

TOWN PLANNING BOARD

**Minutes of 762nd Meeting of the
Metro Planning Committee held at 9:00 a.m. on 28.3.2025**

Present

Director of Planning
Mr C.K. Yip

Chairperson

Ms Sandy H.Y. Wong

Vice-chairperson

Professor Jonathan W.C. Wong

Mr Ricky W.Y. Yu

Mr Ben S.S. Lui

Professor Bernadette W.S. Tsui

Ms Kelly Y.S. Chan

Dr Tony C.M. Ip

Professor Simon K.L. Wong

Mr Derrick S.M. Yip

Assistant Commissioner/Urban,
Transport Department
Mr B.K. Chow

Chief Engineer (Works),
Home Affairs Department
Mr Bond C.P. Chow

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

Assistant Director/Regional 1,
Lands Department
Ms Catherine W.S. Pang

Deputy Director of Planning/District
Ms Donna Y.P. Tam

Secretary

Absent with Apologies

Mr Stanley T.S. Choi

Professor Roger C.K. Chan

In Attendance

Assistant Director of Planning/Board
Ms Caroline T.Y. Tang

Chief Town Planner/Town Planning Board
Mr Jeff K.C. Ho

Town Planner/Town Planning Board
Mr Jack H. Lau

Agenda Item 1

Confirmation of the Draft Minutes of the 761st MPC Meeting held on 14.3.2025

[Open Meeting]

1. The draft minutes of the 761st MPC meeting held on 14.3.2025 were confirmed without amendment.

Agenda Item 2

Matters Arising

[Open Meeting]

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

Deferral Cases

Section 16 Applications

[Open Meeting (Presentation and Question Sessions only)]

Presentation and Question Sessions

3. The Committee noted that there were two cases requesting the Town Planning Board to defer consideration of the applications. Details of the requests for deferral, Member's declaration of interest for a case and the Committee's views on the declared interest were in **Annex 1**.

Deliberation Session

4. After deliberation, the Committee decided to defer decisions on the applications as requested by the applicants pending submission of further information, as recommended in the Papers.

Case for Streamlining Arrangement

Section 16 Application

[Open Meeting (Presentation and Question Sessions only)]

Presentation and Question Sessions

5. The Committee noted that there was one case selected for streamlining arrangement and the Planning Department had no objection to the application. Details of the planning application were in **Annex 2**.

Deliberation Session

6. After deliberation, the Committee decided to approve the application on the terms of the application as submitted to the Town Planning Board subject to the approval conditions stated in the Paper. The Committee also agreed to advise the applicant to note the advisory clauses as set out in the appendix of the Paper.

Tsuen Wan and West Kowloon District

[Mr Michael K.K. Cheung, Senior Town Planner/Tsuen Wan and West Kowloon (STP/TWK) and Mr Frankie H.C. Tsang, Town Planner/Tsuen Wan and West Kowloon (TP/TWK), were invited to the meeting at this point.]

Agenda Item 3

Section 16 Application

[Open Meeting (Presentation and Question Sessions only)]

A/TW/538	Proposed Social Welfare Facility (Residential Care Home for the Elderly) in “Village Type Development” Zone, Lots 1211 RP (Part) and 1215 RP (Part) and Adjoining Government Land in D.D. 451, Lo Wai, Tsuen Wan (MPC Paper No. A/TW/538B)
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Presentation and Question Sessions

7. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Michael K.K. Cheung, STP/TWK, 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 (PlanD) had no objection to the application.

[Ms Sandy H.Y. Wong joined the meeting during the presentation session.]

Proposed Scheme

8. Some Members raised the following questions:
- (a) the number of trees to be felled and new trees to be planted within the application site (the Site); and
 - (b) whether the private lots surrounded by the proposed residential care home for the elderly (RCHE) were owned by the applicant, and any known development plan for those private lots.
9. With the aid of some PowerPoint slides, Mr Michael K.K. Cheung, STP/TWK, made the following main points:
- (a) five new trees would be planted within the Site to compensate for the five existing trees to be felled within the government land of the Site; and
 - (b) Lots 40, 41 and 42 in D.D. 451, falling within the same “Village Type Development” (“V”) zone as the Site, were surrounded by the proposed RCHE and owned by the applicant. According to the applicant, three New Territories Exempted Houses (NTEHs), which were always permitted in the “V” zone of the Tsuen Wan Outline Zoning Plan (OZP), would be built on those lots. The NTEH applications were being processed by the Lands Department (LandsD) under the land administration regime. The proposed NTEH development aimed to promote “intergenerational co-living” in which the younger generation would live in the NTEHs near the elderly in the proposed RCHE.

