

**Planning Application to Town Planning Board for  
Proposed ‘Social Welfare Facility’ (Residential Care  
Home for Persons with Disabilities) (“RCHD”) and  
Proposed Excavation of Land Associated with the  
Proposed RCHD in “Village Type Development”  
Zone, at Portion of Former Wa Fung School (華封學  
校) and Adjoining Government Land, Lam Hau  
Tsuen, Yuen Long, New Territories**

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# Executive Summary

This planning application aims to seek a permission of the Town Planning Board (“**TPB**”) for two planning proposals at Lam Hau Tsuen, Yuen Long:

- (i) to set up the community needed single-storey ‘Social Welfare Facility’ (Residential Home for Persons with Disabilities) (“**RCHD**”) with 90 bed spaces partly by conversion of existing portion of the former Wah Fung School and partly to take up its adjoining Government Land (“**GL**”); and
- (ii) to carry out excavation works associated with the proposed RCHD within the Application Site.

It is the intention of the Applicant to achieve THREE primary objectives in this planning application: **(a)** to rehouse urgently the entire existing RCHD operation (26 bed spaces) in Pak Sha Tsuen (“**PST**”) now under land resumption process for Yuen Long South New Development Area; **(b)** to combine another existing RCHD operation (24 bed spaces) at Hung Shui Kiu (“**HSK**”) for a more effective integrated operational management; **(c)** to supply additional 40 new bed spaces to meet the pressing demand in the community.

The proposed RCHD is a single-storey development. It covers a total land area of about 2,945m<sup>2</sup> (i.e. about 87.8% in the extent of the School site area and about 12.2% in adjoining GL). Upon completion in 2027, it will provide a total of 90 bed spaces for persons with disabilities (“**PWDs**”).

It has been demonstrated that the proposed RCHD in line fully with the Government’s policy objective in addressing the soaring demand for such social welfare facility; it conforms totally with the intention of making good use of Vacant School Premises; and also make the best use of vacant and unattended GL to meet the urgent community needs; and it will not cause any adverse or unacceptable impact on the local road traffic, sewerage or drainage aspects in the area. It is a “win-win” project.

The Applicant would like to thank TPB in advance, if a sympathetic consideration can be given to and approve this application, all affected existing patients at PST could be rehoused in a short period of time and to allow the Applicant to combine its other active RCHD at HSK, and at the same time to provide additional 40 bed spaces for other recovery patients in need in our community.

## 行政摘要

本規劃申請旨在懇請城市規劃委員會（下稱「城規會」）准許位於元朗 攬口村以下兩個擬議規劃項目：

- (i) 建設一個由改建部分屬於早前華封學校校舍建築物，以及由結合該校毗連政府土地而成，用作配置 90 床位的單層「社會福利設施」（即殘疾人士院舍），應對社區需求；及
- (ii) 與申請院舍發展相關的挖土工程。

申請人期望本規劃申請可達至以下三個目標：(i) 盡快安置受元朗南新發展區收地影響的現有白沙村院舍(26 個床位)；(ii) 合併現有位於洪水橋(24 床位)院舍，發揮統一營運管理效益；及 (iii) 為社區增加 40 床位，紓緩迫切需求的壓力。

整個擬議院舍是單層高的。佔地合共 2,945 平方米(當中 87.8%屬於學校原址土地;12.2%是屬於毗連政府土地)。預期在 2027 年完工後，即可提供 90 個院舍床位。

本申請已證實，擬議院舍發展，與政府就社區對解決提供殘疾人士院舍需求，所提出的政策目標是完全一致；完全符合以更「接地氣」的方式，來善用空置校舍用地的用途意向；善用閑置和沒有管理的政府土地資源，來應對社區對相關院舍需求的迫切壓力；同時，也不會對本區帶來任何不良或不可接受的道路交通、排污或排雨水方面的問題。這是一個對殘疾人士和舒緩解決提供殘疾人士院舍需求壓力的適時適地「雙贏」項目。

申請人代表現有和將來院友，以萬二分感恩的心情，盼望「城規會」能給予共情之心批准是次規劃申請，讓申請人可以在短期內安置受影響的白沙村院友及合併現有洪水橋院舍的同時，亦能為社區提供額外 40 個康復人士床位，紓緩現有的迫切渴求壓力。

## **1. THE APPLICATION**

1.1. Vision Planning Consultants Ltd. has been commissioned by Joyful House (Rehabilitation Dormitory) Limited (the “**Applicant**”), to prepare and to submit this planning application on its behalf. This planning application aims to seek a permission from the Town Planning Board (“**TPB**”) for the following two items:

- (i) proposed ‘Social Welfare Facility’ (for Residential Care Home for Persons with Disabilities) (“**RCHD**”). The proposed RCHD is a single-storey development. It partly covers a large portion of an existing single-storey former rural school site, known as Wa Fung School (華封學校) and partly covers three small portions of adjoining Government Land (“**GL**”) (hereinafter collectively called the “**Subject Site**”) at Lam Hau Tsuen (欖口村), Yuen Long (**Figures 1 and 2**); and
- (ii) proposed excavation of land in association with the proposed RCHD development.

