

TOWN PLANNING BOARD

Minutes of 723rd Meeting of the Metro Planning Committee held at 9:00 a.m. on 28.7.2023

Present

Director of Planning
Mr C.K. Yip

Chairman

Mr Wilson Y.W. Fung

Vice-chairman

Mr Franklin Yu

Mr Stanley T.S. Choi

Mr Daniel K.S. Lau

Ms Lilian S.K. Law

Mr Ricky W.Y. Yu

Professor Roger C.K. Chan

Mr Timothy K.W. Ma

Ms Bernadette W.S. Tsui

Assistant Commissioner/Urban, Transport Department
Mr. Chow Bing Kay

Chief Engineer (Works), Home Affairs Department
Mr Paul Y.K. Au

Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Territory South),
Environmental Protection Department
Miss Queenie Y.C. Ng

Assistant Director/Regional 1,
Lands Department
Ms Trevina C.W. Kung

Deputy Director of Planning/District
Ms Lily Y.M. Yam

Secretary

Absent with Apologies

Ms Sandy H.Y. Wong

Professor Jonathan W.C. Wong

Mr Ben S.S. Lui

In Attendance

Chief Town Planner/Town Planning Board
Ms Josephine Y.M. Lo

Town Planner/Town Planning Board
Mr Timothy T.C. Kau

Agenda Item 1

Confirmation of the Draft Minutes of the 722nd MPC Meeting held on 14.7.2023

[Open Meeting]

1. The draft minutes of the 722nd MPC meeting held on 14.7.2023 were confirmed without amendments.

Agenda Item 2

Matter Arising

[Open Meeting]

2. The Secretary reported that there were no matters arising.

Kowloon District

Agenda Item 3

Section 12A Application

[Open Meeting (Presentation and Question Sessions Only)]

Y/K10/5 Application for Amendment to the Draft Ma Tau Kok Outline Zoning Plan No. S/K10/29, To amend the building height restriction on a “Government, Institution or Community” site at 222 Argyle Street in Kowloon City from 5 storeys to 80 metres above Principal Datum, 222 Argyle Street, Kowloon City, Kowloon
(MPC Paper No. Y/K10/5B)

Presentation and Question Sessions

3. The following representatives from the Planning Department (PlanD), and the applicant’s representatives were invited to the meeting at this point:

PlanD

Ms Vivian M.F. Lai	-	District Planning Officer/Kowloon (DPO/K)
Ms Jenny M.C. Ngan	-	Town Planner/Kowloon (TP/K)

Applicant’s Representatives

Evangel Hospital	-	Dr Lin Tat Pang
	-	Ir Ho Wing Ip
	-	Dr Chui Siu Hang, Billy
	-	Mr Lim Wan Fung, Bernard Vincent
Townland Consultants Limited	-	Ms Delius Wong
OZZO Technolgy (Hong Kong) Limited	-	Mr Dickson Poon

4. The Chairman extended a welcome and explained the procedures of the meeting. He then invited PlanD's representatives to brief Members on the background of the application.

5. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Ms Jenny M.C. Ngan, TP/K, briefed Members on the background of the application, the proposed rezoning of the application site (the Site), departmental and public comments, and the planning considerations and assessments as detailed in the Paper. PlanD had no objection to the application.

6. The Chairman then invited the applicant's representatives to elaborate on the application. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Dr Lin Tat Pang, Ir Ho Wing Ip, Dr Chui Siu Hang, Billy and Ms Delius Wong, the applicant's representatives, made the following main points:

Background

- (a) the Evangel Hospital (the Hospital) was founded in 1950s as a medical ministry, with a mission to preach gospel through holistic, high quality and affordable healthcare services;
- (b) the existing hospital building at the Site was completed in 1965 and had served Kowloon City District for over half a century;
- (c) the Hospital was a licenced, self-financing and non-profit-making private hospital, dedicated to provide professional family medicine services which emphasized primary, preventive, continuing and holistic care. It served about 70,000 to 80,000 patients a year, with 90% as outpatients;