Developments within the “V” Zone

10. The Vice-chairperson and some Members raised the following questions:
- (a) the building height (BH) of the developments in the subject “V” zone and other government, institution and community (GIC) developments near the

subject “V” zone;

- (b) how PlanD estimated the amount of land available for Small House development in Lo Wai to meet the six outstanding Small House applications and the 10-year Small House demand forecast of 170 for Lo Wai;
- (c) whether the possibility of granting planning permission for a proposed columbarium development in Tung Po Tor Monastery (the Monastery) via an upcoming planning application, as mentioned in the Monastery’s public comment, would be affected if the proposed RCHE at the Site was approved; and
- (d) whether there was BH restriction (BHR) for Column 2 uses in the “V” zone.

11. With the aid of some PowerPoint slides, Mr Michael K.K. Cheung, STP/TWK, made the following main points:

- (a) NTEH developments within the subject “V” zone were subject to a maximum BH of 3 storeys (8.23m). A GIC development in the vicinity, namely the Western Monastery, had a 9-storey pagoda. The proposed RCHE development with 8 storeys (excluding 2-storey basement) was considered not incompatible with the surroundings;
- (b) in general, PlanD estimated the amount of land available in a “V” zone with reference to aerial photos and information collected during site visits by excluding areas such as steep slope and major tree clusters. Based on the latest estimate, about 1.5 ha of land, equivalent to 60 Small House sites, was available within the subject “V” zone, which was sufficient to meet the six outstanding Small House applications. In assessing the Small House demand under the more cautious approach formally adopted by Town Planning Board (the Board) since August 2015, more weighting should be put on the number of outstanding Small House applications being processed by LandsD as the 10-year Small House demand forecast provided by the village representatives could not be verified;

- (c) many factors should be considered in granting planning permission for a columbarium development, including its traffic impact and land use compatibility with its surrounding environment and developments, etc. Each application would be considered on its own merits. The approval of the proposed RCHE development would not imply that the application for columbarium to be submitted by the Monastery would be rejected; and
- (d) according to the Notes of the Tsuen Wan OZP, certain Column 2 uses, including 'Social Welfare Facility' and 'School', under the "V" zone were not subject to BHR.

Air Quality Impact from Nearby Development

12. Some Members raised the following questions:
- (a) given that the Monastery nearby objected to the application, how the three joss paper burners at the Monastery could be relocated as proposed by the applicant;
 - (b) the potential air quality impact of the joss paper burners at the Monastery on the proposed RCHE;
 - (c) in case the joss paper burners at the Monastery could not be relocated, whether the RCHE could still be developed; and
 - (d) whether any air quality mitigation measures would be implemented within the Site.
13. With the aid of some PowerPoint slides, Mr Michael K.K. Cheung, STP/TWK, made the following main points:
- (a) the applicant had conducted a survey on the usage of joss paper burners and had engaged in discussion with the Monastery to explore the possibility of

either terminating or relocating the joss paper burners. The applicant proposed to relocate the joss paper burners to a location 50m away from other existing and planned air sensitive receivers. The relocated joss paper burners would also be equipped with electrostatic precipitator and water scrubber before the population intake of the proposed RCHE development;

- (b) the use of joss paper burners was monitored by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) under relevant guidelines. According to the records, only one complaint was received by EPD relating to the use of joss paper burners in the Monastery and the complaint had been resolved. Significant air quality impact on the proposed RCHE was not anticipated;
- (c) as the relocation proposal of joss paper burners was also beneficial to the Monastery, it was likely to be accepted. Even if the removal or relocation proposal could not be implemented, the applicant would be required to submit a revised air quality impact assessment and implement the identified mitigation measures to the satisfaction of EPD to ensure that there would be no adverse air quality impact. Relevant approval condition was recommended; and
- (d) according to the applicant, air purification system would be installed in the RCHE.

Public Consultation

14. Noting the relatively large number of objecting public comments, a Member enquired whether public consultation was conducted by the applicant. In response, Mr Michael K.K. Cheung, STP/TWK, said that according to the applicant, they had liaised with the Monastery on issues relating to the access arrangement and relocation of joss paper burners. There was no information provided by the applicant in relation to liaison with other members of the public.

Provision of RCHE in Tsuen Wan

15. A Member raised the following questions:

- (a) the overall provision of RCHEs in Tsuen Wan in view of the trend of ageing population; and
- (b) information on other recent planning applications for RCHE development in Tsuen Wan and the number of beds provided.

