

**S16 PLANNING APPLICATION  
APPROVED MID-LEVELS EAST OZP No. S/H12/14**

**Proposed Access (Inclined Lift) for the Existing Residential Development  
in “Green Belt” Zone at No. 17 Bowen Road, Mid-Levels, Hong Kong**

## **SUPPORTING PLANNING STATEMENT**

---

**March 2026**

**Applicant:**

**Sydney Fung & Son Limited**

**Consultancy Team:**

**KTA Planning Ltd.**

**Fruit Design & Build Limited**

**Landes Limited**

**Green Engineering Consultant Company Limited**



**PLANNING LIMITED**

規 劃 顧 問 有 限 公 司

## **Executive Summary**

This Supporting Planning Statement is prepared on behalf of Sydney Fung & Son Limited (“the “Applicant”) to seek approval from the Town Planning Board (“TPB”) under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance for Proposed Access (Inclined Lift) for the existing residential development at No. 17 Bowen Road, Mid-Levels, Hong Kong (the “Application Site”). The Proposed Access, involving the installation of an inclined lift and the associated works area, forms the Development Site (about 89.6m<sup>2</sup>), of which approx. 69.7m<sup>2</sup> falls within the Application Site, which is zoned “Green Belt” (“GB”) on the Approved Mid-Levels East Outline Zoning Plan (the “Approved OZP”) No. S/H12/14.

The Proposed Access involves installation of an inclined lift (about of 32m in length) and the associated works area. This is to provide a safe and convenient access next to the existing Right of Way to the existing permitted residential development at IL 2460, namely Caronia. The proposed inclined lift is small in size and minimal in scale, featuring a compact design with a dimension of approx. 2.2m in height and 1.5m in width. Sensitive design measures, such as non-reflective surface and natural colour scheme, will be incorporated to minimise potential visual and physical impact to the surrounding environment.

The Proposed Access is fully justified based on the following main reasons:

- The Proposed Access is small in size and minimal in scale;
- The Proposed Access is compatible with surrounding environment;
- The Proposal will not adversely affect public amenity and declared monument;
- There will be no adverse visual impact;
- There will be no adverse landscape impact;
- The Proposal is in line with Town Planning Board Guidelines for Application for Development within Green Belt Zone;
- The Proposed Access will enhance accessibility;
- The Proposal has incorporated various adjustments to address TPB’s previous concerns;
- Approval of the Planning Application would be consistent with TPB’s previous decisions on similar applications; and

In light of justifications given throughout the Supporting Planning Statement, we sincerely request the TPB to give favourable consideration to this Planning Application.

## 行政摘要

(內文如有差異，應以英文版本為準)

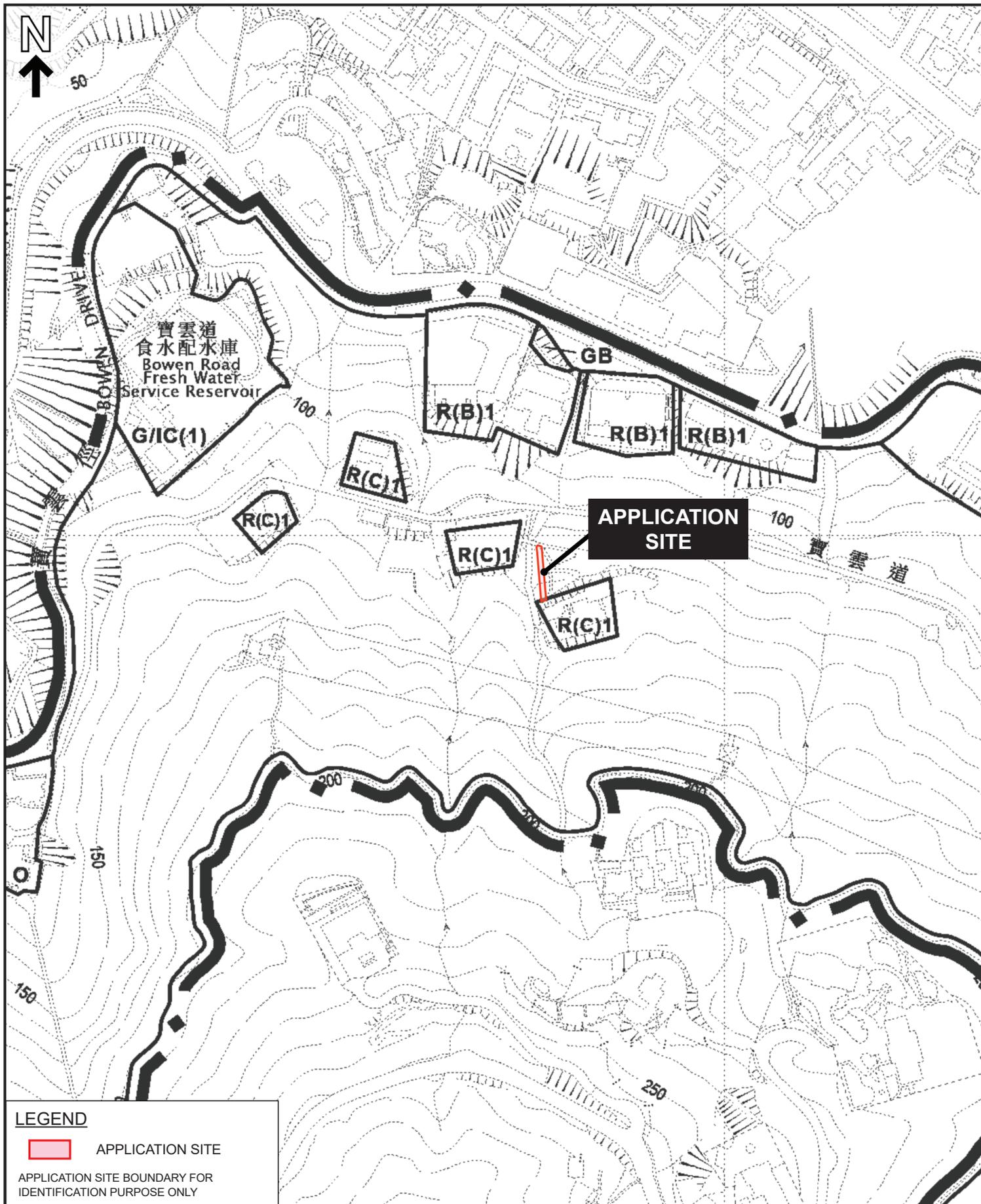
本規劃申請書是代表申請人 Sydney Fung & Son Limited (下稱「申請人」) 根據城市規劃條例第 16 條，向城市規劃委員會 (下稱「城規會」)，就擬議通路(斜道升降機) 提出規劃申請。申請地點位於半山區寶雲道 17 號 (下稱「申請地點」) 並位於半山區東部分區計劃大綱核准圖 (下稱「核准圖」) 編號 S/H12/14 的「綠化地帶」地帶內。申請地點的面積約 69.7 平方米，而發展地盤的面積約 89.6 平方米。

擬議方案僅涉及安裝一條約 32 米長的斜道升降機及相關施工區域，旨在為位於內地段 2460 號的現有住宅「Caronia」提供必要的無障礙通道。擬議斜道升降機體積小，規模輕微，並採用緊湊設計，尺寸約為 2.2 米高及 1.5 米寬。為減低對周邊環境的潛在視覺及實質影響，擬議斜道升降機將採用敏感的設計措施，包括非反光表面及自然色調配色。

擬議通路有充份理據支持，其主要理據如下：

- 擬議通道體積小及規模輕微；
- 擬議通道與周邊環境相容；
- 不會對公共設施及法定古蹟造成不良影響；
- 不會產生不良視覺影響；
- 不會產生不良景觀影響；
- 擬議通道符合城市規劃委員會規劃指引編號 10 「擬在綠化地帶進行發展而按照城市規劃條例第 16 條提出的規劃申請」；
- 擬議通道將提高可達性；
- 擬議方案已納入多項調整，以解決城規會先前的擔憂；
- 批准本規劃申請與城規會之前考慮同類型規劃申請的決定一致；及