Justifications for the Proposed Redevelopment

- (d) the proposed redevelopment would increase the number of hospital beds and operating theatres, as well as the capacity of out-patient services, which was in line with the Government's policy initiatives for enhancing healthcare services and providing more healthcare options. The Health

Bureau had provided policy support to the proposed redevelopment;

- (e) the existing hospital building was subject to various constraints, including limited floor space, scattered service locations and insufficient infrastructural support (e.g. electricity supply) for installation of the latest medical equipments. The proposed redevelopment was the best option to overcome these constraints;
- (f) the proposed redevelopment would enhance the provision of healthcare services by facilitating the upgrading of hardware to higher infection control standards after the COVID-19 pandemic and the implementation of smart hospital initiatives (e.g. introduction of tele-consultation and remote monitoring technologies);
- (g) the proposed redevelopment would facilitate the Hospital's collaboration with other non-government organisations (NGOs) which provided services to the underprivileged groups (e.g. mentally handicapped persons in need of dental surgeries);

Proposed Amendment and the Indicative Scheme

- (h) the proposed relaxation of the building height restriction (BHR) for the Site from 5 storeys to 80mPD was compatible with the BHRs of the nearby residential zones. Besides, there were two existing residential developments in the vicinity (i.e. the Montebello and ForFar), with building heights of more than 100mPD;
- (i) a number of planning and design merits were proposed in the indicative scheme, including a 6m wide full-height setback from Argyle Street, a 6m wide tower setback above podium level from Fu Ning Street, an all-weather canopy and street plantings fronting Argyle Street, and a circulation splay at the junction of Fu Ning Street and Fuk Cheung Street, with a view to improving pedestrian circulation, streetscape amenity and visual permeability;

- (j) an overall minimum 20% green coverage would be achieved by the provision of edge planting, roof top greening and vertical greening; and

Way Forward

- (k) should the application be agreed by the Committee, the Hospital would proceed with the corresponding fund raising programme and lease modification procedure for the proposed redevelopment.

7. As the presentations of PlanD's representatives and the applicant's representatives had been completed, the Chairman invited questions from Members.

Land Matters

8. The Vice-chairman raised the following questions:

- (a) the relationship between the applicant and the 'current land owner' of the Site; and
- (b) noting that the land lease of the Site would expire in year 2038, whether the applicant had taken into consideration such factor when initiating the redevelopment proposal.

9. In response, Ir Ho Wing Ip, the applicant's representative, made the following main points:

- (a) the Hospital and the Association of Evangelical Free Churches of Hong Kong (the 'current land owner' of the Site) were established under the same parent organisation. The applicant had obtained consent from the 'current land owner' for the application. In the forthcoming lease modification stage, consideration would be given to transferring ownership of the Site to the Hospital; and
- (b) the applicant was aware that the land lease of the Site would expire in 2038,

soon after the estimated completion of the proposed redevelopment in 2028. In view of that, the applicant would start liaising with the Lands Department on the extension of lease as soon as the application was agreed by the Committee.

Healthcare Services of the Hospital

10. Some Members raised the following questions:
 - (a) the positioning of the Hospital and the specific healthcare services or pricing for the underprivileged;
 - (b) the estimated service capacity of the Hospital after the proposed redevelopment;
 - (c) whether the Hospital had collaborated with other hospitals to provide healthcare services for the public;
 - (d) the details of the Hospital's collaboration with the NGO which provided dental services for persons with intellectual disability; and
 - (e) the interim arrangement for provision of healthcare services during the construction of the proposed redevelopment.