16. With the aid of some PowerPoint slides, Mr Michael K.K. Cheung, STP/TWK, made the following main points:

- (a) the planned provision of beds in RCHE was calculated based on a population estimate in consultation with the Social Welfare Department (SWD). According to the records, there was a surplus of RCHE beds in Tsuen Wan Planning Scheme Area which could also help address the deficit in Tsuen Wan West Planning Scheme Area; and
- (b) there was a rezoning application (No. Y/TW/19) with proposed RCHE development approved by the Committee on 24.1.2025, which would provide 328 beds.

17. In response to a Member's follow-up question, Mr Michael K.K. Cheung, STP/TWK, said that the planned population for estimating the required provision of RCHE beds would be updated from time to time.

18. The Chairperson supplemented that the provision of RCHE was subject to SWD's policy and assessment and PlanD would reserve suitable sites for the purpose. SWD had adopted a multi-pronged approach to increase the supply of RCHE and other social welfare facilities, including incorporating the requirements in land sale sites and public housing developments, and purchasing private properties in the market to provide social welfare facilities. In general, the provision of social welfare facilities was assessed by SWD in a wider context and the planned provision of GIC facilities would be based on the estimated population in the long term.

Access Arrangement

19. Some Members raised the following questions:
- (a) noting from the public comments that the Monastery, which owned part of the access road to the Site, raised strong objection to the application, whether the access to the proposed RCHE would be affected, in particular for emergency vehicles;
 - (b) details of the right-of-way (ROW) reserved within the Site for public access to the Monastery;
 - (c) whether access would be reserved for the lots (i.e. Lots 40, 41 and 42 in D.D. 451) surrounded by the Site; and
 - (d) the frequency of shuttle bus services and the location of loading and unloading bay for shuttle bus within the Site.
20. In response, Mr Michael K.K. Cheung, STP/TWK, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, made the following main points:
- (a) according to the lease condition of Lot 1240 RP (i.e. the Monastery), the owner of the lot should permit the public, with and without vehicles, at all times to pass and repass over and along the access road. Enforcement action would be taken by LandsD if a breach of the lease condition was detected;
 - (b) a ROW was reserved in the eastern part the Site for the public to gain access to the Monastery as proposed by the applicant. The issue would be dealt with during the land exchange application stage;
 - (c) a shared access would be provided to the concerned lots, i.e. Lots 40, 41 and 42 in D.D. 451. The issue would also be dealt with during the land exchange application stage; and

- (d) during Ching Ming and Chung Yeung festivals when Lo Wai Road was closed, shuttle bus services to and from Tsuen Wan West Station would be provided by the applicant for public access to the proposed RCHE. The 29-seater shuttle bus would operate at 20-minute intervals from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. during the festive periods. The arrangement had been agreed by the Transport Department. The loading and unloading bay for shuttle bus was proposed in the eastern part of the Site.

[Professor Bernadette W.S. Tsui joined the meeting during the question and answer session.]

Deliberation Session

21. The Chairperson recapitulated that the Site was located within the “V” zone which was primarily intended for development of Small Houses by indigenous villagers. The major considerations for the application included whether there was sufficient land within the “V” zone for Small House development, its compatibility with the surroundings in terms of land use and BH, the access arrangement and air quality issues relating to the joss paper burners at the Monastery.

22. A Member had reservation on the application and expressed that while the technical issues including the ROW and air quality might be resolvable, ‘Social Welfare Facility’ was a Column 2 use under the “V” zone, which might give rise to land use compatibility issue. Besides, as the future NTEHs would be surrounded by the Site, the layout of the proposed RCHE development might need to be improved to address the interface issues. Noting the strong objection from the Monastery owning part of the access road, another Member was concerned about the access to the Site and considered that such issue might not be resolved practically.

23. At the invitation of the Chairperson, Ms Catherine W.S. Pang, Assistant Director/Regional 1, LandsD said that the Monastery should permit the public to pass through its land being part of the local access road under the lease. Enforcement action would be taken by LandsD as appropriate if the lease condition was not complied with.

24. Regarding the joss paper burners at the Monastery, Miss Queenie Y.C. Ng, Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Territory South), EPD said that the use of joss paper burners of the Monastery complied with relevant regulations. It was noted that the applicant of the RCHE development had liaised with the Monastery to relocate the joss paper burners to a more remote location away from the Site. The implementation of this proposal was yet to be confirmed. It was recommended that an approval condition be imposed requiring the submission of a revised air quality impact assessment and implementation of identified mitigation measures, which could cater for the situation in case the three joss paper burners could not be relocated. In that regard, EPD would work with the applicant to identify alternative solutions to mitigate the air quality impact, such as installation of air filtering system in the proposed RCHE.