## **2. THE OBJECTIVES**

2.1. This planning application intends to achieve the following three primary objectives:

- (i) To rehouse urgently the Applicant’s existing RCHD operation (with 26 bed spaces solely for persons in mental recovery) at Pak Sha Tsuen (“**PST**”) (**Figure 3**) which falls within Second Phase Development (Stage 2B Works) of the Yuen Long South New Development Area (“**YLS NDA**”) and the land resumption process has been commenced (**Figure 4**);
- (ii) To combine the Applicant’s other RCHD operation (with 24 bed spaces solely for persons in mental recovery) at Hung Shui Kiu (“**HSK**”) (**Figure 3**) in the proposed RCHD for more effective integrated operational management; and
- (iii) To supply additional bed spaces, where technically feasible, to release the pressing demand for this disadvantaged group in the community.

### 3. BACKGROUND OF THE APPLICANT

- 3.1. The Applicant has been operating RCHD for persons in mental recovery at medium care level in Hong Kong since 2006. At present, the Applicant has already expanded its services to two RCHD operations, i.e., one at HSK (24 bed spaces) and one at PST (26 bed spaces) (**Figure 3**).

#### *Existing HSK RCHD Operation (Figure 3)*

- 3.2. This operation was established in June 2007 [i.e. well before the commencement of the Residential Care Homes (Persons with Disabilities) Ordinance (Cap. 613) ("**RCHD Ordinance**") on 18.11.2011]. It is now operated under a Licence valid until 31.7.2026. It provides a total of 24 bed spaces. This operation was approved with conditions by TPB under Planning Application No. A/YL-HT/975 on 22.4.2016.

#### *Existing PST RCHD Operation (Figure 3)*

- 3.3. This operation was established in June 2010. It provides a total of 26 bed spaces under a Licence valid until 31.1.2026. This operation was approved with conditions by TPB under Planning Application No. A/YL-TYST/967 on 21.6.2019.

#### *Specific Nature of Operation*

- 3.4. The two existing RCHD operations managed by the Applicant only accept adult patients referred from Department of General Adult Psychiatry (成人精神科) and Substance Abuse Service (物質濫用科) in Castle Peak Hospital. These patients include:
- a. "Conditionally discharged patients" as defined under the Mental Health Ordinance (Cap. 136);
  - b. Patients that cannot be handled by other rehabilitation centres in the Yuen Long and Tuen Mun area; and/or
  - c. Patients that other NGOs are unwilling to take up.
- 3.5. These two operations are under a strict "*closed door management*" (閉門管理) arrangement. All residents **cannot leave the premises without approval from the doctors / medical superintendent (as defined under Cap. 136)**.

3.6. **Under normal circumstances, no causal visits are allowed. Special visits may be allowed strictly through a visit-by-appointment system only. No two visits will be permitted in any one time slot.**

3.7. According to the Applicant, in its previous practical experience, there will not be more than 5 residents eligible to work at a sheltered workshop in Tuen Mun. All these workers, if any, will commute to and from the workshop via the Applicant's in-house shuttle bus. The same in-house shuttle bus is also used for sending and picking up patients to attend pre-arranged medical appointments in Castle Peak Hospital.

#### ***Land Resumption and Departure Deadline***

3.8. As shown in **Figure 4**, the PST RCHD operation is located within an area zoned "Residential - Zone 1 (Subsidised Sale Flats with Commercial)" ("**R1(SSF)c**") on the Revised Recommended Outline Development Plan ("**RODP**") of the YLS NDA promulgated in May 2020. According to the YLS Development Phasing Plan, the PST RCHD operation falls within Second Phase Development (Stage 2B Works).

3.9. With respect to the Second Phase Development works, the Lands Department ("**LandsD**") issued letters to affected households and business undertakings, including the Applicant, in June 2023 and stated clearly the expected dates of departure, compensation and rehousing arrangements.

3.10. Subsequently, on 20.2.2025, the LandsD posted resumption notices and acquisition notices for implementation of Second Phase Development of YLS NDA<sup>1</sup>. The actual departure deadline for affected households and business undertakings has been "[...] *scheduled to depart in batches from the third quarter of 2025 to the third quarter of 2026.*" (**Appendix 1**)

#### ***Actions Taken After LandsD's Resumption Notices***

3.11. Upon receipt of the LandsD's land resumption notification in June 2023, the Applicants has actively searched for possible private sites for relocation in Tuen Mun and Yuen

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<sup>1</sup> Government posts notices of land resumption and acquisition for Second Phase Development of Yuen Long South New Development Area. (Available at: <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202502/20/P2025022000372.htm>)



Long Districts as these two areas are easily accessible to and from Castle Peak Hospital. But unfortunately, it was unsuccessful.

- 3.12. The Applicant has then focused on Vacant School Premises (“VSP”) and after several rounds of shortlisting and site visits, the site of former Wa Fung School was selected. An application to LandsD has been submitted for use of the vacant Government Land for Community, Institutional or Non-Profit Making Purposes on a short term basis.
- 3.13. To meet LandsD’s requirements set out under para. 2(v) of the ‘Guidelines for Application for Use of Vacant Government Land for Community, Institutional or Non-Profit Making Purposes on Short Term Basis’<sup>2</sup>, the Applicant has made an application to HKGCSE for SEE Mark Accreditation in April 2025. According to HKGCSE, the next panel meeting to review the SEE Mark application is scheduled for August 2025.
- 3.14. The Applicants have also written to the Development Bureau (“DevB”) in March 2025 to obtain supports from DevB and LWB respectively for the proposed relocation of the PST operation to the former Wa Fung School (**Appendix 2**).
- 3.15. A tentative project programme of the proposed RCHD development is attached in **Appendix 3**.
- 3.16. According to this tentative programme, all patients in PST RCHD will have to temporarily decant to other RCHD facilities for a short period of time. The Applicant is now actively working with the Social Welfare Department and Castle Peak Hospital on such ad hoc decanting arrangements. However, having considered the complexity of cases presently under the Applicant’s management, they would be hard pressed to find suitable temporary or short-term residential care service with the same level of experience and expertise.
- 3.17. In view of the above, the earlier the affected residents can be rehoused into the proposed RCHD, the greater the degree of relief to both the Applicant and the affected residents can be achieved.

