

1. Introduction

The applicant, 陳繼林, seeks planning permission for temporary storage of agricultural tools with an ancillary office and associated filling of land for a period of 3 years. The subject site falls within the "Agriculture" ("AGR") zone on the approved Ping Che and Ta Kwu Ling Outline Zoning Plan No. S/NE-TKL/14. According to the Notes of the Plan, the proposed use is neither a Column 1 nor Column 2 use in the "AGR" zone. However, the covering Notes of the Plan stipulate that temporary use or development of any land or buildings for a period not exceeding 3 years within the zone requires planning permission from the Town Planning Board ("TPB"), notwithstanding that the use or development is not specified in the Notes. The current use of the subject site is an "On-Farm Domestic Structure," which existed before the 1980s. The applicant is a farmer who is still actively farming on the site (see Annex 4). According to the Notes of the Plan, "On-Farm Domestic Structure" is a Column 1 use, meaning it is always permitted.

2. The Site and Its Surroundings

The subject site falls within the "AGR" zone on the approved Ping Che and Ta Kwu Ling Outline Zoning Plan No. S/NE-TKL/14. The site area is approximately 373 m² (see Annex 2). Currently, the site is occupied by an on-farm domestic structure and growing crops. Access to the site is available via Ping Che Road to the west. There are several temporary warehouses in the vicinity of the subject site, which have previously been approved by the TPB for temporary use for periods of 3 years.

3. Proposal

An enclosed storage area of about 80 m² (10m (L) x 8m (W) x 3.5m (H)) is proposed on the ground floor at the western side of the site for storing agricultural tools. A proposed office, approximately 50 m² (10m (L) x 5m (W) x 3.5m (H)), will also be located on the ground floor at the eastern side of the site. A staircase will be installed between these two structures to access the second floor (see Annex 1). These structures will be accommodated within the existing "On-Farm Domestic Structure." No rebuilding of the structure will be necessary; only internal partitions will separate different functional areas. The application also includes associated land-filling works, covering 373 m² with a concrete filling depth of 0.2 m. The subject site will not provide vehicle parking spaces; employees will access the site on foot. A bus station located nearby is approximately a 3-minute walk from the site. Detailed fire service plans, including fire equipment, have been prepared and are attached in Annex 3. Office operation hours will be from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, with no operation on weekends and public holidays. A detailed drainage proposal will be

submitted after obtaining permission from the TPB, and this proposal will comply fully with Drainage Services Department regulations.

4. Planning Justification

The subject application seeks temporary permission for storage of agricultural tools with an ancillary office and associated land filling at Lot 1126 in D.D. 82 Ping Che for a period of three years. The proposed development addresses a crucial practical need by providing secure and dedicated storage space for agricultural tools, which are essential for supporting and sustaining agricultural productivity on-site and within the broader Ping Che community. This application actively supports local agricultural activities and aligns with the broader policy goals of the government to promote agricultural sustainability and rural livelihood. The applicant is currently actively farming the site, cultivating crops such as dragon fruit, cucumbers, and other vegetables and fruits. The ancillary office proposed will serve a practical function as a place for farmers to manage the sale of their produce, directly supporting local agricultural commerce. This arrangement reinforces the agricultural use and purpose of the site. An essential aspect of this proposal is the efficient and sustainable utilization of an existing structure, thereby optimizing land use without necessitating any new construction or substantial alteration. This approach ensures that the rural and agricultural character of the area remains intact, preserving the visual landscape and avoiding any unnecessary disruption to the existing environment. The limited scale of associated filling works, covering a modest 373 m² area with only 0.2 m depth of concrete, demonstrates sensitivity towards environmental considerations and drainage management. Such minimal land modification ensures that natural water drainage patterns and local topography remain largely unaffected, thereby reducing potential drainage concerns. From a traffic perspective, the proposed operation will notably mitigate transport-related impacts. The harvested vegetables and fruits will be manually transported to a nearby loading and unloading area, thus eliminating the need for vehicular traffic within the site. The decision to exclude vehicle parking and loading/unloading facilities significantly reduces vehicular traffic, aligning with broader sustainability goals and minimizing the risk of congestion or road safety hazards. The convenient proximity of public transportation further reinforces this sustainable transport approach. The structured operating hours from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., weekdays only, ensures minimal disruption to the neighboring community. With operations contained entirely indoors, noise generation will be negligible, ensuring peace and tranquility in the area, particularly during evenings, weekends, and public holidays when activities will cease entirely. Moreover, the entirely indoor-based activities for storage and office use will prevent the generation of pollutants,

safeguarding local air quality and overall environmental health. Comprehensive fire safety plans highlight the applicant's proactive measures in addressing potential safety concerns, thus maintaining high operational standards and minimizing risks to the surrounding environment and community. Additionally, the site's strategic location and existing infrastructure further justify the appropriateness of the proposed development. The presence of similar temporary warehouses nearby, previously approved by the Town Planning Board, underscores compatibility with surrounding land uses and existing planning precedents. The applicant's long-standing active agricultural practice on-site demonstrates their commitment to sustainable agriculture, adding credibility and reliability to their management of the proposed ancillary facilities. The planned use of internal partitions to delineate different functional areas within the existing building, rather than constructing new facilities, represents a thoughtful and minimalistic approach to land use that preserves existing resources and infrastructure. This careful planning further minimizes construction-related disturbances and environmental impacts. Additionally, the proposed development supports broader agricultural enhancement goals, contributing positively to local food production capabilities by ensuring agricultural tools and equipment remain protected and readily accessible. This will help optimize farming operations, enabling more effective and efficient agricultural practices in the area. Furthermore, the proposal aligns with Hong Kong's broader sustainability and rural revitalization policies, by encouraging continued agricultural activities, preserving agricultural heritage, and supporting rural community livelihoods. This promotes long-term sustainability in both economic and environmental terms, providing meaningful employment opportunities in the agricultural sector and ensuring the ongoing productive use of rural land. Upon approval, a robust drainage strategy will be promptly submitted, ensuring complete adherence to Drainage Services Department regulations, thus preempting any potential adverse impacts related to water management and flooding. In summary, this proposal represents a balanced and strategic approach to supporting essential agricultural operations, maintaining environmental integrity, and enhancing local sustainability practices. Considering these substantial benefits and the absence of significant impacts, this application merits favorable consideration by the Town Planning Board.