25. A Member said that in view of the growing demand for RCHE in an ageing society, the application could be supported as the air quality impact of the joss paper burners could be resolved or mitigated. The Chairperson remarked that if the applicant failed to comply with the approval condition regarding the implementation of identified environmental mitigation measures, the planning permission would be revoked. In the absence of planning permission, PlanD would raise objection to the building plans of the proposed RCHE development.

26. In response to a Member's question on the BHR for non-house developments in the "V" zone, the Chairperson explained that the BHR of 3 storeys in the "V" zone was mainly for NTEHs. According to the planning intention for the "V" zone on the OZP, commercial, community and recreational uses may be permitted on application to the Board. Although there was no BHR for some Column 2 uses, such as 'Social Welfare Facility' and 'School', these uses required planning permission from the Board. When viewed from a wider context, the proposed RCHE was considered not incompatible with the surroundings.

27. The Vice-chairperson and majority of Members supported the application, having regard to the following considerations:

- (a) the air quality impact of the nearby joss paper burners was resolvable and would be controlled under relevant regulations;
- (b) the Monastery was required to provide the ROW to the Site under the lease;

- (c) LandsD would take enforcement action as appropriate if ROW requirement was not complied with; and
- (d) while the Site might not be most suitable for RCHE development, there was a general need for RCHE in society. The proposed RCHE would also provide more choices for the community in addition to the existing RCHEs in Tsuen Wan.

28. In response to a Member's question on whether an approval condition should be imposed to ensure that the access to the NTEH developments completely surrounded by the Site would be provided, the Chairperson said that the issue would be dealt with during land exchange stage and hence such approval condition was not required.

29. To address Members' concerns, the Chairperson proposed and Members agreed to include additional advisory clauses requesting the applicant to expedite liaison with the Monastery, including the relocation of the joss paper burners and the access arrangement, and to improve the layout of the proposed RCHE at the Site so as to minimise the interface with the proposed NTEHs surrounded by the Site.

30. After deliberation, the Committee decided to approve the application, on the terms of the application as submitted to the Town Planning Board. The permission should be valid until 28.3.2029, 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 approval conditions stated in the Paper. The Committee also agreed to advise the applicant to note the advisory clauses as set out in the appendix of the Paper and the following additional advisory clauses:

- “ - to expedite liaison with Tung Po Tor Monastery, including the relocation of the joss paper burners and the access arrangement; and
- to improve the layout of the proposed residential care home for the elderly at the application site so as to minimise the interface with the proposed New Territories Exempted Houses on Lots 40, 41 and 42 in D.D. 451.”

Agenda Item 4

Section 16 Application

[Open Meeting (Presentation and Question Sessions only)]

A/TW/543 Proposed Columbarium in “Government, Institution or Community (10)” Zone, Lots 613 RP (Part), 614 and 1229 in D.D. 453 and Adjoining Government Land, Lo Wai, Tsuen Wan
(MPC Paper No. A/TW/543B)

Presentation and Question Sessions

31. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Frankie H.C. Tsang, TP/TWK, 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.

32. In response to a Member’s question on whether there was a genuine shortage of niches in the territory, Mr Michael K.K. Cheung, STP/TWK, said that the proposed columbarium initiated by the applicant under the current application would provide more choices for the community. The application site (the Site) was also the subject of a previous section 12A (s.12A) application which was partially agreed by the Committee. The Chairperson supplemented that the supply of niches in private columbaria was a market decision.

Deliberation Session

33. The Chairperson recapitulated that the Site was the subject of a previously partially agreed s.12A application and was subsequently rezoned to “Government, Institution or Community (10)” intended primarily for the provision of a columbarium. Members could focus on whether the proposed scheme and the number of niches under the current application were acceptable.

34. A Member was generally supportive of the application, considering that the Site was the subject of a s.12A application partially agreed by the Committee and was considered

suitable for columbarium development. Nevertheless, the Member was concerned whether the proposed increase in the number of niches from 3,000 to 4,250 was supported with strong justifications.

35. The Chairperson said that there was a gross floor area (GFA) restriction of 1,900m² for the Site. While the applicant did not specifically provide strong justifications for the increased number of niches, the proposed columbarium development did not exceed the GFA restriction. The revised layout in the current application, comprising a total of 4,250 niches, was supported by technical assessments and was considered acceptable by relevant government departments.

