

Response to Public Comments

- This document provides clarifications in response to public comments received during the statutory public inspection period for the s.16 planning application No. A/NE-KTS/578.

Traffic

- Two ingress/egress points are proposed at the northern and eastern sides of the Site respectively, providing independent access to the Proposed Laboratory. Given the minimal additional traffic volume anticipated (approximately 20 vehicle trips per day, including a shuttle minibus service for the majority of employees) and the availability of adequate on-site parking and manoeuvring space within the Site, the Proposed Laboratory is unlikely to cause queueing or congestion on the surrounding road network. Furthermore, the Proposed Laboratory will not involve the use of heavy goods vehicles. As such, no significant traffic impact on the surrounding area is anticipated.
- Overall, the Proposed Laboratory is not expected to give rise to any significant traffic or safety issues.

Environment

- The laboratory's testing services will primarily involve determining the physical properties of construction materials, including mass, density, water content, particle size distribution of soils, concrete compressive strength, and aggregate grading and particle density. All laboratory work will be conducted indoors and performed manually by staff, without the use of heavy machinery. Consequently, the operation of the Proposed Laboratory is not expected to generate dust or emissions, and any air pollution nuisance is considered negligible.
- During the construction stage, air pollution impacts arising from land filling works will be insignificant due to the small volume and short duration of these activities. These works are not expected to generate notable dust or emissions, and any

associated nuisance is considered negligible. In addition, given the low traffic volumes generated, the Proposed Laboratory will not have any significant air quality impact on the surrounding area.

- Wastewater from the Proposed Laboratory will be discharged either to the underground public sewage system or to a septic tank soakaway system, in full compliance with the requirements of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD). Should a soakaway system be adopted, regular desludging will be carried out to ensure proper functioning.
- Overall, nuisance from noise, air, and water pollution is expected to be negligible.

Landscape

- The Site is currently partly occupied by vacant structures, and its immediate surroundings consist of workshops, storage areas for construction materials and vehicles, and temporary structures, rather than rural natural landscape. The Proposed Laboratory and associated filling of land will not alter the landscape character of the surrounding areas. In addition, existing trees on the Site will be preserved, subject to the results of the detailed tree surveys and tree risk assessments which will be conducted at a later stage to ascertain the condition of the trees.

Drainage

- The existing public drainage system along the northern and eastern boundaries of the Site comprises surface channels and underground pipes. The Site will be surfaced with concrete paving laid to a nominal fall, and drainage channels will be constructed along the boundary to convey surface runoff to a proper discharge point, ultimately connecting into the existing public drainage and stormwater system. With the proposed drainage provisions, the Proposed Laboratory will not induce adverse drainage impacts on the surrounding area.

Waste Management

- Waste materials generated during operation will be temporarily stored in a designated enclosed dumping area and disposed of off-site regularly and as necessary. No leakage or odour nuisance is anticipated.
- In addition, as the testing services are primarily concerned with determining the physical properties of construction materials, they will not generate chemical or biological waste.

Compatibility with Surrounding Area

- The Proposed Laboratory is compatible with the surrounding area, which is predominantly occupied by workshops, storage areas for construction materials and vehicles, and temporary structures. The operational characteristics of the Proposed Laboratory are unlikely to adversely affect the surrounding area, including residential dwellings that also fall within the same “Residential (Group D)” (“R(D)”) zone.

Proposed Temporary Use

- The current application is to facilitate the relocation of an existing temporary Public Works Regional Laboratory (PWRL) in Ha Tsuen, as that site needs to be reallocated to the Highways Department for railway depot development. The temporary land allocation for the PWRL in Ha Tsuen is due to expire in mid-2027 and will not be renewed. The Proposed Laboratory, referred to as PWRL (Northern Metropolis (NM)), will provide testing services for construction materials used in public works projects within the NM area. A three-year planning permission is sought to align with the projected timeline for the current initial phase of NM development.
- Given its temporary nature, the proposed PWRL(NM) is best implemented as a standalone facility/site, subject to review upon expiry of the three-year period.
- The proposed temporary laboratory at the Site will not frustrate the long-term planning intentions for the “R(D)” and “Agriculture” zones. Upon expiry of the

planning permission, the Site will be cleared of all temporary structures and reinstated to a condition acceptable to relevant government departments.

Clarifications on the Development Proposal

- This document provides clarifications on the development proposal submitted under the s.16 planning application No. A/NE-KTS/578 as requested by the Fanling, Sheung Shui & Yuen Long East District Planning Office of Planning Department.