基於以上各項規劃理據，申請人希望是次的規劃申請能獲城規會支持。



**LEGEND**

 APPLICATION SITE

APPLICATION SITE BOUNDARY FOR IDENTIFICATION PURPOSE ONLY



PLANNING LIMITED  
 規劃顧問有限公司

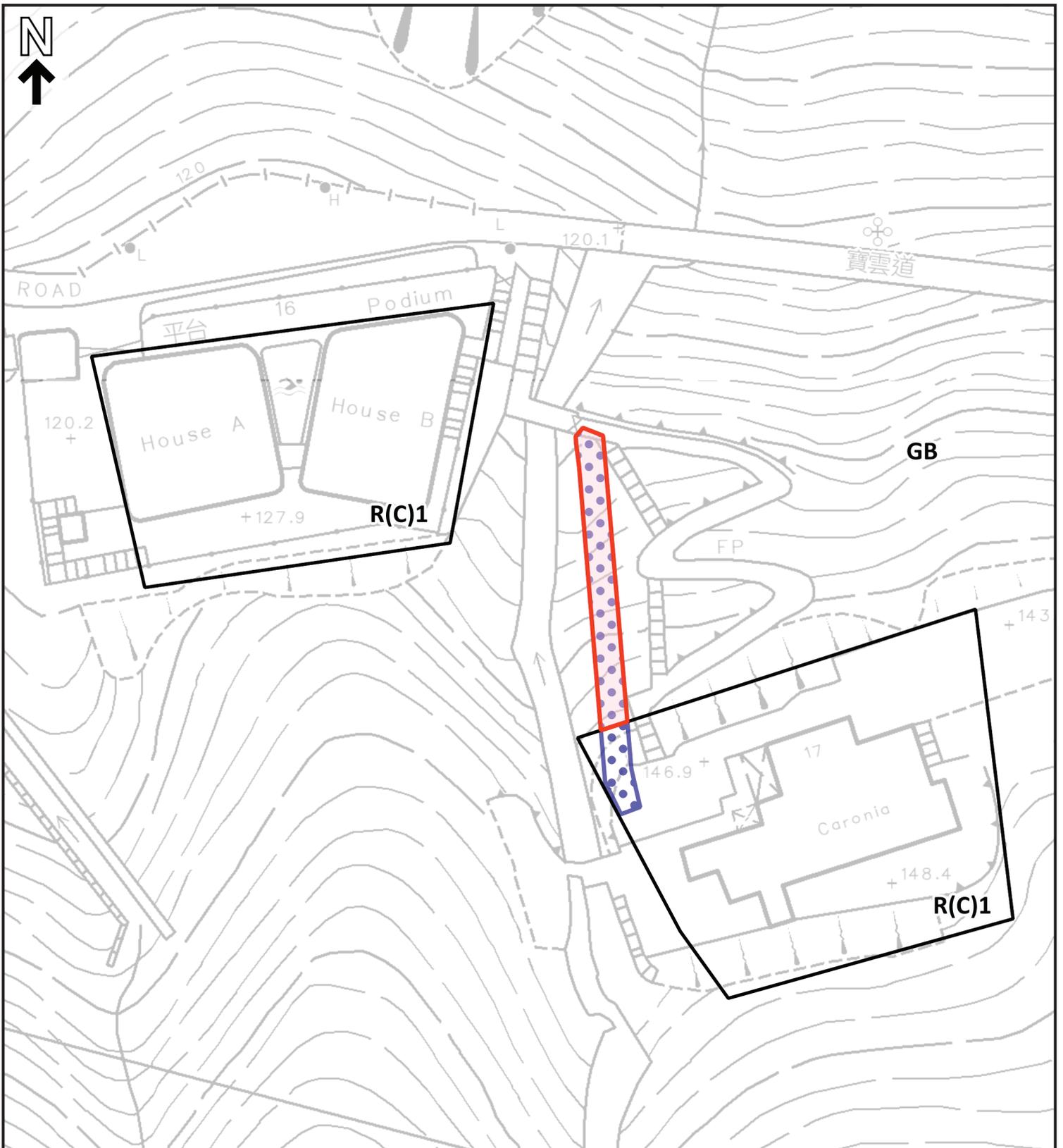
**LOCATION PLAN**

Proposed Access Road (Inclined Lift) for the Existing Residential Development in "Green Belt" Zone at No. 17 Bowen Road, Mid-Levels, Hong Kong

SCALE: 1:2500

Extract plan based on the Approved Mid-Levels East Outline Zoning Plan No. S/H12/14 approved on 24.9.2024

DATE: 16 March 2026



**LEGEND**

-  APPLICATION SITE
-  DEVELOPMENT SITE

APPLICATION SITE BOUNDARY FOR IDENTIFICATION PURPOSE ONLY



PLANNING LIMITED  
 規劃顧問有限公司

**SITE PLAN**

Proposed Access Road (Inclined Lift) for the Existing Residential Development in "Green Belt" Zone at No. 17 Bowen Road, Mid-Levels, Hong Kong

SCALE: 1:500

Extract plan based on the Survey Sheet No. 11-SW-14D

DATE: 16 March 2026

**GREEN BELT**

Column 1 Uses always permitted	Column 2 Uses that may be permitted with or without conditions on application to the Town Planning Board
Agricultural Use Barbecue Spot Government Use (Police Reporting Centre only) Nature Reserve Nature Trail On-Farm Domestic Structure Picnic Area Public Convenience Tent Camping Ground Wild Animals Protection Area	Animal Boarding Establishment Broadcasting, Television and/or Film Studio Cable Car Route and Terminal Building Field Study/Education/Visitor Centre Flat Government Refuse Collection Point Government Use (not elsewhere specified) Holiday Camp House Mass Transit Railway Vent Shaft and/or Other Structure above Ground Level other than Entrances Petrol Filling Station Place of Recreation, Sports or Culture Public Transport Terminus or Station Public Utility Installation Public Vehicle Park (excluding container vehicle) Radar, Telecommunications Electronic Microwave Repeater, Television and/or Radio Transmitter Installation Religious Institution Residential Institution School Service Reservoir Social Welfare Facility Utility Installation for Private Project Zoo

**Planning Intention**

The planning intention of this zone is primarily for the conservation of the existing natural environment amid the built-up areas/at the urban fringe, to safeguard it from encroachment by urban type development, and to provide additional outlets for passive recreational activities. There is a general presumption against development within this zone.

## **Table of Contents**

### **Executive Summary**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Purpose
- 1.2 Report Structure

#### **2. SITE AND PLANNING CONTEXT**

- 2.1 Site Location and Existing Condition
- 2.2 Land Status
- 2.3 Statutory Planning Context
- 2.4 Surrounding Context
- 2.5 Accessibility
- 2.6 Planning History of the Site and Surrounding Area
- 2.7 Similar Planning Applications
- 2.8 Town Planning Board Guideline No.10 for Application for Development within Green Belt Zone

#### **3. PROPOSED ACCESS ROAD (INCLINED LIFT)**

- 3.1 The Proposal
- 3.2 Site Selection and Alignment Considerations
- 3.3 Visual Considerations
- 3.4 Tree Preservation and Landscape Proposal

#### **4. PLANNING JUSTIFICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Proposed Access Road is “Small in Size and Minimal in Scale”
- 4.2 Compatible with Surrounding Environment
- 4.3 No Adverse Impact on Public Amenity and Declared Monument
- 4.4 In line with TPB PG-No. 10
- 4.5 Improvement to Accessibility for the Existing Residents
- 4.6 Adjustments Made To Address TPB’s Previous Concerns
- 4.7 Approval of the Planning Application is Consistent with TPB’s Previous Decisions on Similar Applications
- 4.8 Technically Feasible with No Insurmountable Impact

#### **5. CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY**

### **List of Figures**

Figure 2.1	Site Location Plan
Figure 2.2	Site Photos
Figure 2.3	Lot Index Plan
Figure 2.4	Zoning Context Plan
Figure 2.5	Surrounding Context Plan
Figure 2.6	Planning History of the Site and Surrounding Area
Figure 3.1	The Proposed Inclined Lift
Figure 3.2	Section of The Proposed Inclined Lift
Figure 3.3	Photomontages
Figure 3.4	Landscape Proposal
Figure 4.1	Affected “GB” Area

### **List of Tables**

Table 2.1	Details of Planning Applications of the Site and Surrounding Area
Table 2.2	Similar Planning Applications Approved by the TPB

### **List of Appendices**

Appendix 1	Schematic and Sectional Drawings
Appendix 2	Landscape Proposal
Appendix 3	Geotechnical Planning Review Report

**S16 PLANNING APPLICATION**  
**Approved Mid-Levels East OZP No. S/H12/14**

**Proposed Access (Inclined Lift) for the  
Existing Residential Development in “Green Belt” Zone  
at No. 17 Bowen Road, Mid-Levels, Hong Kong**

---

---

**Supporting Planning Statement**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Purpose**

1.1.1 This Planning Application is prepared and submitted on behalf of Sydney Fung & Son Limited (the “Applicant”) to seek approval from the Town Planning Board (“TPB”) under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance for a Proposed Access (Inclined Lift) for the existing residential development at No. 17 Bowen Road, Mid-Levels, Hong Kong (the “Application Site” or the “Site”). The Site falls within an area zoned “Green Belt” (“GB”) on the Approved Mid-Levels East Outline Zoning Plan (the “Approved OZP”) No. S/H12/14. This Supporting Planning Statement is to provide the TPB and relevant Government departments with necessary information to facilitate consideration of this Planning Application.