36. After deliberation, the Committee decided to approve the application, on the terms of the application as submitted to the Town Planning Board. The permission should be valid until 28.3.2029, 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 approval condition stated in the Paper. The Committee also agreed to advise the applicant to note the advisory clauses as set out in the appendix of the Paper.

[The Chairperson thanked PlanD's representatives for attending the meeting. They left the meeting at this point.]

Hong Kong District

Agenda Item 8

Section 16 Application

[Open Meeting (Presentation and Question Sessions Only)]

A/H19/87 Proposed Residential Development with Minor Relaxation of Plot Ratio, Building Height and Site Coverage Restrictions in “Other Specified Uses” annotated “Residential Development with Historic Building Preserved” Zone, 44 Stanley Village Road, Stanley, Hong Kong
(MPC Paper No. A/H19/87A)

37. The Secretary reported that LWK & Partners (HK) Limited (LWK) was one of the consultants of the applicant. Mr Ricky W.Y. Yu had declared an interest on the item for his firm having current business dealings with LWK. As Mr Ricky W.Y. Yu had no involvement in the application, the Committee agreed that he could stay in the meeting.

38. The following government representatives were invited to the meeting at this point:

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| Ms Maggie H.K. Wu | - Senior Town Planner/Hong Kong (STP/HK), Planning Department (PlanD) |
| Mr Harvey T.H. Law | - Town Planner/Hong Kong (TP/HK), PlanD |
| Mr Sunny S.P. Lo | - Commissioner for Heritage (C for H) (Acting), Development Bureau (DEVB) |
| Ms Winkie W.Y. Chick | - Assistant Secretary (Heritage Conservation) ³ , Commissioner for Heritage's Office (CHO), DEVB |
| Mr Mike K.O. Tang | - Engineer (Heritage Conservation) ³ , CHO, DEVB |

Ms Fione S.L. Lo

- Executive Secretary (Antiquities & Monuments), Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO), DEVB

Presentation and Question Sessions

39. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Ms Maggie H.K. Wu, STP/HK, 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. PlanD had no objection to the application.

Proposed Scheme and Justifications for Minor Relaxation of Development Restrictions

40. The Vice-chairperson and some Members raised the following questions:

- (a) whether the proposed plot ratio (PR) of 0.9 and site coverage (SC) of 36% were compatible with the adjoining sites, which were zoned “Residential (Group C)” (“R(C)”) on the same knoll;
- (b) the additional planning gains/design merits of the current scheme as compared with the previously approved scheme under application No. A/H19/82 in 2021 (the approved 2021 Scheme);
- (c) the traffic impact of the increased number of car parking spaces and whether the right-of-way (ROW) issue was resolved in the current scheme;
- (d) the number of units in the Main Building, and whether the guided tours would disturb the future residents living there;
- (e) whether car parking spaces would be provided for public visitors;
- (f) whether the reduction of about 45% in communal open space would adversely affect public appreciation, such as smaller space for holding event and exhibition; and

- (g) details of the management of the proposed Heritage Gallery.

41. With the aid of some PowerPoint slides, Ms Maggie H.K. Wu, STP/HK, made the following main points:

- (a) the application site (the Site) was surrounded by “R(C)” sites to the immediate north, south and east with PRs of about 0.69 to 0.75, and a “R(A)3” site to the west of the Site across Carmel Road with a PR of about 1.65. The proposed PR of 0.9 at the Site was considered not incompatible with the surrounding low- to medium-density residential developments. With various landscape treatments as demonstrated in the photomontages submitted by the applicant, the proposal would not result in an out-of-context and bulky development as viewed from various public viewpoints. The proposed minor relaxation of SC restriction was mainly due to in-situ preservation of the Main Building which already occupied certain site area;
- (b) according to the applicant, to enhance public appreciation of the Maryknoll House, the exhibition areas had been consolidated from the separate locations on 1/F of the Chapel Wing and Library Wing under the approved 2021 Scheme, to a designated Heritage Gallery on G/F and 1/F of the Chapel Wing under the current scheme, with an increased area from 44m² to 298m². This proposal also struck a balance between the opportunities for public appreciation of heritage and the privacy of future residents of the Maryknoll House;
- (c) the increased number of car parking spaces was in line with the upper-end requirements of the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG). The Transport Department had no adverse comment on the Traffic Impact Assessment submitted by the applicant, which had taken into account the increased number of car parking spaces and the resulting traffic. The applicant had reached an initial agreement with the owners of the adjacent Stanley Knoll regarding the ROW for the residents and residents’ visitors to access the Site. A formal agreement on ROW would be sought at the detailed design stage;