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<sup>2</sup> ‘Guidelines for Application for Use of Vacant Government Land for Community, Institutional or Non-Profit Making Purposes on Short Term Basis’. Available at: [https://www.landsd.gov.hk/doc/en/Pamphlet/guide\\_vgl.pdf](https://www.landsd.gov.hk/doc/en/Pamphlet/guide_vgl.pdf)

#### 4. KEY REVIEW OF SUBJECT SITE

##### *The Former Wa Fung School Premises*

- 4.1. The former Wa Fung School commenced operation in the 1950s and was renovated in 2002 to continue to serve the local community. The entire school compound is shown in **Figure 2**. In accordance with the data provided by the LandsD's public domain system, this School covers a total land area of about 2,920m<sup>2</sup>. The School ceased operation in November 2008 (more than 16 years now) due to failure to meet the minimum threshold number of Primary One students under the policy on "Consolidation of Under-utilised Primary Schools". It comprises a total of 5 classrooms and 3 special rooms<sup>3</sup>.
- 4.2. It should be noted that the eastern end of this School site comprises two private lots and a piece of steep sloping area (**Figure 2**). Having considered the urgency of the project and the need to minimise the construction cost, the Applicant has decided to exclude these portions of the School site. As a result, the Subject Site only takes up about 88.5% (or about 2,585m<sup>2</sup>) of the overall School site (i.e.  $2,585\text{m}^2 / 2,920\text{m}^2 \times 100\% = 88.5\%$ ).
- 4.3. Having considered the following considerations, three small portions of long unattended GL of about 360m<sup>2</sup> adjoining the School site (two at the west and one at the east), as shown in **Figure 2**, are also included in this planning application:
- i. a need to provide a set of up-to-date ancillary facilities (E&M, EVA and sewerage facilities) to comply with the present building regulations and standards;
  - ii. a need to provide a new and much-needed vehicular entrance next to the local access road;
  - iii. a need to make the best use of land resources to supply additional bed spaces within the Applicant's manageable capacity to meet the pressing needs of the community;
  - iv. a need to create a self-contained home-like living environment with adequate circulation, and simple landscaped active and passive open spaces for residents; and
  - v. a need to provide some basic carparking facilities.

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<sup>3</sup> Annex 2 to LCQ16: Allocation of land and vacant school premises for education purposes. Available at: <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201312/11/P201312110391.htm>

- 4.4 In its latest 2024 review on Vacant School Premises announced on 27 May 2024, the Planning Department (“**PlanD**”) has recommended the subject School site to be retained for ‘Government, Institution or Community’ use.

## **5. PLANNING CONTEXT**

### ***Statutory Planning Aspects***

- 5.1 The Subject Site falls within an area zoned “Village Type Development” (“**V**”) on the Approved Tong Yan San Tsuen Outline Zoning Plan (“**OZP**”) No. S/YL-TYST/14 (**Figure 1**). According to the Notes of the OZP for “V” zone, ‘Social Welfare Facility’ is a Column 2 use that may be permitted with or without conditions on application to the TPB (**Appendix 4**). A permission from the TPB for the present proposed RCHD at the Subject Site is required.
- 5.2 The Remarks in the same Notes also states that *“Any filling of pond or excavation of land, including to effect a change of use to any of those specified in Columns 1 and 2 above or the uses or developments always permitted under the covering Notes (except public works co-ordinated or implemented by Government, and maintenance, repair or rebuilding works), shall not be undertaken or continued on or after the date of the first publication in the Gazette of the notice of the draft development permission area plan without the permission from the Town Planning Board under section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance.”*
- 5.3 The proposed RCHD will inevitably involve various levels of excavation works, including, but not limited to, erection of boundary walls, construction of new buildings for ancillary E&M and operational facilities, residential compartments, sewage disposal facilities, hard and soft landscaping works, and on-site drainage system. A permission from the TPB to carry out such excavation works in association with the proposed RCHD is also required.

### ***Previous Planning Applications***

- 5.4 The subject School site is subject of three previously approved planning applications, namely Applications Nos. A/YL-TYST/162, 333 and 1132. They were approved with

conditions by the Rural and New Town Planning Committee (“RNTPC”) respectively on 1.3.2002, 3.11.2006 and 10.6.2022. The application boundary under Application No. A/YL-TYST/1132 is very similar to that in the present planning application.

- 5.5 **Table 1** below outlines the key information of the above three previously approved applications.