**1.2 Report Structure**

1.2.1 Following this introductory section, the site and planning context will be briefly set out in Section 2. The description of Proposed Access is included in Section 3, followed by the planning merits and justifications for the Planning Application in Section 4. The Supporting Planning Statement will be concluded and summarises in Section 5.

## 2. SITE AND PLANNING CONTEXT

### 2.1 Site Location and Existing Condition

2.1.1 The Site is situated at a steep slope, extending uphill from the lower section of the existing right of way (“RoW”) to the platform of Caronia, which is an existing single house development (**Figure 2.1** refers). The lower section of the Site is located at approx. +127.6mPD, while the upper section on the platform is at approx. +146.0mPD. The total area of the Development Site is about 89.6m<sup>2</sup>, of which approx. 69.7m<sup>2</sup> falls within the Application Site.

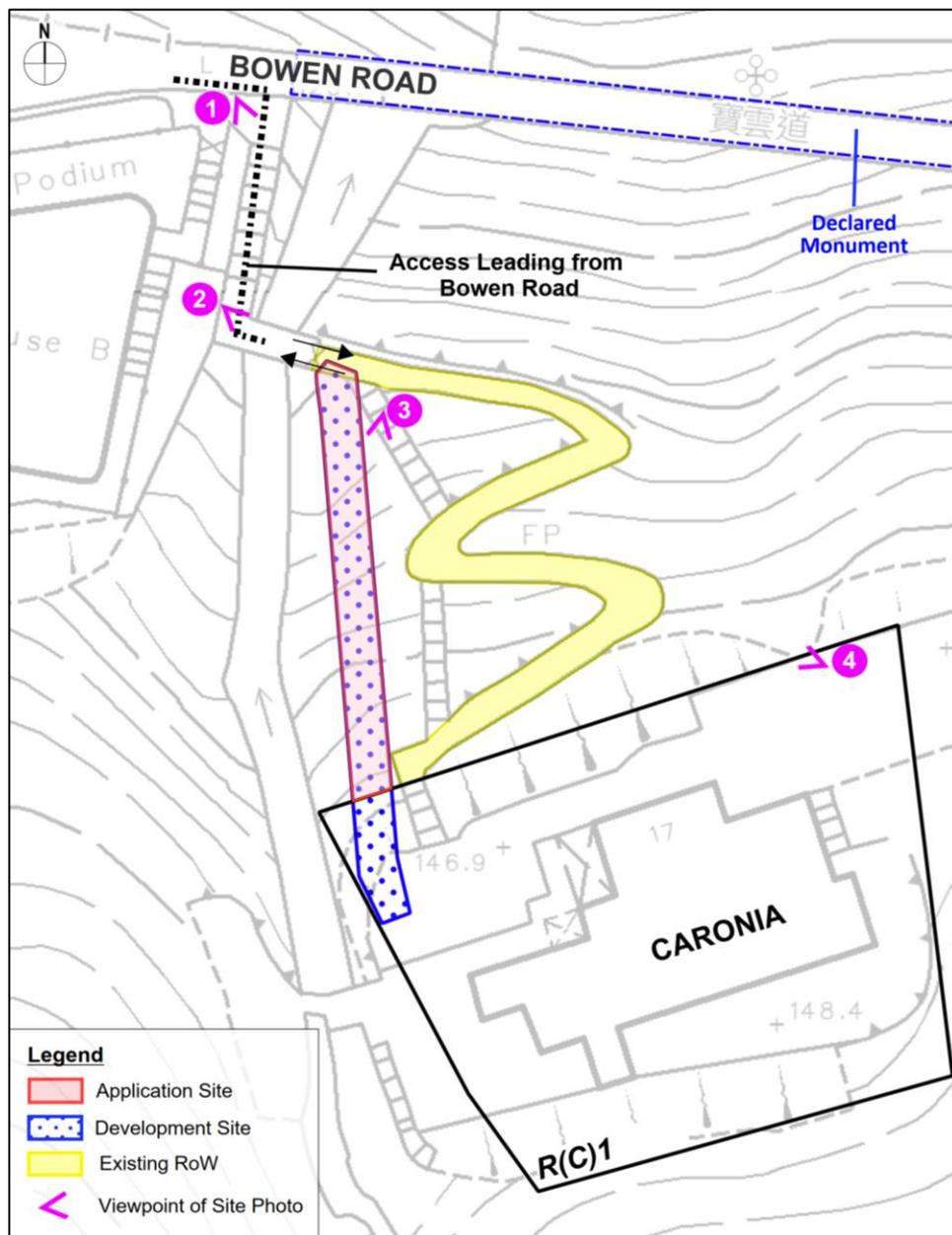


Figure 2.1: Site Location Plan

2.1.2 The Site is primarily a vegetated slope with portion occupied by a temporary manual conveying system (Photo 3 of **Figure 2.2** refers). The existing Row extends from approx. +127.5mPD to 143.4mPD, resulting in a gradient of about 1:1.8. The steep slope significantly restricts the accessibility to Caronia, creating a pedestrian-hostile environment that poses great difficulty to elderly and people with disabilities.



Figure 2.2: Site Photos

## 2.2 Land Status

2.2.1 While the Application Site is entirely on Government Land, the Development Site falls partly on Government Land (about 77.8% or 69.7m<sup>2</sup>) and partly on Inland Lot (IL) 2460 (about 22.2% or 19.9m<sup>2</sup>), which is wholly owned by the Applicant (**Figure 2.3** refers). The areas quoted are subject to detailed survey.