- (d) there were five units as shown on the G/F layout plan of the Main Building. The guided tour would access the Heritage Gallery through a dedicated corridor at the lobby on G/F;
- (e) there was no car parking space for public visitors. The proposed 55 car parking spaces were provided exclusively to residents (53 nos.) and residents' visitors (2 nos.) The public could only visit the Maryknoll House by joining a free guided tour. Shuttle bus services would be arranged at Stanley Plaza for public visitors;
- (f) although there was a reduction in communal open space serving the residents, the provision was in line with the requirements of HKPSG for an estimated population of 69. The applicant did not provide information on whether there would be events or exhibitions held in the communal open space; and
- (g) the management of the Heritage Gallery would be subject to the decisions of the future owners.

Heritage Conservation Elements

42. The Vice-chairperson enquired about the concerns regarding heritage features that Members had raised during the consideration of previous planning applications, and whether the rooftop cross was one of the concerns. In response, Ms Maggie H.K. Wu, STP/HK, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, said that during the consideration of section 12A (s.12A) application (No. Y/H19/1) in 2019, Members' concerns were mainly related to (i) the negative impacts of the large glass entrance lobby on the architectural integrity of the main façade; (ii) the alteration of the original symmetrical built form of the Main Building due to the proposed eastern extension; (iii) the provision of reasonable public access to the Maryknoll House for public appreciation including the number of guided tours to be offered; and (iv) the importance of maintaining public views of the red brick elevation of the existing building. The rooftop cross was not a subject of discussion during previous consideration.

43. The Chairperson said that the applicant had taken into account Members' comments at the s.12A stage and submitted a revised proposal under the s.16 application (No.

A/H19/82) in 2021, in which extensions on both eastern and western sides of the building were proposed. He supplemented that Members' previous concerns also included whether the public's view to the Maryknoll House, in particular its southern façade facing the coast of Stanley, would be obstructed by the proposed addition of residential blocks.

Preservation of the Maryknoll House and Public Appreciation

44. Some Members raised the following questions:
- (a) the justifications for the proposed relocation of the rooftop cross to the Heritage Gallery, including whether there was technical difficulty in retaining it on the rooftop;
 - (b) CHO's assessment of the current proposal, in particular the impact of the proposed relocation of the rooftop cross on the architectural integrity and historic value of the Maryknoll House;
 - (c) the number of participants for each free guided tour, the continuity of the free guided tour if there was a change in ownership, and the measures to monitor quality of display contents and guided tours; and
 - (d) whether there was potential for the Maryknoll House to be listed as a declared monument, and whether CHO had any plan to do so.
45. In response, Mr Sunny S.P. Lo, C for H (Acting), DEVB, made the following main points:
- (a) the applicant proposed converting the Maryknoll House into a residential development with no religious affiliation, and suggested that the cross be relocated to the Heritage Gallery. This would enable visitors to appreciate the cross up close and in a more religious setting with interpretative information. Given its significance as a character-defining element of the Maryknoll House, CHO/AMO would ensure the careful handling of the cross by the applicant. The applicant was required to assess the technical feasibility of relocating the cross from the roof, including conducting a structural appraisal to ensure that

the integrity of both the cross and the pitched roof would be properly preserved;

- (b) the current proposal, which included the in-situ preservation of the Maryknoll House, had demonstrated the applicant's efforts in striking a balance between heritage conservation and development needs. The Maryknoll House was previously not open to the public, and the proposed free guided tours that would allow the public to visit this privately-owned historic building were appreciated. In view of the above, CHO had no in-principle objection to the preservation-cum-development proposal from heritage conservation perspective;
- (c) each free guided tour would accommodate up to 25 participants. The applicant would be required to submit a revised Conservation Management Plan (CMP), with detailed arrangements of free guided tours included, prior to the commencement of any works. The implementation of the works, including provision of free guided tours, must adhere to the CMP; and
- (d) the existing Grade 1 historic building status of the Maryknoll House did not automatically confer a declared monument status. Currently, CHO/AMO did not consider the Maryknoll House a candidate for declared monument status.

46. In response to a Member's question on the definition of 'religiously neutral', Mr Sunny S.P. Lo, C for H (Acting), DEVB emphasised on the need for a balance between preservation and development. He clarified that the Maryknoll House was intended for redevelopment into residential use and was not specifically designed for any particular religion.