**Table 1 Summary of Three Previously Approved Schemes**

| Application No. |                | Applied Use   | Approved on | Remarks   |
|-----------------|----------------|---|-------------|---|
| 1.              | A/YL-TYST/162  | Extension of School Building                          | 1.3.2002    | Lapsed in 2005  |
| 2.              | A/YL-TYST/333  | Temporary social centre (for 3 years)                 | 11.2006     | Revoked in 2008 (due to non-compliance with time-limited planning conditions) |
| 3.              | A/YL-TYST/1132 | Temporary RCHE* (for 10 years) and excavation of land | 10.6.2022   | Revoked in 2024 (due to non-compliance with time-limited planning conditions) |

\*‘Social Welfare Facility’ (Residential Care Home for the Elderly)

## 6. THE SUBJECT SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

### *The Site*

- 6.1 As mentioned in paragraph 4.2 above, the Subject Site comprises about 88.5% (or about 2,585m<sup>2</sup>) of the former Wa Fung School site, as shown in **Figure 2**. The exclusion of the remaining School site is mainly due to the involvement of two private lots and portion of the affected school building have been occupied by someone’s belongings, and the involvement of a piece of steeply sloping area.

- 6.2 **Table 2** below outlines the land area breakdown and land status of the Subject Site.

**Table 2 Land Area Breakdown and Land Status of the Subject Site**

| Breakdown        | Land Area (m <sup>2</sup> ) (about) | % of GL    |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|------------|
| School Site Area | 2,585 (87.8%)                       | 100        |
| Adjoining GL     | 360 (12.2%)                         | 100        |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>2,945 (100%)</b>                 | <b>100</b> |

- 6.3 **Figure 5** shows the surrounding development context in the vicinity of the Subject Site. In the local context, the location of the Subject Site is rather detached from the active

living cluster catchment of Lam Hau Tsuen. It enjoys an independent pedestrian access point at the north. No vehicular access point is provided in this School site. Under this situation, a new vehicular access point will be required to facilitate the daily operation of the proposed RCHD.

- 6.4 It is also noted that graves are scattered to its northwest on the two sides of the local access road (see **Figure 2** in details); active open storage activities and workshops are located immediately to its south and its farther south and south-western (**Figure 5**); a huge open vacant area to north; about 5m to its west are three village houses; and to its east are scattered village houses.
- 6.5 The Subject Site is accessible via a local track which branches off directly from Shan Ha Road about 80m to its southwest (**Figure 5**). A Green Mini-Bus ("GMB") Route No. 604 running between Yuen Long Town Centre (Kau Yuk Road near Hing Fat House) and Shan Ha Tsuen via Shan Ha Road, as shown in **Figure 5**. In addition, a Red Mini-Bus ("RMB") route operates between Pak Sha Tsuen and Long Ping Station with pick-up and drop-off points at Lam Yu Road and Lam Hi Road as shown in **Figure 5**. This RMB requires only 5 minutes walking time to and from the Subject Site.
- 6.6 **Figure 6** shows the existing site conditions of the Subject Site from various viewpoints. They are:
- (i) Photos 1 – 4, a local access road connection to Shan Ha Road to the east and north of the Subject Site;
  - (ii) Photo 5, the pedestrian access point of the former School in the north;
  - (iii) Photo 8, an old back access point for students living in Shan Ha Tsuen to the south of the Subject Site. It is also a steeply sloping area being excluded from the Subject Site;
  - (iv) Photos 5, 6, 8, 10, 11 and 12 are the unattended conditions;
  - (v) Photo 7, internal condition of a school building partly erected on a private lot;
  - (vi) Photo 9, vacant conditions of a school building;
  - (vii) Photos 11 and 12, overgrown with weeds situation; and
  - (viii) Photos 2 and 3, two graves located respectively to its east and north-eastern.

***No Public Sewer***

- 6.7 No existing or planned public sewerage system is or to-be provided in the vicinity of the Subject Site.

***Existing Trees***

- 6.8 According to the results of the Tree Survey, a total of 78 trees including 6 dead trees and 3 undesirable species (namely, *Leucaena leucocephala*) have been identified within the Subject Site. Most of the surveyed trees are of poor tree form and poor health conditions.

## **7. RELEVANT POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

***Supply of and Demand for RCHD***

- 7.1 According to the 'The Profile of Persons with Disabilities and Chronic Diseases in Hong Kong and Characteristics of their Carers' published by the Census and Statistic Department in December 2022<sup>4</sup>, excluding persons with intellectual disabilities, in 2020, it was estimated that there were 866,500 persons with disabilities ("PWDs"), accounting for 11.6% of the total population in Hong Kong. Among those, about 256,800 PWDs were with mental illness and mood disorder, accounting for about 3.4% of the total population.
- 7.2 When compared these figures to those in the last survey in 2013, they respectively represent about 47.46% increase in the population of PWDs [i.e.  $(866,500 - 587,600)/587,600 \times 100\% = 47.46\%$ ] and about 43.21% increase in the prevalence rate [i.e.  $(11.6 - 8.1)/8.1 \times 100\% = 43.21\%$ ] (see **Table 3** below).
- 7.3 In respect of PWDs with mental illness / mood disorder, the population has increased by about 74.34% [i.e.  $(256,800 - 147,300)/147,300 \times 100\% = 74.34\%$ ] and the prevalence rate being increased by about 65.9% [i.e.  $(3.4 - 2.05)/2.05 \times 100\% = 65.85\%$ ].

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<sup>4</sup> The Profile of Persons with Disabilities and Chronic Diseases in Hong Kong and Characteristics of their Carers (2022). Available at: [https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/data/stat\\_report/product/FA100059/att/B72212FA2022XXXXB0100.pdf](https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/data/stat_report/product/FA100059/att/B72212FA2022XXXXB0100.pdf) and An Analysis of Statistics on Persons with Physical Disabilities (2022). Available at: [https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/data/stat\\_report/product/FA100059/att/B72212FB2022XXXXB0100.pdf](https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/data/stat_report/product/FA100059/att/B72212FB2022XXXXB0100.pdf)

- 7.4 As at March 2023, there were still around 11,500 PWDs waitlisted for various types of subsidized residential care places for PWDs and the average waiting time ranged from 4.2 months up to a high of 171.1 months<sup>5</sup> representing a significant shortfall in provision of residential care services for disabilities in our community.