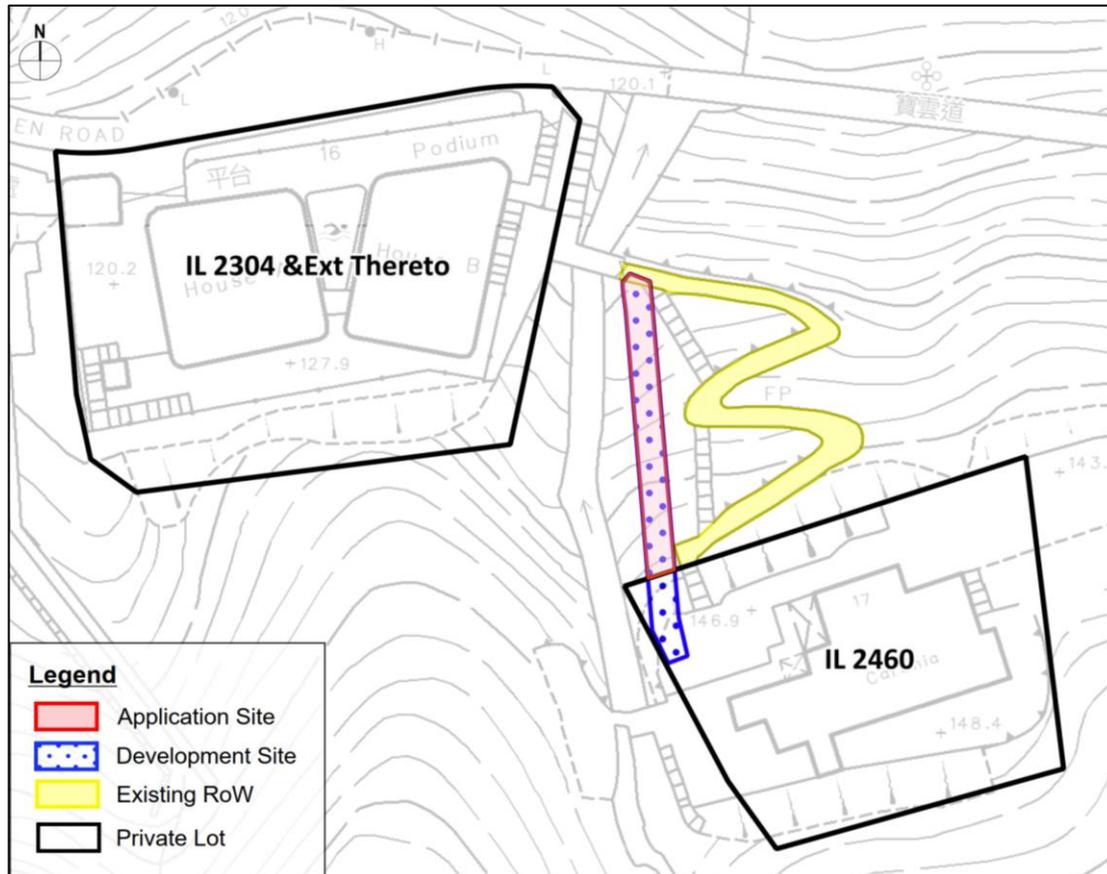


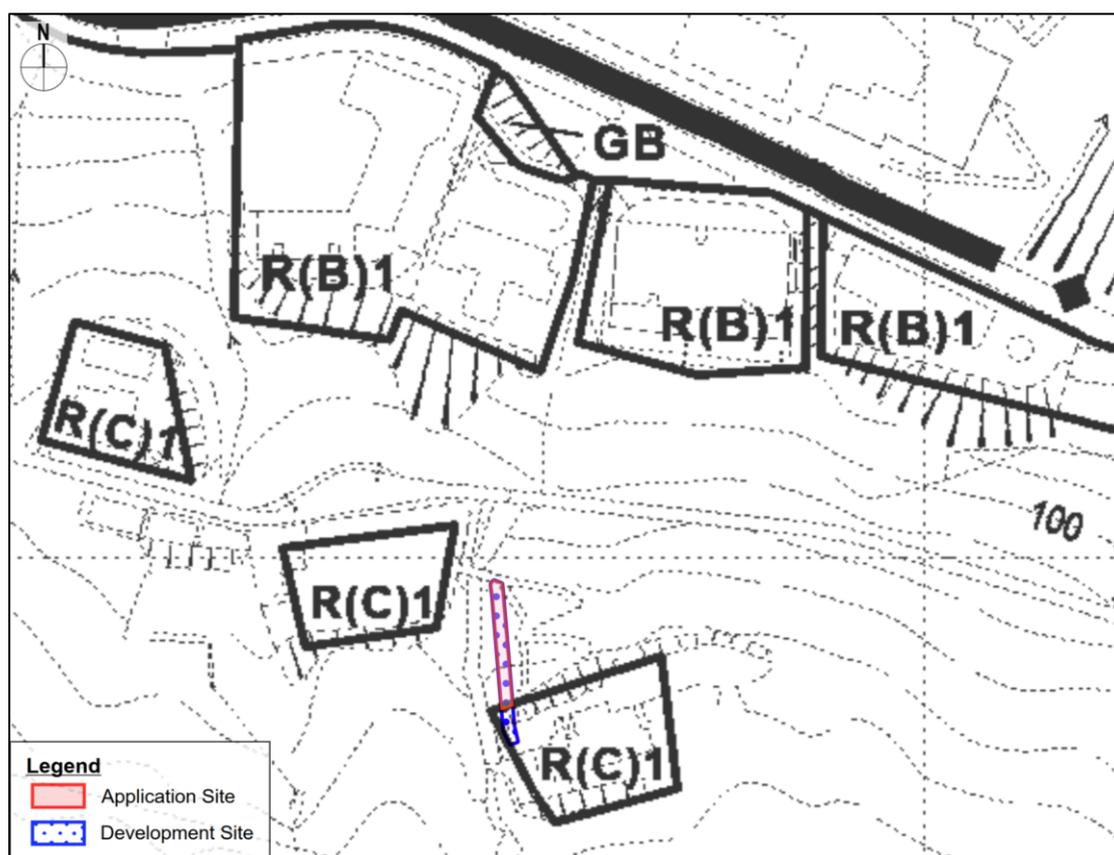
Figure 2.3: Lot Index Plan (For Illustrative Purpose Only)

## 2.3 Statutory Planning Context

2.3.1 While the Application Site falls entirely within an area zoned “Green Belt” (“GB”), the Development Site falls partly within an area zoned “GB” with a minor portion encroaching into the “Residential (Group C) 1” (“R(C)1”) on the Approved Mid-Levels East Outline Zoning Plan (the “Approved OZP”) No. S/H12/14 (**Figure 2.4** refers). According to the Statutory Notes of the Approved OZP, the planning intention of “GB” zone is as follows,

*“The planning intention of this zone is primarily for the conservation of the existing natural environment amid the built-up areas/at the urban fringe, to safeguard it from encroachment by urban type development, and to provide additional outlets for passive recreational activities. There is a general presumption against development within this zone”.*

2.3.2 The Proposed Access (Inclined Lift) is a Column 2 Use in the “GB” zone and requires planning permission from the Town Planning Board (“TPB”).



**Figure 2.4: Zoning Context Plan (Extracted from the Approved OZP No. S/H12/14)**

## 2.4 Surrounding Context

2.4.1 Bowen Road is a carriageway traversing the mid-levels, which also forms part of a fitness trail, namely Bowen Road Fitness Trail. Vehicles without valid permit are prohibited from entering the trail starting from the staircase to Caronia (Photo 1 of **Figure 2.2** refers). The Proposed Access (Inclined Lift) and the existing house are situated off Bowen Road and within a predominately residential area with various low to medium-rise residential developments. The surrounding area is largely occupied by vegetated slope and greenery area (**Figure 2.5** refers).

2.4.2 To the immediate northwest of the Site is two low-rise houses (i.e. 16 Bowen Road) falling within an area zoned “R(C)1” zone along Bowen Road. There are two “R(C)1” zones to its further northwest, which are also occupied by houses (i.e. 12 and 15 Bowen Road) and the Consulate of the Republic of Seychelles. To the north of the Site across Bowen Road downhill are three “Residential (Group B) 1” (“R(B)1”) zones, comprising several medium-rise residential developments, namely Monticello, Man Yuen Garden, Ewan Court, Sakura Court and Kantian Rise, all served by Kennedy Road. The surrounding vegetated slope and greenery area are zoned “GB”.