Deliberation Session

47. The Chairperson recapitulated the background and planning history of the Site. The Site on which the Maryknoll House located was privately owned and was not open to the public over the years. It was often difficult to preserve historic buildings under private ownership as the owners had development right, and it required a lot of efforts for CHO and AMO to liaise with them to explore options that struck a balance between preservation and

development. The Maryknoll House was one of these examples. The in-situ preservation of a privately-owned historic building and the guided tours were considered as planning gains. As compared with the approved 2021 Scheme, the applicant proposed to increase the number of guided tours from 8 to 12 per year and expand the dedicated Heritage Gallery from about 44m² (in two separated areas) to 298m² (in one larger area) for public appreciation and enjoyment of the Grade 1 Maryknoll House. Both CHO and AMO had no in-principle objection to the application from the heritage conservation perspective and the applicant would be required to submit a revised CMP with more details on the arrangement for free guided tours and the implementation of the works. Taking into account the above, PlanD had no objection to the application. In considering the current application, Members might focus on whether the proposed minor relaxation of development restrictions was justified and its differences from the previously approved scheme.

48. At the invitation of the Chairperson, Ms Catherine W.S. Pang, Assistant Director/Regional 1, Lands Department (LandsD) provided the following supplementary information on lease restrictions:

- (a) there was no restriction on gross floor area (GFA), SC and building height (BH) under the lease;
- (b) there was restriction for development of houses under the lease and as long as the lot owner complied with this restriction by adhering to Lands Administration Office Practice Note Issue Nos. 3/2000 and 3/2000A regarding “House” Restrictions under Government Leases, there was no need to apply for lease modification; and
- (c) subject to the detailed design of the proposed development, LandsD’s comments were reserved until the lot owner submitted building plans for approval under the lease.

Proposed Scheme and Justifications for Minor Relaxation of Development Restrictions

49. Some Members did not support or expressed reservation on the application and made the following points:

- (a) the removal of the cross from the rooftop was a demerit as it was a character-defining element of the Maryknoll House;
- (b) there were no strong justifications or design merits to support the proposed minor relaxation of PR from 0.75 to 0.9. As compared with the approved 2021 Scheme, the increase in exhibition area from 44m² to 298m² at the Heritage Gallery and the increased number of free guided tours from 8 to 12 per year were insufficient considering that the increase in GFA was over 1,000m² resulted from the proposed relaxation of PR. There was already sufficient financial incentive to preserve the Maryknoll House under the approved 2021 Scheme;
- (c) the proposed PR of 0.9 was incompatible with the surrounding developments, which generally had a PR of 0.75; and
- (d) the increase in SC was not compatible with the planning intention of the area and the increase in building bulk might affect public views of the building from lower levels.

50. While agreeing that there were no strong justifications for the proposed minor relaxation of PR to 0.9, a Member had no strong view regarding the relocation of the rooftop cross.

51. In response to a Member's comment on the development bulk of the proposed western extension of the Main Building, the Chairperson clarified that the proposed BH of 67.7mPD was the same as that in the approved 2021 Scheme, though there was an increase in SC for the western extension, which contributed to the increase in building bulk.

Heritage Conservation Elements

52. The Vice-chairperson remarked that it might be useful to refer to the relevant meeting minutes about what key heritage features, such as red brick elevation and pitched roof with green glazed tiles, were of concern to the public and Members during the consideration of previous applications. She recalled that Members were concerned about the red brick elevation as it could be easily seen from public viewpoints and the applicant was required to

submit a revised CMP to the satisfaction of AMO. She also agreed with some Members that the removal of the cross from the rooftop was a demerit as it was a character-defining element of the Maryknoll House.

53. A Member opined that the treatment of the rooftop cross might not have been discussed during the consideration of previous applications, as there was a general assumption that the cross would be retained as part of the pitched roof. Another Member agreed that the rooftop cross should be retained, subject to the appropriate control mechanism.

Preservation of the Maryknoll House and Public Appreciation

54. A Member supported the application, acknowledging the difficulty in preservation-cum-development for historic buildings under private ownership. There was no mechanism to prevent the land owner from demolishing the Maryknoll House for other developments as it was not a declared monument, and there was no such restriction under the lease. An approval condition on a revised CMP should be imposed to ensure that the free guided tours for the public 12 times per year were properly implemented. The same Member remarked that the public might not understand the difficulty of preserving historic buildings under private ownership, and might misconstrue that the Town Planning Board supported the relocation of rooftop cross, which was a character-defining element. It might also affect the prospect for the Maryknoll House to become a declared monument in the future.