**Table 3 PWDs and PWDs with Mental Illness/ Mood Disorder (2000 – 2020)**

| Year  | Persons with disabilities (excluding those with Intellectual Disabilities) |                 | PWDs with Mental Illness / Mood Disorder |                     |
|---|--|-----------------|--|---------------------|
|   | Population   | Prevalence Rate | Population                               | Prevalence Rate     |
| 2000  | 269,500  | 4.0%            | 50,500 <sup>[1]</sup>                    | 0.7% <sup>[1]</sup> |
| 2007  | 361,300  | 5.2%            | 86,600                                   | 1.25%               |
| 2013  | 587,600  | 8.1%            | 147,300                                  | 2.05%               |
| 2020  | 866,500  | 11.6%           | 256,800                                  | 3.4%                |
| <b>Source:</b><br>The Profile of Persons with Disabilities and Chronic Diseases in Hong Kong and Characteristics of their Carers Available at: <a href="https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=FA100059&amp;scode=380#section3">https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/en/EIndexbySubject.html?pcode=FA100059&amp;scode=380#section3</a> including: ‘Persons with Disabilities and Chronic Diseases in Hong Kong’ released on 23.11.2001, 20.2.2009, 15.1.2015; ‘An Analysis of Statistics on Persons with Physical Disabilities’ released on 15.12.2022 and ‘The Profile of Persons with Disabilities and Chronic Diseases in Hong Kong and Characteristics of their Carers’ released on 15.12.2022. |  |                 |  |                     |
| <b>Remarks</b><br><sup>[1]</sup> Only Persons with Mental Illness   |  |                 |  |                     |

- 7.5 In his 2023 Policy Address, the Chief Executive unveiled a raft of policy measures aiming at addressing the needs of person with disabilities including policies measures aimed at “*strengthening the services of residential care homes for persons with disabilities*” and “[*encouraging*] developers to construct and operate RCHDs in their development projects”.
- 7.6 In 2024 Policy Address, the Chief Executive further proposed to improve rehabilitation services and enhance support for PWDs including “*increase the number of rehabilitation (including day care, residential care and respite care) service places from about 37,300 in 2023-2024 to about 39,900 by 2028-2029, [...]*”.
- 7.7 **Table 4** below outlines the provision of RCHD in the context of Yuen Long District. It is noted that only 922 subsidised places out of the required provision of 2,128 (or

<sup>5</sup> ‘Support for carers of persons with disabilities and chronic diseases’ Available at: [https://app7.legco.gov.hk/rpdb/en/uploads/2023/ISSH/ISSH35\\_2023\\_20231208\\_en.pdf](https://app7.legco.gov.hk/rpdb/en/uploads/2023/ISSH/ISSH35_2023_20231208_en.pdf)

43.32%) were provided in 2021. Very obviously, it represents a significant shortfall in such subsidised facilities in the Yuen Long District.

**Table 4 Provision of RCHD in Yuen Long District**

| Geographic Area  | Population (aged 15 or above) <sup>[1]</sup> | Derived Provision Requirement <sup>[2]</sup> | Provision <sup>[3]</sup> (As of March 2025) |                       |              | License Capacity <sup>[3]</sup> (As of March 2025) |
|--|--|--|---|-----------------------|--------------|--|
|  |  |  | Subsidised Places                           | Non-Subsidised Places | Total Places |  |
| Yuen Long District   | 590,881                                      | 2,128  | 922   | 658                   | 1,580        | 1,658  |
| <b>Remarks</b><br><sup>[1]</sup> Source: <a href="https://www.census2021.gov.hk/en/district_profiles.html">https://www.census2021.gov.hk/en/district_profiles.html</a><br><sup>[2]</sup> Adopts HKPSG Standard for RCHD i.e. 36 subvented service places per 10,000 persons aged 15 or above (Para. 10.2.57 of HKPSG Ch3). Rounded up to the nearest whole number.<br><sup>[3]</sup> Place provision information obtained from <a href="https://www.rchdinfo.swd.gov.hk/en/rchds_search">https://www.rchdinfo.swd.gov.hk/en/rchds_search</a> . |  |  |   |                       |              |  |

### ***Policy on Vacant School Premises***

- 7.8 To facilitate the use of vacant government sites (including vacant school premises on government land), the Secretary for Development has set up a ‘Funding Scheme to Support the Use of Vacant Government Sites by Non-government Organisations’ and has set aside \$1 billion to subsidise the cost of basic works of eligible projects.
- 7.9 The former Wa Fung falls under the category of “VSP sites on government land/to-be-surrendered private land that have short term uses under consideration / processing pending implementation of long term uses”.

## **8. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

### ***The Schematic Scheme***

- 8.1. The proposed RCHD development is a self-contained single-storey compound. It is partly converted from two existing classroom structures and partly newly built. The core residential compound is closely connected by the covered walkway system to become one integrated RCHD block. This integrated block comprises bedrooms, laundry, staff quarters, kitchen, dining/sitting area, office and isolation rooms. A semi-detached E&M building block is proposed in area previously used as basketball court.