11. In response, Dr Chui Siu Hang, Billy, the applicant's representative, made the following main points:
 - (a) the Hospital was dedicated to provide affordable outpatient services and inpatient services of short length of stay (average about 1.5 to 2 days). To support the underprivileged groups, the Hospital offered discounts for senior patients (e.g. 10% discount for outpatient services and drug items) and the patients referred by the Hospital Authority (HA) (e.g. 40% to 50% discount for radiation therapy services). The Hospital also offered packaged rates for various healthcare services in accordance with the

Government's requirements;

- (b) as compared with the current service capacity of 70,000 to 80,000 patients per year, with the increased number of hospital beds, operating theatres and endoscopy rooms and longer operation hours of the outpatient clinic in the proposed redevelopment, the service capacity of the Hospital was estimated to be doubled;
- (c) in private healthcare sector, individual doctors would recommend treatments for their patients and seek collaboration with suitable private hospitals by their professional judgement. With the enhanced services (e.g. introduction of new high-dependency unit) after the proposed redevelopment, the Hospital could provide more treatment options for the private doctors to choose from. Under the Public-Private Partnership programme, the Hospital collaborated with the HA during the COVID-19 pandemic by reserving 15% of its hospital beds for patients transferred from public hospitals;
- (d) the Hospital was the only private hospital collaborating with one NGO which was dedicated to provide dental services for persons with intellectual disability. The Hospital provided operating theatres, anaesthesia services and intensive care to facilitate the dental surgeries; and
- (e) the Hospital would identify suitable off-site location(s) to continue most of its services during the construction of the proposed redevelopment. With digitalised medical records, it was expected that the outpatient services could be relocated to other locations seamlessly during the construction period. The Hospital would also consider setting up an interim centre for day surgeries.

Potential Impacts on the Surrounding Area

12. The Chairman and some Members raised the following questions:

- (a) given the public concerns regarding the potential visual and noise impacts, safety of students during the construction and the future treatment of medical wastes, whether there were any mitigation measures planned in the proposed redevelopment; and
- (b) how the neighbourhood would be engaged during the planning and construction of the proposed redevelopment.

13. In response, Ir Ho Wing Ip and Mr Lim Wan Fung, Bernard Vincent, the applicant's representatives, made the following main points:

- (a) advanced construction method like Modular Integrated Construction would be explored to reduce nuisances to the surrounding environment during the construction period. Setbacks, corner splay and landscaping were proposed in the indicative scheme with a view to bringing improvements to the neighbourhood. The applicant would explore opportunities to introduce more greening and visually-permeable designs at the detailed design stage for further enhancement. The medical waste of the Hospital would be handled by the dedicated contractor without using the nearby public refuse collection vehicle space; and
- (b) while there was no strong objection from the neighbourhood, the applicant would closely liaise with the nearby schools and residential developments (e.g. Hoover Court) through regular meetings and newsletters in the future.

The Indicative Scheme

14. A Member enquired whether there was any all-weather feature proposed in the indicative scheme to facilitate patients commuting to the hospital on foot or by public transport. In response, Mr. Lim Wan Fung, Bernard Vincent, the applicant's representative said that a 4m wide all-weather canopy was proposed along the setback area fronting Argyle Street to provide shelter for the visitors and the public. The applicant would explore opportunities to improve the pedestrian environment, in particular the frontage along Fu Ning Street, at the detailed design stage.

Building Height Restriction and Development Intensity

15. In response to Members' enquiries on the background of the BHR at the Site and its surrounding area, Ms Vivian M.F. Lai, DPO/K, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, said that most of the existing buildings in the vicinity of the Site were about 40mPD in height, since the area was subject to the Airport Height Restriction (AHR) before the relocation of the ex-Kai Tak Airport. BHRs had been imposed to the area under the Ma Tau Kok Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) since 2008. For residential zones, a BHR of 80mPD was imposed to the sites along/to the north of Argyle Street whilst a higher BHR of 100mPD was imposed to those to the further south, forming a stepped building height profile in the area. For "Government, Institution or Community" ("G/IC") sites, BHRs were imposed mainly to reflect their existing building heights (i.e. 5 storeys for the Site). According to the Notes of the OZP, minor relaxation of BHR in "G/IC" zone might be considered by the Town Planning Board (TPB) on application based on individual merits. The Chairman supplemented that the imposition of BHRs in 2008 was to take forward the comprehensive building height review by PlanD to take into account the relaxation of AHR after the relocation of the ex-Kai Tak Airport.