Conclusion and Decision

55. Noting that the Site was under private ownership and that CHO/AMO made substantial efforts in encouraging the owner to preserve the Maryknoll House during its redevelopment, the Vice-chairperson considered it appropriate to defer a decision on the application such that the applicant could submit further information to justify or revise the development scheme, as appropriate, to address the concerns of the Members.

56. Noting that any delay in development might have financial implication to the developer, a Member enquired whether approving the application with a condition that the cross should be retained on the rooftop was a possible option. Another Member pointed out that there was an approved scheme in 2021 and the applicant was entitled to commence the

development. Any decision from the Committee should not cause a delay in the development programme. The same Member continued to say that if the relocation of the rooftop cross was proposed in the previous applications, the Committee might not approve the previous scheme. Such fundamental change in the character of the building without strong justifications was considered not acceptable.

57. A Member opined that instead of deferment, rejection of the application might be more welcomed by the public, as the submission of a fresh application would provide an opportunity for another round of public consultation. In response, the Vice-chairperson said that while the records about Members' consideration of previous applications should be referred to, deferring a decision on the application was considered appropriate and respectful to the efforts made by the applicant and the Government in the current proposal.

58. In response to a Member's question regarding the differences between processing an application after deferral and a fresh application, the Chairperson explained that the applicant could submit further information as requested by the Committee such as providing more justifications, revising the development scheme with a lower PR or retaining the cross at the rooftop without going through the statutory and administrative procedures of a fresh application, such as the publication requirement, provided that the revised scheme did not constitute material change to the original one.

59. The Chairperson remarked that the current preservation-cum-development proposal was in line with the planning intention of the "Other Specified Uses" annotated "Residential Development with Historic Building Preserved" zone, and the applicant had taken into account Members' previous comments to maintain the symmetrical built form and increase the number of free guided tours. While acknowledging the efforts of the applicant and the Government in pursuing a preservation-cum-development scheme that struck a proper balance between conservation and development, the Chairperson noted Members' grave concerns regarding the removal of the cross at the rooftop which was considered one of the character-defining elements of the Maryknoll House. Some Members were also concerned about the proposed increase in PR and SC without design merits and sufficient justifications. The Chairperson suggested and Members agreed that the applicant could be invited to provide supplementary information, such as justifications for removing the cross at the rooftop and the extent of the proposed increase in PR and SC. As such, the Committee considered it prudent

to defer a decision on the application pending the applicant's submission of the said information to address Members' concerns. PlanD was requested to provide more details of Members' previous concerns about heritage conservation elements during the consideration of previous applications and the OZP amendment process to facilitate the further consideration of the Committee.

[Dr Tony C.M. Ip left the meeting during deliberation.]

60. After deliberation, the Committee decided to defer a decision on the application for two months pending the submission of further information from the applicant, including (i) consideration of retaining the cross at the rooftop, and if removal was deemed necessary, strong justifications should be provided; and (ii) review of the extent and justifications for the proposed increase in plot ratio and site coverage, for further consideration of the Committee.

[The Chairperson thanked the government representatives for attending the meeting. They left the meeting at this point.]

Agenda Item 9

Any Other Business

[Open Meeting]

61. There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 12:15 p.m.

**Minutes of 762nd Metro Planning Committee
(held on 28.3.2025)**

Deferral Cases

Requests for Deferment by Applicant for 2 Months

Item No.	Application No.*	Times of Deferment
6	A/H6/96	1 st
7	A/H17/143	1 st

Declaration of Interest

The Committee noted the following declaration of interest:

Item No.	Member's Declared Interest	
6	The application site was located in Tai Hang.	- Ms Sandy H.Y. Wong for living in Tai Hang

The Committee noted that Ms Sandy H.Y. Wong had not yet joined the meeting.

* Refer to the agenda at https://www.tpb.gov.hk/en/meetings/MPC/Agenda/762_mpc_agenda.html for details of the planning applications.

**Minutes of 762nd Metro Planning Committee
(held on 28.3.2025)**

Case for Streamlining Arrangement

Application approved on a permanent basis

Item No.	Application No.	Planning Application
5	A/K5/874	Proposed Shop and Services in “Other Specified Uses” annotated “Business (1)” Zone, Shop 8, Unit 2, G/F, Wing Kut Industrial Building, 608 Castle Peak Road, Cheung Sha Wan, Kowloon