- 8.2. A set of schematic Block Plan, Master Layout Plan and Section Diagrams for the whole RCHD development are respectively illustrated in **Figure 7**, **Figure 8** and **Figure 9**.
- 8.3. Upon full development by end 2027, a total of 90 bed spaces will be supplied to meet the rehousing of the two existing operations under the Applicant’s management and the needs of the community.

***Key Development Parameters***

- 8.4. Based on the site area of about 2,945m<sup>2</sup> and the proposed gross floor area (“GFA”) of 1,010m<sup>2</sup>, the resultant overall plot ratio of about 0.343 will be yielded. **Table 5** summarises the key development parameters of the proposed development. **Table 6** provides the roughly breakdown of GFA distribution by functional item. [Please note that for Net Floor Area (“NFA”) calculations for items including any staff dormitory, open space, podium, garden, flat roof, bay window, staircase, column, walls, staircase hall, lift, lift landing, any space occupied by machinery for any lift, air-conditioning system or any similar service provided for the building, or any other area in the RCHD which the Director of Social Welfare considers unsuitable for the purposes of the RCHD shall be disregarded. (Under Code of Practice for Residential Care Homes (Persons with Disabilities))]

**Table 5 Key Development Parameters**

| Item                          | Proposed Development   |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. Site Area                  | About 2,945m <sup>2</sup>  |
| 2. No. of Blocks              | 3 (including a Pavilion)   |
| 3. Building Height/Storey     | About 5m to 7m (1 storey only)                                   |
| 4. Site Coverage              | About 39.8%  |
| 5. Total GFA                  | About 1,010m <sup>2</sup><br>(EB: 555m + NB: 455m <sup>2</sup> ) |
| 6. Plot Ratio                 | About 0.343  |
| 7. No. of Bed Spaces          | 90   |
| 8. Isolation Rooms            | 2  |
| 9. No. of L/UL Bay (LGV)      | 1  |
| 10. No. of Car Parking Spaces | 2  |

EB – Existing Building; NB: New Building

**Table 6 Breakdown of Key GFA Distribution**

| Item                           | GFA (m <sup>2</sup> ) | NFA* (m <sup>2</sup> ) |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Bedroom w/ Bathroom         | 614                   | 552                    |
| 2. Sitting/Dining Room         | 102                   | 96                     |
| 3. Staff Toilet                | 7                     | 5.5                    |
| 4. Disabled Toilet             | 5                     | 4.5                    |
| 5. Kitchen                     | 23                    | 21                     |
| 6. Office                      | 25                    | 22                     |
| 7. Laundry                     | 16                    | 14                     |
| 8. Store                       | 7                     | 5.5                    |
| 9. Isolation Room              | 23                    | 19                     |
| 10. Covered Walkway            | 142                   | 142                    |
| 11. Staff Quarters w/ Bathroom | 22                    |                        |
| 12. Pavilion                   | 24                    |                        |
| <b>Total:</b>                  | <b>1,010</b>          | <b>881.5</b>           |

\*Min. NFA/person= 8m<sup>2</sup>

### *The Operation*

- 8.5. The nature of operation and the operation mode in the present proposed RCHD development will be the same as that outlined in paragraphs 3.4 – 3.7 above, but in a larger, but manageable operational scale. Upon completion of the proposed development by end 2027, a total of 90 bed spaces will be supplied. Apart from the 50 bed spaces being reserved to rehouse the Applicant's two RCHD operations (24 residents in HSK and 26 residents in PST), the proposed RCHD development will also supply additional 40 new bed spaces to meet the soaring demand in the community.
- 8.6. The Applicant plans to employ a total of 13 regular staff, including 2 foreign workers, to serve the whole operation. Among these staff, three of them will work the night-time shifts. All staff (except home manager) is expected to commute to and from work via the local public transport facilities. To address the accommodation concerns of the two foreign workers, two ancillary workers' quarters are thus proposed.
- 8.7. In normal practice, not more than 5 residents are eligible to work at a sheltered workshop in Tuen Mun. All regular medical appointments (once every 1-3 months, on a case by case basis) can be pre-arranged with the Castle Peak Hospital. As such, a 7-seater for daily pick-up and drop-off all residents is adequate to cater for the whole operation in practice.

8.8. It should be noted that under normal circumstances, causal visits are not permitted. All visits, if any, must be made via a '*visit-by-appointment*' system. No two visits will be allowed at any one time slot.

8.9. According to the Applicant, the proposed RCHD is a self-contained operation. To provide a relaxed and comfortable living environment, the overall layout of the proposed RCHD will adopt a '*home feel*' environment setting with sufficient active and passive areas. Proper screening boundary wall with security gate will be provided. The entire operation is planned and designed to comply with all licensing standards and requirements.

#### ***Access and Traffic Arrangements***

8.10. A 6m wide vehicular access point is proposed at the western end of the Subject Site next to the local access road, as shown in **Figures 7 and 8**. For easy traffic movements and provision of better sightline for all road users, the main entrance gate is proposed to setback by around 4m from the existing local access road. The original pedestrian access will be retained in-situ. A proper EVA is planned to comply with today's building regulations/standards. Two car parking spaces and one Light Goods Vehicle ("LGV") loading/unloading bay are proposed near the main vehicular entrance area to serve the proposed RCHD (**Figure 8**).

#### ***Landscape Proposals***

8.11. To soften the hardlines of the proposed 3m tall fence wall, special landscaping treatments in the form of planting beds, are planned immediately outside the fence wall but within the site boundary, as shown in **Figures 10 – 13**. Within the Proposed RCHD development, several landscaped open spaces including sitting gardens, gathering courtyards and a ball court are proposed for enjoyment of future residents.