16. Noting the acute demand for healthcare services and that there existed high-rise existing/planned developments in the vicinity of the Site, a Member enquired whether the applicant would consider pursuing a higher building height (say, up to 100mPD) for the proposed redevelopment at the Site. In response, Ir. Ho Wing Ip, the applicant's representative said that subject to PlanD's views, the applicant could explore higher building height for the proposed redevelopment to provide more floor space for healthcare services. Ms Vivian M.F. Lai, DPO/K, said that the applicant could consider submitting to the TPB application for a higher BHR for the Site in future. However, any development proposal should be compatible with the surrounding environment and substantiated by relevant technical assessments. Under the current application, the relevant technical assessments were conducted based on the indicative scheme with a building height of 80mPD. The Chairman supplemented that should the application be agreed by the Committee and reflected on the OZP, there was established mechanism, including application for minor relaxation under section 16 and rezoning application under section 12A of the Town Planning Ordinance (TPO), for the applicant to apply for a higher BHR in the future. Since there was no relevant technical assessment available to substantiate a higher BHR at the moment, it was

pre-mature for the Committee to consider a BHR deviating from the proposed 80mPD under the current application.

17. As the applicant's representatives had no further points to raise and there were no further questions from Members, the Chairman informed the applicant's representatives that the hearing procedure of the application had been completed and the Committee would deliberate on the application in their absence and inform the applicant of the Committee's decision in due course. The Chairman thanked PlanD's and the applicant's representatives for attending the meeting. They left the meeting at this point.

[Mr Daniel K.S. Lau left the meeting during the question and answer session.]

Deliberation Session

18. The Chairman remarked that 'Hospital' use was always permitted within the subject "G/IC" zone, and the current application was for proposed relaxation of the BHR from 5 storeys to 80mPD at the Site. The Secretary for Health provided in-principle support to the application and the concerned departments had no adverse comment on the proposed redevelopment. Should the Committee agree to the rezoning application, the proposed amendment to the OZP would be submitted to the Committee for consideration prior to gazetting and the statutory plan making process would be undertaken in accordance with the TPO.

19. With regard to a Member's comment that there might be room for further increase of BHR at the Site, the Chairman said that should the applicant decide to pursue a higher BHR for the proposed redevelopment in the future after the BHR of the Site had been amended, the applicant could submit a minor relaxation application or a rezoning application together with the relevant technical assessments for the consideration of the Committee.

20. Members generally considered that the application could be agreed on the grounds that the Hospital had been contributing to the community through provision of healthcare services, especially for the underprivileged groups, and the proposed redevelopment with relaxed BH could facilitate efficient utilization of valuable land resources and meet the acute demand for healthcare services. While supporting the

application, a Member opined that the Hospital could consider having more collaborations with other hospitals to diversify and enhance the medical services for their patients and to support the long-term running of the Hospital.

21. After deliberation, the Committee decided to agree to the application. The proposed amendment to the Ma Tau Kok OZP would be submitted to the Committee for agreement prior to its gazetting under the Ordinance.

[Mr Franklin Yu joined the meeting at this point.]

[Ms Vivian M.F. Lai, DPO/K, and Ms Janet S.Y. Wong, TP/K, were invited to the meeting at this point.]

Agenda Item 4

Section 16 Application

[Open Meeting (Presentation and Question Sessions Only)]

A/K9/281 Proposed Public Utility Installation (Dry Weather Flow Interceptor) in “Open Space” Zone, Open Space at Kin Wan Street, Hung Hom, Kowloon
(MPC Paper No. A/K9/281A)

22. The Secretary reported that the application site (the Site) was located in Hung Hom. Mr Stanley T.S. Choi had declared an interest on the item for owning a property in Hung Hom. As the property owned by Mr Choi had no direct view of the Site, the Committee agreed that he could stay in the meeting.