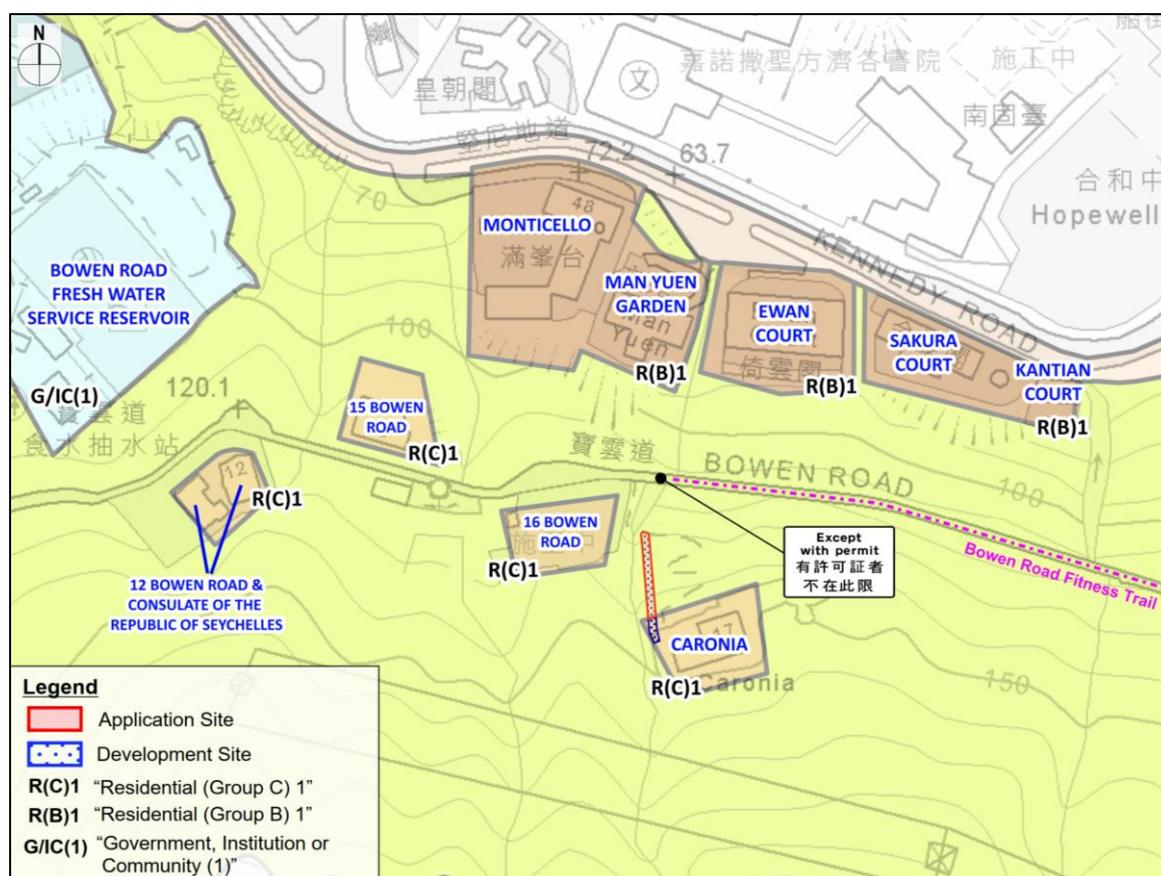


Figure 2.5: Surrounding Context Plan

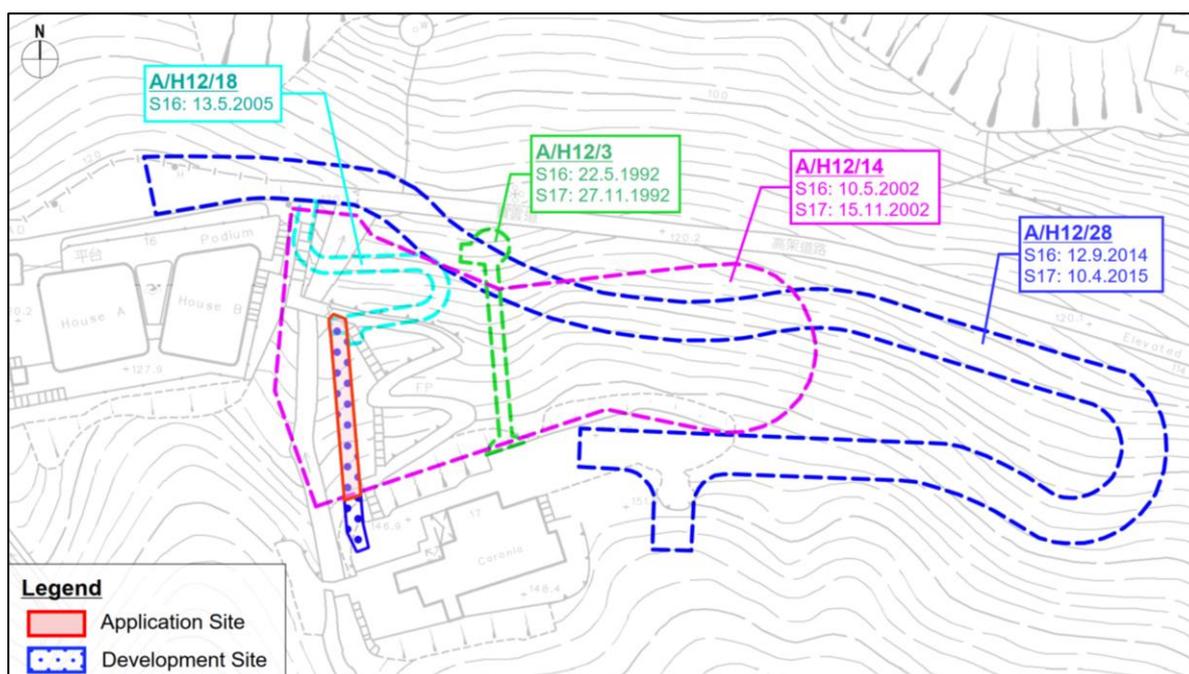
## 2.5 Accessibility

2.5.1 The Site is accessible from the existing staircase and footpath (“RoW”) leading from Bowen Road (**Figure 2.1** refers).

## 2.6 Planning History of the Site and Surrounding Area

2.6.1 There were a total of 4 previous planning applications in the vicinity seeking for permission for an access (pedestrian and/or vehicular) to serve the existing house (i.e. Caronia) between 1992 and 2015 viz. A/H12/3, A/H12/14, A/H12/18, and A/H12/28 (**Figure 2.6** refers). The Proposed Access (Inclined Lift) falls within one of the previous applications.

2.6.2 TPB rejected all these applications, mainly on the grounds of adverse visual and/or landscape impact, general presumptions against developments in “GB”, not in line with “Town Planning Board Guideline No. 10 for Application for Development within Green Belt Zone” (“TPB PG-No.10”), adverse impact on public amenity and declared monument, and setting an undesirable precedent. Details of these planning applications and major rejection reasons have been summarised in **Table 2.1**.



**Figure 2.6: Planning History of the Site and Surrounding Area**

**Table 2.1: Details of Planning Applications of the Site and Surrounding Area**

Application No.	Applied Use(s)	Site Area	Decision	Rejection Reason	Decision Date
A/H12/3	Inclined Passenger Elevator	73m <sup>2</sup>	Rejected	(a), (b) & (c)	22.5.1992 (S16) 27.11.1992 (S17)
A/H12/14	Vehicular Access and Car Parking Spaces Ancillary to Residential Use	2,200m <sup>2</sup>	Rejected	(a), (b) & (d)	10.5.2002 (S16) 15.11.2002 (S17)
A/H12/18	Access Road Ancillary to Residential Use	176m <sup>2</sup>	Rejected	(a), (b) & (d)	13.05.2005 (S16)
A/H12/28	Proposed Vehicular Access for Residential Development	1,700m <sup>2</sup>	Rejected	(b), (d), (e) & (f)	12.9.2014 (S16) 10.4.2015 (S17)

**Note**

- (a) : Substantial adverse visual and/or landscape impact
- (b) : Undesirable precedent
- (c) : Public amenity affected
- (d) : General presumption against development in “GB” and/or deviation from planning intention
- (e) : Adverse impact on declared monument
- (f) : Not in line with TPB PG-No.10

## 2.7 Similar Planning Applications

2.7.1 Apart from the planning applications discussed in **Section 2.6** above, there is no similar applications for access road use in “GB” zone within the same OZP. Nonetheless, TPB approved several similar planning applications within “GB” zone in other OZPs. Particulars of these planning applications have been provided in **Table 2.2**.

2.7.2 In gist, these applications were approved mainly on grounds of (i) in line with TPB PG-No. 10, (ii) no adverse impact (e.g. landscape and visual), and (iii) no objection from relevant departments.

**Table 2.2: Similar Planning Applications Approved by the TPB**

Application No.	Applied Use(s)	Zoning(s)	Site Area	Decision Date
A/H14/48	Proposed Access Road	“GB”	723m <sup>2</sup>	14.1.2005
A/H14/61	Proposed Access Road with Guardhouse and Gate for Permitted House Development	“GB”	370m <sup>2</sup>	24.7.2009
A/H14/66	Proposed Access Road for Residential Development	“GB” & ‘Road’	300m <sup>2</sup>	18.3.2011
A/H14/69	Proposed Access Road for Residential Development	“GB”	72m <sup>2</sup>	4.11.2011
A/TWW/114	Proposed Access Road for Residential Development	“GB” & ‘Road’	1,662m <sup>2</sup>	16.11.2018

**2.8 Town Planning Board Guideline No.10 for Application for Development within Green Belt Zone**

2.8.1 The TPB PG-No.10 set out the main planning criteria for all developments to be erected within "GB" zone. While there is a general presumption against development with "GB" zone, any development/redevelopment should be compatible with the surrounding areas and should itself not be a source of pollutant.