Site Search

1.	Please supplement on the considerations for identifying the current Site amongst other potential sites.
	The following locational and operational requirements were considered during the site search exercise: (i) Within Yuen Long District or North District, close to development sites in the Northern Metropolis (NM); (ii) With a minimum site area of about 3,000m²; (iii) Situated on Government land; (iv) A single site that is not divided/ separated by other uses in between; (v) Readily available; (vi) Regular in shape; and (vii) Accessible by existing vehicular road. After considering three other alternative sites located in Ng Ka Tsuen and Kam Tsin Wai in the Yuen Long District and a site at Kwu Tung Road in the North District, the current Site in Hang Tau Tai Po is the only suitable one having regard to the above-mentioned locational and operational requirements.
2.	Please provide a comparison of the scale of the current and proposed laboratory. Justification should be provided if there is increase in scale of operation.
	With reference to the Temporary Government Land Allocation (TGLA) granted, the existing Public Works Regional Laboratory (PWRL) in Ha Tsuen occupies an area of about 2,760m² and has been in operation since 2013. Taking into account the surge in testing demand arising from public civil and infrastructure projects in the NM, the applicant

	identified the current Site, which is larger (about 4,000m ²) and located within the NM, as ideal for the reprovisioning of the PWRL, having considered the above-mentioned operational and locational requirements.
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Land Filling

3.	According to para. 3.6 of the Supplementary Planning Statement (SPS), areas of the Site where trees are present will not be paved. Please clarify, and revise the land filling area and land filling plan as appropriate to exclude the portions of the Site that straddle Trees T1 to T4.
	The majority of the Site, except in areas where trees are present, will be filled (about 3,718m²). The concerned land filling area as indicated on the land filling plan is indicative only and subject to the results of the detailed tree surveys and tree risk assessments which will be conducted at a later stage to ascertain the condition of the trees. Details on the preservation of existing trees (i.e. the landscaping/tree works and the extent of the unpaved area) will be submitted to the CEDD Tree Works Vetting Panel for vetting at a later stage. The above is supplementary to para. 5.3.3 of the SPS. Relevant replacement pages of the SPS, including the revised land filling plan, are at Appendix 1.

Operation Details

4.	Please clarify whether there are operations on Sundays and whether a security guard will be on duty at all times.
	No operations will be conducted on Sundays under normal circumstances. A security guard stationed in the guard booth, working in shifts, will be on duty 24 hours daily.
5.	Please supplement the type of dangerous goods and nuclear materials/equipment to be handled at the proposed laboratory.
	The dangerous goods to be handled are solvent, which is classified as Category 4 Dangerous Goods under the classification system administered by the Fire Services Department (FSD) and will be stored in

	the designated dangerous goods store which is separated from the main laboratory building. The nuclear equipment involved is the nuclear densometer gauge (also known as a nuclear density gauge). It is a portable field tool that uses tiny radioactive sources to quickly measure the density and moisture of soil, in this case, the compacted fill at a construction site. The gauge will be stored in the designated nuclear densometer gauge storeroom which is separated from the main laboratory building.
6.	Please supplement on the relevant guidelines/procedures that will be observed in handling dangerous goods and nuclear materials/equipment.
	For the handling and storage of dangerous goods, as set out in para. 5.7.1 of the SPS, relevant plans and proposals will be submitted to the Fire Services Department (FSD) for approval at a later stage. The applicant will comply with all guidelines and procedures as imposed by the FSD. For the handling and storage of nuclear materials/equipment, the Department of Health/Radiation Board is the relevant authority, and the applicant will comply with the guidelines and procedures as prescribed under the Radiation Ordinance (Cap. 303).
7.	Please supplement the expected time for commencement of operation.
	As set out in para. 6.1 of the SPS, the proposed laboratory is anticipated to commence operation in Q2 2027 at the earliest. This timeline takes into account the time required for the Lands Department to process the subsequent TGLA application after obtaining planning approval, and for the applicant to construct the Proposed Laboratory.

Transport

8.	Please supplement on the mode of transport for staff to access the Site.
	Mode of transport for staff to access the Site include: (i) Shuttle Minibus (a service to be procured by the applicant) From Sheung Shui MTR Station to the Site and vice versa,

	taking approximately 12 minutes (about 5 km) one way; • 2 trips per working day (i.e. one in the early morning and one in the evening); • Would serve the majority of the employee working at the Site. (ii) Green Minibus Route 50K • From Sheung Shui Station Public Light Bus (PLB) Terminus to the PLB stop at Serenity Garden and vice versa, taking approximately 12 minutes (about 5 km) one way; • Followed by a walk of about 550m from the PLB stop at Serenity Garden to the Site and vice versa, taking approximately 8 minutes one way. (iii) Private Cars • From various origins to the Site; • Access to the Site from Castle Peak Road – Kwu Tung Section via Kwu Tung Road, Hang Tau Road, and the local track is about 2km one way. It is estimated that approximately 20 vehicle trips will be generated per day (including the shuttle minibus service to/from Sheung Shui MTR Station to the proposed laboratory; private car trips to/from home and the proposed laboratory; and private cars/LGVs/MGVs trips to/from construction sites and the proposed laboratory).
9.	Please clarify whether only authorised vehicles of the Proposed Laboratory will be allowed to park at the Site.
	The applicant confirms that only authorised vehicles of the Proposed Laboratory (private cars/LGVs and minibus/MGVs) will access and park at the Site. No heavy goods vehicles of over 24-36 tonnes will be allowed to access the Site.