of Jurong. Some of you have taken your wedding photos at the Double Beauty Bridge that connects the Chinese Garden with the Japanese Garden. These are highlights which many residents and Singaporeans remember. But both the Chinese and Japanese Gardens are getting old. They are already more than 40 years old, and it is time for them to undergo a facelift.

7 So we will do the upgrading and renovation of the Central gardens, which includes the Chinese and Japanese Gardens. But in doing the work, many have also asked that we retain the familiar icons that hold special memories for us.

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8 So we will do so. We will take in that feedback, and we will retain not just the bridge and the pagoda, but we will also retain many other familiar features, like the Stone Boat, Tea House, Bonsai Garden and Japanese-style Rest Houses.

We will not just leave them the way they are, but we will make them even better. For instance, we will retain the pagoda, but create new spaces for park users to rest and enjoy nature near the pagoda. One highlight is a beautiful courtyard near the pagoda, which is surrounded on 3 sides by a 3-metre high waterfall. It is tranquil and the waterfall will create a cool environment.

9 As for the Bonsai Garden, we will retain that, but we will make it even better with a Hanging Bonsai Gate. Not only will you see Bonsai emerging from the ground, but you will also see bonsai suspended in mid-air. It would be an interesting experience.

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10 In addition, we will have Rest Houses which will be transformed into new indoor event spaces for the community to use. These are some of the aspects which we are both retaining and enhancing.

11 We have also taken in other feedback for upgrading works. Many of you have asked for more public spaces for the community to bond, and to celebrate festivals and big community events.

12 That is why we envisage a large outdoor lawn at the northern edge of JLG Central, near the Stone Boat. This lawn can cater for up to 7,000 visitors. It will be a new community space, and very large-scale events can be held there. It will be a new focal point for the community.

13 Other residents also asked for more F&B spaces so that they can eat with their family while enjoying the Gardens.

Therefore, we are planning for 4 F&B outlets which will be located at different parts of JLG Central. These F&B outlets will be designed to fit into the garden surroundings. For example, one idea was to have a restaurant which serves fresh vegetables harvested straight from the gardens.

14 But a garden is not just about activities, it is also about connecting with nature. The Gardens are sanctuaries for many birds. In fact, in the 60s, the entire area was a native swamp forest.

15 Quite a few of you asked that we conserve and enhance the habitats for our precious biodiversity. In particular, Chen Wah, an avid birdwatcher suggested that we restore the swamp forest and install nest boxes. We think this suggestion is very important and will do so. We will make the restored swamp forest into a trail to bring people closer to nature, and we will make sure that the biodiversity in the area is preserved.

16 This is what we envisage JLG Central to be. It will be a good mix of community and nature. In addition, it will be a good blend of something familiar, with many new elements which are exciting and fresh. I think that we can make JLG, combining the existing Chinese and Japanese Gardens, into something very exciting.

17 JLG East is a new development. Today, JLG East is mostly a grass patch. But in future, we will make JLG East a waterfront promenade, which families can stroll along in the evenings when the sun sets.

18 In addition, we want to create places where young people can gather with friends. For example, there can be a Skate Park for our youths at the northern tip of JLG East. There will be a waterfront amphitheatre for concerts, performances and events, and further down, you will find the new Science Centre. It will be a major attraction. Around the new Science Centre, we will create new discovery trails, where people can go beyond the Science Centre to explore nature, and discover science outdoors. Therefore, JLG East will develop in the next phase and it will be something interesting to watch and experience.

19 Finally, we will try to bring together all of this together with better connectivity, as JLG spans a very large area. We are looking at ways to make it easier to get around.

20 We will have more bridges and more pathways to connect to the different areas, be it JLG West, Central, or East. We are also looking at options for people-mover systems, to help Singaporeans get from the MRT into the Gardens and to connect people within the Gardens. They are particularly important as we want JLG to be an inclusive place, not only for families with young children, but for our seniors and the wheelchair-bound.

21 Finally, we are also studying how to connect the Gardens around the perimeter, such that the Western, Central, and Eastern parts can be connected in one big circle.

22 The only part that is missing is a plot of land, which is now the Jurong Country Club. But in the future, it will be the location of the High Speed Rail Terminus that connects to Kuala Lumpur. That is the part which is being developed, and as we develop this, we will try to connect the green perimeter, so from the West, Central, and East, you can walk, jog, and cycle

around the entire JLG perimeter. That is about 6km long, and it would be a very exciting new area for people to explore as well.

23 These are some of the ideas that we have come up with after hearing from all of you. They are not set in stone. The next step is to refine the design and turn it from paper into reality.

24 We will continue to involve you, our residents, grassroots leaders and people from the community, and our stakeholders and partners. I hope everyone can share your ideas and vote for the features that you would like to see at JLG Central and East at the exhibition.

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25 Beyond this exhibition, NParks will also hold more townhalls and roving exhibitions in the coming months. So if you have family or friends who are unable to make it for this particular exhibition, encourage them to join the subsequent townhall sessions that are being organised, or share your ideas

through the JLG website. There is also an interactive feature where people can participate and give their feedback.

26 I hope all of you are as excited about JLG as I am. As I said, JLG will be our third national garden. We look forward to something beautiful, exciting, and something that all Singaporeans can be very proud of. Ultimately, we want to create a wonderful place which all of us can enjoy, and create even more memories together.

27 Thank you and have an enjoyable weekend ahead.

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