2.8.2 The main planning criteria include:-

- a. *There is a general presumption against development (other than redevelopment) in a "GB" zone. In general, the Board will only be prepared to approve applications for development in the context of requests to rezone to an appropriate use.*
- b. *An application for new development in a "GB" zone will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and must be justified with very strong planning grounds. The scale and intensity of the proposed development including the plot ratio, site coverage and building height should be compatible with the character of surrounding areas. With the exception of New Territories Exempted Houses, a plot ratio up to 0.4 for residential development may be permitted.*
- c. *Applications for New Territories Exempted Houses with satisfactory sewage disposal Town Planning Board July 1991 facilities and access arrangements may be approved if the application sites are in close proximity to existing villages and in keeping with the surrounding uses, and where the development is to meet the demand from indigenous villagers.*
- d. *Redevelopment of existing residential development will generally be permitted up to the intensity of the existing development.*
- e. *Applications for G/IC uses and public utility installations must demonstrate that the proposed development is essential and that no alternative sites are available. The plot ratio of the development site may exceed 0.4 so as to minimize the land to be allocated for G/IC uses.*
- f. *Passive recreational uses which are compatible with the character of surrounding areas may be given sympathetic consideration.*
- g. *The design and layout of any proposed development should be compatible with the surrounding area. The development should not involve extensive clearance of existing natural vegetation, affect the*

*existing natural landscape, or cause any adverse visual impact on the surrounding environment.*

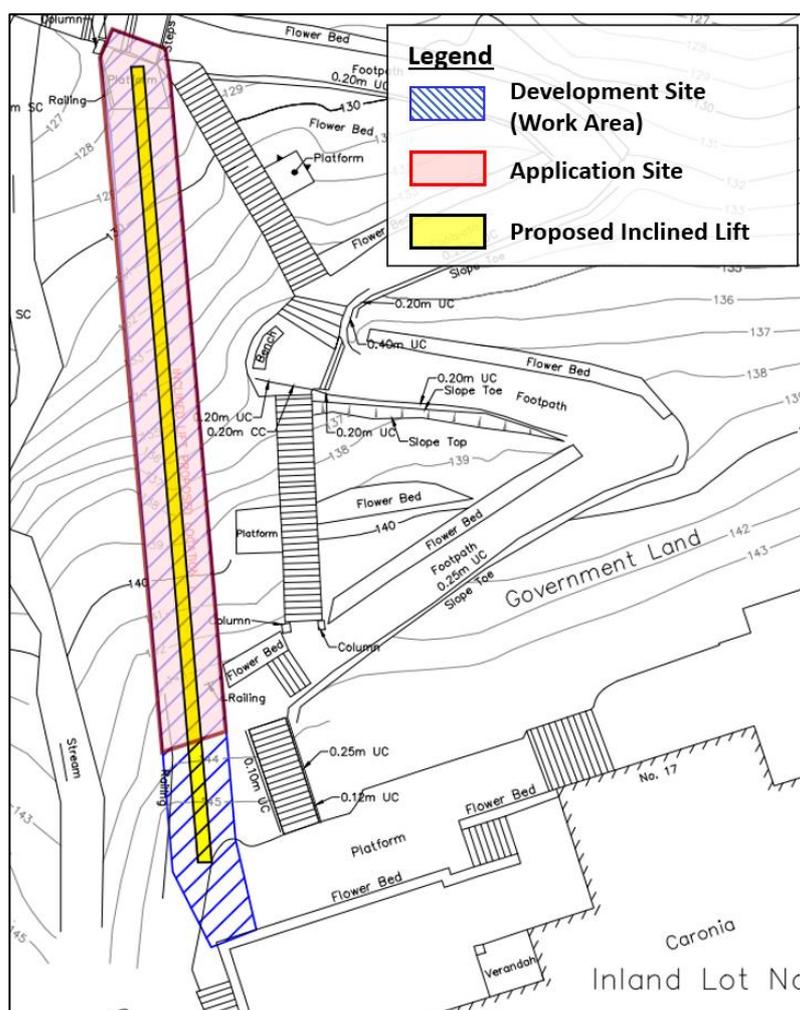
- h. The vehicular access road and parking provision proposed should be appropriate to the scale of the development and comply with relevant standards. Access and parking should not adversely affect existing trees or other natural landscape features. Tree preservation and landscaping proposals should be provided.*
- i. The proposed development should not overstrain the capacity of existing and planned infrastructure such as sewerage, roads and water supply. It should not adversely affect drainage or aggravate flooding in the area.*
- j. The proposed development must comply with the development controls and restrictions of areas designated as water gathering grounds.*
- k. The proposed development should not overstrain the overall provision of G/IC facilities in the general area.*
- l. The proposed development should not be susceptible to adverse environmental effects from pollution sources nearby such as traffic noise, unless adequate mitigating measures are provided, and it should not itself be the source of pollution.*
- m. Any proposed development on a slope or hillside should not adversely affect slope stability.*

### 3. PROPOSED ACCESS ROAD (INCLINED LIFT)

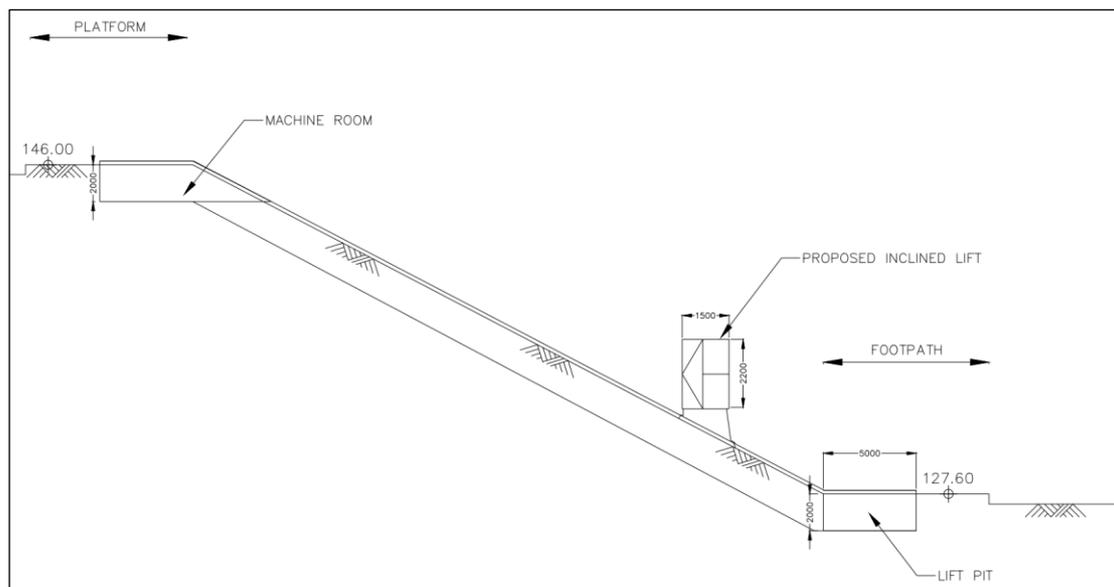
#### 3.1 The Proposal

3.1.1 Schematic and sectional drawings of the Proposed Access (Inclined Lift) are presented in **Appendix 1** of this Supporting Planning Statement. The Proposed Access, involving the installation of an inclined lift (about of 32m in length) and the associated works area forms the Development Site (about 89.6m<sup>2</sup>), of which approx. 69.7m<sup>2</sup> falls within the Application Site. This is to provide barrier-free access alongside the existing RoW, with a view to enhancing accessibility for the residents of Caronia.

3.1.2 The Proposed Access (Inclined Lift) is strategically positioned adjacent to the existing gate at the lower section of the RoW, at approx. +127.6mPD, extending uphill to the platform of the Caronia at approx. +146.0mPD (**Figures 3.1 & 3.2** refers). To minimise potential intrusion into the surrounding environment, the proposed inclined lift features a compact design with a dimension of approx. 2.2m in height and 1.5m in width, which will facilitate seamless integration with the existing terrain and built features, such as the adjacent staircase and footpath.