8.12. As mentioned in paragraph 6.8 above, the 78 on-site surveyed trees, including three trees of undesirable species. All these trees will be felled due to direct conflict with the proposed RCHD. To make the best effort to compensate the loss of these surveyed trees taking into consideration the actual practical needs of the operation, a total of 58 heavier standard sized trees are proposed at a rate of 1:0.77 (i.e.,  $58 / (78-3) = 0.77$ ).

Details of the Tree Felling and Tree Compensatory Scheme, and Landscape Proposals are provided in **Appendix 5**.

### ***Licensing Requirements***

- 8.13. The proposed RCHD will be a "medium care level home" and will comply with the licensing requirements stipulated in the Residential Care Homes (Persons with Disabilities) Ordinance (Cap. 613), its subsidiary legislation and the latest version of the Code of Practice for Residential Care Homes (Persons with Disabilities). As outlined in the tentative programme in **Appendix 3**, the Applicant will continue to apply all relevant licenses at different stages when situation permits.

### **Sewerage and Drainage Arrangements**

- 8.14. To tackle on-site sewage disposal and having considered the following considerations, an on-site septic tank/soakaway pit system is being selected:
- (i) The rehousing programme for the existing PST RCHD is very tight;
  - (ii) A need to minimise the length of construction period so that all affected patients can be rehoused back as early as possible;
  - (iii) Although the Applicant can apply for construction funding from the Government, the more the money can be saved from construction, the greater the public resources can be distributed to other socially vulnerable groups in need;
  - (iv) The scale of development is small and the overall operation must follow a basic cost-effectiveness principle without affecting the quality of services for all residents;
  - (v) The construction cost of a sewerage treatment plant and its long-term repair and maintenance costs are too expensive for such a small community operation; and
  - (vi) A need to make the best use of this small and elongated land resources for greater enjoyment of future residents.
- 8.15. For drainage proposals, a series of 525mm and 600mm diameter is proposed to collect the on-site surface runoff and convey them into the existing 900mm diameter pipeline along Shan Ha Road.

### ***Extent of Excavation Works***

- 8.16. **Figure 14** shows the extent of the excavation areas in association with the proposed RCHD. Subject to the detailed design of the proposed RCHD, it has been roughly estimated that the resultant overall maximum excavation land area under the present proposed development will be around 1,352m<sup>2</sup> and the depths of these excavation areas are ranged from 0.5m to a maximum of 3.2m.

## **9. RESULTS OF TECHNICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS**

- 9.1 Relevant technical impact assessments, namely, Traffic Impact Assessment ("TIA"), Sewerage Impact Assessment ("SIA"), Drainage Impact Assessment ("DIA"), Environmental Assessment ("EA", contains road traffic noise impact, fixed noise impact, air quality impact, water quality, waste management and land contamination aspects), and Geotechnical Planning Review Report ("GPRR"), are attached in **Appendix 6, Appendix 7, Appendix 8, Appendix 9 and Appendix 10** respectively.
- 9.2 The results of these technical impact assessments have demonstrated that the proposed one-storey tall RCHD will not generate any unacceptable traffic, sewerage, drainage, noise, air quality, odour, water quality, waste management or geotechnical problems on the local area. The proposed RCHD will also not be subject to any land contamination problems or any undesirable noise, air quality or odour impact from its surrounding developments.

## **10. PLANNING JUSTIFICATIONS**

### ***Aligning with Government Initiatives***

- 10.1 As mentioned in paragraph 3 above, the Applicant's PST RCHD falls within the Second Phase Development of the YLS NDA. Upon receipt of LandsD's land resumption notification, the Applicant immediately undertook actions to explore potential private sites in both Tuen Mun and Yuen Long districts for relocation of the existing affected RCHD at PST. Unfortunately, it was unsuccessful.
- 10.2 The Applicant then focused its effort on VSP sites. The Subject Site was finally selected among others. The location and site area are most suitable for the Applicant's long-term business plan, i.e. (i) can rehouse all the affected residents at PST within a

short period of time; (ii) enable to combine the Applicant's other RCHD in HSK for more effective integrated operational management purpose; and (iii) to supply additional 40 RCHD bed spaces for this disadvantaged group in the community.

- 10.3 The Applicant has made its best endeavour to cooperate with the Government's implementation programme of YLS NDA and tried very best effort to explore a new site to relocate the affected PST RCHD in both Tuen Mun and Yuen Long districts. The Subject Site is considered most suitable for the proposed RCHD operation in terms of location, size, rehousing programme and its compatibility.

***Conforming with Government Policy Objectives***

- 10.4 The Subject Site is one of the vacant school premises and has been left idle for more than 16 years since the School was ceased in operation in November 2008, as mentioned in paragraph 4.1 above. The present proposed RCHD is fully in line with the Government policy on the gainful use of vacant government premises.
- 10.5 In addition, according to its latest review on vacant school premises, on 27 May, 2024, PlanD confirmed that the subject School is recommended to be retained for "Government, Institution or Community" ("G/IC") use (paragraph 4.4 above).
- 10.6 Paragraph 7.6 above also points out that in 2024 Policy Address, the Chief Executive further proposed to improve rehabilitation services and enhance support for PWDs including "*increase the number of rehabilitation (including day care, residential care and respite care) service places from about 37,300 in 2023-2024 to about 39,900 by 2028-2029, [...]*".
- 10.7 In view of the above, the approval of this application not only conforms fully with the Government's policy objectives, but also represents a great pressure release for relocation of the existing PST RCHD operation and the best use of land resources of the Subject Site to supply a much-needed community facility for the socially disadvantaged group. The approval of this application will bring in the community an additional supply of 40 bed spaces for the type of disadvantaged group in the community.