Presentation and Question Sessions

23. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Ms Janet S.Y. Wong, TP/K, briefed Members on the background of the application, the proposed development, departmental and public comments, and the planning considerations and assessments as detailed in the Paper. The Planning Department had no objection to the application.

24. Some Members raised the following questions:
- (a) noting that some of the dry weather flow interceptor (DWFI) facilities would be above ground at the Site, forming part of a planned open space, whether the future open space could fulfil the relevant guidelines in respect of site coverage and building height for public open space;
 - (b) why the size and footprint of the above-ground DWFI facilities were smaller than those of the proposed DWFI in the Victoria Park under the recently approved application No. A/H8/437;
 - (c) why movable pot planters were adopted as the landscape treatment for the above-ground DWFI facilities; and
 - (d) the maintenance responsibility of the landscape planting within the Site.
25. In response, Ms Vivian M.F. Lai, DPO/K, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, made the following main points:
- (a) given the small footprint of the above-ground DWFI facilities, the future open space could still fulfil the guideline on site coverage (i.e. maximum 10% for district open space) as specified in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines. The low-rise DWFI facilities with a building height of one storey (absolute height of 1.5m to 4.35m) were also considered compatible with the future open space;
 - (b) as compared with the proposed DWFI in the Victoria Park with all facilities located at the same site, the filtering station of the proposed DWFI under the subject application was located off-site, i.e. within a “Government, Institution or Community” zone to the northwest of the Site. Only the flow interception device (FID) and the electrical and mechanical kiosk would be located within the Site. As such, the size and footprint of the above-ground DWFI facilities within the future open space where the Site was located could be minimised;

- (c) given that most parts of the FID needed to be made openable for future routine inspection and maintenance by the Drainage Services Department (DSD), movable pot planters were proposed as landscape treatment for the FID with a view to allowing flexibility for such purpose. The detailed design of the landscape treatments would be formulated by DSD and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) and it was intended to integrate the proposed DWFI facilities with the future open space as far as practicable; and
- (d) the DWFI facilities would be maintained by DSD and the landscape planting of the future open space (including the Site) would be maintained by LCSD.

Deliberation Session

26. The Chairman remarked that the proposed development was supported by the Environment and Ecological Bureau from the water quality management perspective as it was conducive to enhancing the quality of the coastal waters of the Victoria Harbour. Relevant departments had no adverse comment on the proposed development. While the proposed development would occupy a minor portion of a planned open space, the size and footprint of the above-ground DWFI facilities were relatively small and the proposed DWFI could benefit the community by alleviating the pollution and odour problems at the Hung Hom waterfront.

27. Members generally supported the proposed development and considered that the proposal had struck a proper balance between the public interests of improving water quality and the interests of the future open space users. The applicant had also demonstrated efforts to minimise impact on the future open space. While supporting the application, a Member said that the relevant departments should explore opportunity to make further improvement at the detailed design stage in order to better integrate the above-ground DWFI facilities with the future open space in terms of visual and accessibility aspects. The Chairman said that PlanD would convey the Member's concern to the relevant departments for consideration, as appropriate.

28. After deliberation, the Committee decided to approve the application, on the terms of the application as submitted to the Town Planning Board (TPB). The permission should be valid until 28.7.2027, and after the said date, the permission should cease to have effect unless before the said date, the development permitted was commenced or the permission was renewed. The permission was subject to the following condition :

“the submission and implementation of fire service installations and water supplies for fire fighting to the satisfaction of the Director of Fire Services or of the TPB.”

29. The Committee also agreed to advise the applicant to note the advisory clauses as set out at Appendix III of the Paper.

[The Chairman thanked Ms Vivian M.F. Lai, DPO/K, and Ms Janet S.Y. Wong, TP/K, for their attendance to answer Members' enquiries. They left the meeting at this point.]

Agenda Item 5

Any Other Business

30. There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 10:25 a.m..