**Figure 3.1: The Proposed Inclined Lift**



**Figure 3.2: Section of The Proposed Inclined Lift**

### **3.2 Site Selection and Alignment Considerations**

3.2.1 Drawing on the experience of the previously rejected planning applications (**Section 2.6** refers), the location and alignment of the Proposed Access Road have been carefully studied and selected, taking into account the rejection grounds and considerations by TPB Members.

3.2.2 The site selection has addressed TPB’s concerns on the potential impact to the public amenity and declared monument by strategically positioning the proposed inclined lift away from the public walking trail along Bowen Road and pushing it to the farthest corner possible to avoid direct interface with the declared monument (i.e. 21-Arch Section of the Bowen Aqueduct). Further, the application site area has been significantly reduced to a minimal size and scale (about 69.7m<sup>2</sup>) to serve only essential access function without compromising the integrity of the “GB” zone.

3.2.3 Not least, the alignment of the proposed inclined lift has also been carefully planned to avoid extensive clearance of existing vegetation or landscape. Site survey confirmed that only 5 nos. of tree (2 nos. within the Site and 3 nos. outside the Site) of common species will be affected and that they will be compensated in the immediate surrounding (please refer to **Section 3.4** for further details).

### **3.3 Visual Considerations**

3.3.1 To minimise visual impact and ensure compatibility with the surrounding environment, various sensitive design features will be incorporated in the proposed inclined lift. For instance, non-reflective materials and natural colour schemes will be adopted for seamless integration with the surrounding environment and existing terrain. In addition, the compact size

of the proposed inclined lift would further reduce potential intrusion, ensuring negligible physical and visual impact onto the surrounding area.

- 3.3.2 As demonstrated in **Figure 3.3**, the proposed inclined lift will be largely or even completely shielded off by the existing vegetation when viewing from different locations along Bowen Road. When the proposed incline lift arrives at the footpath level near Bowen Road, the top portion of the glassy compartment would be visible; on the contrary, when it reaches the platform level, view towards the proposed inclined lift would be completely blocked by existing vegetation. Since the proposed inclined lift would blend in well with the surroundings and appear visually compatible with the low-rise and low-density residential characteristics, only negligible visual impact would be envisaged.



**Figure 3.3: Photomontages**

### 3.4 Tree Preservation and Landscape Proposal

3.4.1 The Applicant has carried out a Tree Survey (**Appendix 2** refers) that covers both the Application Site and as well as the area 3m away from both sides of the boundary. As revealed in the Tree Survey, there are a total of 11 nos. of existing trees, including 2 nos. within the Site and 9 nos. outside the Site. All existing trees are common species that can be found in Hong Kong. No Old and Valuable Trees (OVT), protected species, nor Tree of Particular Interest (TPI) has been identified. Out of the 11 nos. existing trees, 6 nos. are proposed to be retained, whilst 5 nos. (2 nos. within the Site and 3 nos. outside the Site) would be felled. In terms compensation, a total of 8 nos. of standard trees would be planted in the immediate surroundings of the Site along the slope, achieving a compensatory ratio of 1:1.6.

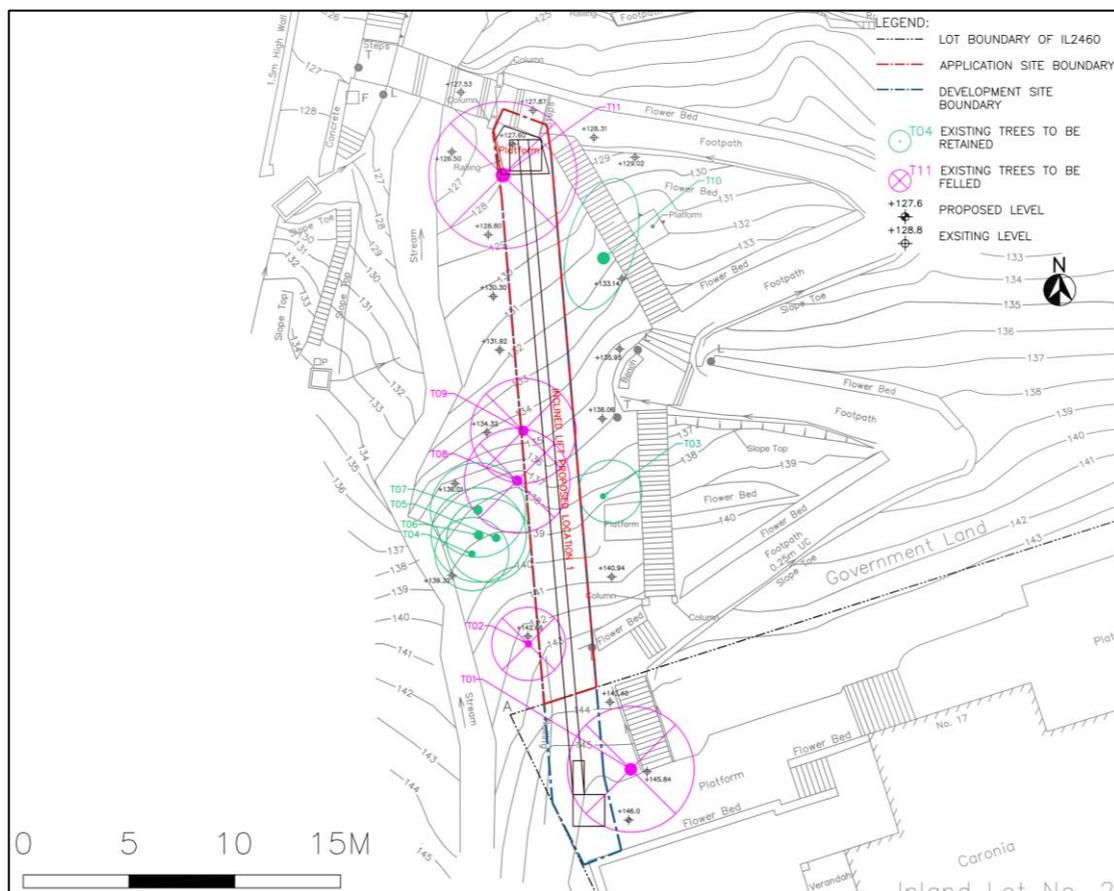


Figure 3.4: Landscape Proposal

#### 4. PLANNING JUSTIFICATIONS

##### 4.1 The Proposed Access (Inclined Lift) is “Small in Size and Minimal in Scale”

4.1.1 The Proposed Access, involving the installation of an inclined lift and the associated works area, occupies a site area of about 89.6m<sup>2</sup> only (or 69.7sq.m in terms of Application Site), which is exceptionally small in size and minimal in scale. Amongst which, only a negligible 5.1% of the “GB” area between Caronia and Bowen Road will be occupied (**Figure 4.1** refers). The small site size ensures that the Proposed Access Road will only serve essential access function without compromising the integrity of the “GB” zone.



**Figure 4.1: Affected “GB” Area**

4.1.2 In addition to its small size, the proposed inclined lift also features a compact design with a dimension of about 2.2m in height and about 1.5m in width. The minimal scale of the proposed inclined lift represent a low-profile design, which would ensure negligible visual and physical impact, as well as seamless integration with the surrounding environment.

##### 4.2 Compatible with Surrounding Environment

4.2.1 Although the Site falls primarily within a “GB” zone, it is actually a sparsely vegetated cut-slope with low landscape and amenity value. No least, the surrounding environment of the Site is characterised by existing hard-paved infrastructures (i.e. staircase and footpath), and low-rise residential developments such as Caronia and 16 Bowen Road. The Proposed Access Road is compatible with the surrounding environment in terms of land use and character.

4.2.2 Nonetheless, to further enhance compatibility with the existing built environment, various sensitive design features, such as non-reflective surface and natural colour scheme, will be adopted for the proposed inclined lift to harmonise with the surrounding environment.

**4.3 No Adverse Impact on Public Amenity and Declared Monument**

4.3.1 While the Application Site is located on Government Land, it is actually gated and not publicly accessible. In addition, to avoid direct impact on the public amenity and interface with the declared monument (i.e. 21-Arch Section of the Bowen Aqueduct), the proposed inclined lift is strategically positioned away from the public walking trail along Bowen Road (**Figure 2.1** refers). Through careful site selection and alignment, the Proposed Access Road will not adversely affect the amenity and historical value of the area, thereby preserving public amenity and the integrity of the declared monument.