***Compatible with Surrounding Developments***

- 10.8 In paragraphs 6.3 - 6.5 above, it is understood that the Subject Site is closely surrounded by active open storage activities/workshops, graves, vacant land and village type developments. The Subject Site is located in the fringe area slightly away from the core residential development area of Lam Hau Village. Its surrounding vacant GL serve as an effective buffer against the normal local living movements/activities. The retention of a single-storey development profile with extensive planting beds immediately outside the fence wall makes the overall development totally compatible with its surrounding development setting and character.

***No Unacceptable Technical Problems***

- 10.9 The results of relevant technical impact assessments have demonstrated that the proposed single-storey RCHD development will not generate any unacceptable technical impact on the local area with respect to traffic (TIA in **Appendix 6**), sewerage (SIA in **Appendix 7**), drainage (DIA in **Appendix 8**), environmental (EA in **Appendix 9**) or Geotechnical (GPRR in **Appendix 10**) aspects. With the provision of a 3m tall solid fence wall, the proposed development will not be subject to any undesirable noise or air quality impact from its surrounding developments. Therefore, the proposed development is technically feasible and acceptable at this locality. The approval of this application will not result in any unacceptable technical impact on the area at all.

***Win-win Project***

- 10.10 As mentioned in paragraph 2.1 above, the Applicant wishes to achieve three primary objectives via this application: (i) to urgently rehouse its existing PST RCHD with 26 beds operation affected by land resumption for YLS NDA; (ii) to take this opportunity to combine its other RCHD with 24 beds in HSK in one integrated operational management (instead of scattered distribution manner); and (iii) to supply additional bed spaces to meet the increasing population in this disadvantaged group in the community.
- 10.11 Paragraph 7.2 above has highlighted the fact that, between 2013 and 2020, the population of mental illness/mood disorder has increased by about 74.3% (or an

increase of 109,500 persons). **Table 3** above has demonstrated that there is a significant shortfall in the supply of RCHD facilities in Yuen Long district.

10.12 The approval of this planning application is therefore a "win-win" project to all parties concerned, including the end-users, operator, and the community at large. Upon full development, a total of 90 bed spaces will be provided, including additional supply of 40 bed spaces for new residents.

10.13 Indeed, the approval of this application also helps to improve the quality of living in the RCHD developments that helping all recovery people in the community.

***Sympathetic Consideration Needed***

10.14 As highlighted in paragraph 2.1, one of the primary objectives for this planning application is for relocation of an existing RCHD operation at PST to align with the land resumption process required for the Second Phase Development of the YLS NDA. The rehousing programme is very tight (**Appendix 3**) and the Applicant has already made its every possible effort to pin down the Subject Site for the proposed RCHD in terms of its unique location, size, surrounding environment and self-containment.

10.15 The approval of this application represents a positive and active support of this disadvantaged group in our community as committed by the Chief Executive in his 2024 Policy Address.

## **11. CONCLUSION**

11.1 This Planning Application aims to seek a permission of the Town Planning Board ("TPB") for two planning proposals at Lam Hau Tsuen, Yuen Long:

- (i) to set up the community needed single-storey 'Social Welfare Facility' (Residential Home for Persons with Disabilities) ("RCHD") with 90 bed spaces partly by conversion of existing portion of the former Wah Fung School and partly to take up its adjoining Government Land ("GL"); and
- (ii) to carry out excavation works associated with the proposed RCHD within the Application Site.



11.2 The Applicant wishes to achieve THREE primary objectives in this planning application:

- (a) urgently need to rehouse the entire existing RCHD operation (26 bed spaces) in Pak Sha Tsuen now under land resumption process for Yuen Long South New Development Area;
- (b) to combine another existing RCHD operation (24 bed spaces) in Hung Shui Kiu in one integrated operational management; and
- (c) to supply additional 40 new bed spaces to meet the pressing demand in the community.

11.3 The proposed RCHD is a single-storey development. It covers a total land area of about 2,945m<sup>2</sup> (i.e. about 87.8% are within the extent of the School site area and about 12.2% in adjoining GL). Upon completion in 2027, it will provide a total of 90 bed spaces for persons with disabilities ("PWDs").

11.4 It has been demonstrated that the proposed RCHD is in line fully with the Government's policy objective to address the soaring demand for such social welfare facility; it conforms totally with the intention of making good use of Vacant School Premises; and also make best use of vacant and unattended GL to meet the urgent community needs; and it will not cause any adverse or unacceptable impact on road traffic, sewerage, drainage or geotechnical aspects in the local area. The proposed RCHD will not be subject to any land contamination problem, or any unacceptable environmental impact (particularly in noise and air-quality aspect) from its surrounding developments. It is compatible with its surrounding development setting and character. It is a "win-win" project to the community at large.

11.5 In view of the above, we respectfully request the Town Planning Board to give a sympathetic consideration to and approve this planning application to meet the

Applicant's urgent rehousing programme so as to allow the Applicant to continue to serve this disadvantaged group of persons in mental recovery in our community.

**VISION PLANNING CONSULTANTS LIMITED**  
**15 August 2025**