**4.4 In line with TPB PG-No. 10**

4.4.1 The Proposed Access Road, involving only installation of a inclined lift, is small in size and minimal in scale. It is fully in line with the planning criteria set out in TPB PG-No.10 and the justifications are tabulated as follows:

<u>Main Planning Criteria</u>		<u>Justification</u>
(a)	There is a general presumption against development (other than redevelopment) in a "GB" zone. In general the Board will only be prepared to approve applications for development in the context of requests to rezone to an appropriate use.	With an site area of about 89.6sq.m (or 69.7sq.m in terms of Application Site), the Proposed Access Road is small in size and minimal in scale. Not least, only about 5.1% of "GB" area between Caronia and Bowen Road will be affected by the proposal. Given the small size of the Proposed Access Road, the integrity of the "GB" zone will not be compromised.
(b)	An application for new development in a "GB" zone will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and must be justified with very strong planning grounds. The scale and intensity of the proposed development including the plot ratio, site coverage and building height should be compatible with the character of surrounding areas. With the exception of New Territories Exempted Houses, a plot ratio up to 0.4 for residential development may be permitted.	In addition, the proposal only involves installation of a inclined lift, which serves an essential function of providing barrier-free access. With a dimension of about 2.2m in height and 1.5m in width, the proposed inclined lift is minimal in scale and intensity, and compatible with the character of surrounding areas. It also represents a low-profile design that would ensure negligible visual and physical impact.

<u>Main Planning Criteria</u>		<u>Justification</u>
(g)	The design and layout of any proposed development should be compatible with the surrounding area. The development should not involve extensive clearance of existing natural vegetation, affect the existing natural landscape, or cause any adverse visual impact on the surrounding environment.	<p>To avoid extensive clearance of existing natural vegetation and adverse visual impact, site selection and alignment of the Proposed Access Road were carefully studied. First off, it is strategically positioned away from the public walking trail along Bowen Road and the declared monument. Secondly, the alignment of the inclined lift has successfully minimise vegetation clearance, under which only 5 nos. of tree (2 nos. within the Site and 3 nos. outside the Site) of common species will be affected. The affected trees will be compensated in the immediate surrounding (<b>Figure 3.4</b> refers).</p> <p>Not least, sensitive design features, such as non-reflective surface and natural colour scheme, will be adopted, which will not only minimise potential visual intrusion, but also ensure seamless integration with the surrounding environment. As demonstrated in <b>Figure 3.3</b>, the proposed inclined lift will be largely or completely shielded off when viewing from Bowen Road. Hence, the Proposed Access Road is envisaged to result in negligible visual impact.</p>

#### **4.5 Improvement to Accessibility for the Existing Residents**

4.5.1 Situated on a steep slope with gradient of about 1:1.8, the Caronia has no direct vehicular access nor served by any barrier-free facilities. At present, access to Caronia is restricted to the steep staircase and footpath leading from Bowen Road. In this regard, the accessibility of Caronia is severely hindered by the steep terrain, which created a pedestrian-hostile environment, posing significant challenges to elderly, not to mention safety issue during wet and humid weather.

4.5.2 Provision of an inclined lift next to the existing RoW would effectively address the accessibility issue and transform the residential site into a more pedestrian-friendly environment, thereby enhancing the overall liveability, inclusivity and safety for existing residents of the Caronia, while also without compromising the integrity of the “GB” zone.

#### **4.6 Adjustments Made To Address TPB’s Previous Concerns**

4.6.1 In response to the TPB’s considerations and rejection grounds from the previous planning applications (**Section 2.6** refers), the current proposal has incorporated various adjustments to address TPB’s concerns and comply with TPB PG-No.10. The Applicant’s proactive approach demonstrates the commitment to balance accessibility needs as well as the conservation objectives of the “GB” zone.

##### *Optimised Site Selection and Alignment Design*

4.6.2 To minimise potential impacts on public amenities and the declared monument, the proposed inclined lift has been strategically positioned away from Bowen Road (i.e. Bowen Road Fitness Trail & declared monument) at the expense of the optimum convenience of the residents. Future users will have to take a few steps off Bowen Road before reaching the proposed inclined lift. Unlike the previous applications, the current proposal has avoided direct interface with the declared monument by locating the inclined lift to the farthest feasible corner. Not least, there will not be any direct sightline to the inclined lift from the Fitness Trail. Coupled with the negligible visual impact, the potential impact on public amenities will be minimised to a negligible level.

##### *Substantial Reduction in Site Area*

4.6.3 The development site area of the current proposal has been significantly reduced to about 89.6m<sup>2</sup> (or 69.7m<sup>2</sup> in terms of Application Site), representing a substantial reduction compared to the average of 997.5m<sup>2</sup> for the previous applications. The small site area represents a minimal footprint that serves only essential accessibility function while limiting the encroachment onto the “GB” zone. By adopting the “small in size, minimal in scale” approach, the current proposal will result in a much lower visual and landscape impact than those of the previous applications’, in that only negligible visual and landscape impact would be envisaged.

4.6.4 In addition, to further minimise the site area, the Applicant has taken deliberate step of forgoing the direct access to Bowen Road, which would have required a larger land take, causing greater disruption to the “GB” zone and public amenities. This compromise made, combined with the site selection, alignment and sensitive design measures, reflects the Applicant’s commitment to balance accessibility needs with the conservation objectives of the “GB” zone.

#### **4.7 Approval of the Planning Application is Consistent with TPB’s Previous Decisions On Similar Applications**

4.7.1 As detailed in **Section 2.7**, the TPB has previously approved several similar planning applications for access road use within “GB” zone. The site area of these applications range from 72m<sup>2</sup> to 1,662m<sup>2</sup>. The Proposed

Access Road is significantly smaller in size and scale than these approved schemes.

- 4.7.2 As such, approval of the current Planning Application would be consistent with the TPB’s previous decisions on similar small-scale developments within “GB” zone. Given the small size, minimal scale, and negligible physical, visual and environmental impact of the Proposed Access Road, the proposal will not set any undesirable precedent.

#### **4.8 Technically Feasible with No Insurmountable Impact**

##### ***Visual***

- 4.8.1 Based on the photomontages provided in **Figure 3.3**, the proposed inclined lift will only result in negligible visual impact as it will be largely or completely shielded off by existing vegetation when viewing from different locations along Bowen Road.

##### ***Tree and Landscape (Appendix 2 refers)***

- 4.8.2 A total of 11 nos. of trees, including 2 nos. within the Site and 9 nos. within its 3m buffer, were identified. No OVT, protected species, nor TPI was surveyed. Amongst the 11 nos. of existing trees, 6 nos. are proposed to be retained, while the remaining 5 nos. (2 nos. within the Site and 3 nos. its 3m buffer), which will be inevitably affected by the Proposed Access, are recommended to be felled. A compensation ratio of 1:1.6 (i.e. 8 nos. of trees) will be achieved. The compensatory trees will be reprovioned to the immediate surroundings of the Site along the slope.

##### ***Geotechnical (Appendix 3 refers)***

- 4.8.3 Based on the findings of the Geotechnical Planning Review Report, the Proposed Development is considered relatively small in scale and geotechnically feasible to be implemented at the Site. While no natural terrain hazard study is required, geotechnical assessment report, detailed design and works proposal of associated works shall be submitted for approval in subsequent stages.

## **5. CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY**

5.1.1 In light of the above, it is believed that the Proposed Access (Inclined Lift) should be favourably considered by the TPB from the planning and technical point of view.

5.1.2 The Planning Department and Members of the TPB are respectfully requested to give favourable consideration to support the Proposed Access (Inclined Lift) based on the following main reasons:

- The Proposed Access (Inclined Lift) is small in size and minimal in scale;
- The Proposed Access (Inclined Lift) is compatible with the surrounding environment;
- The Proposal will not adversely affect public amenity and declared monument;
- There will be no adverse visual impact;
- There will be no adverse landscape impact;
- The Proposal is in line with Town Planning Board Guidelines for Application for Development within Green Belt Zone;
- The Proposed Access (Inclined Lift) will enhance accessibility;
- The Proposal has incorporated adjustments to address TPB’s previous concerns;
- Approval of the Planning Application would be consistent with TPB’s previous decisions on similar applications; and