

RURAL AND NEW TOWN PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE TOWN PLANNING BOARD

RNTPC Paper No. 4/25

**For Consideration by
the Rural and New Town Planning Committee on 23.5.2025**

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE
DRAFT MAN KAM TO OUTLINE ZONING PLAN NO. S/NE-MKT/5**

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1. Introduction

This paper is to seek Members' agreement that:

- (a) the proposed amendment to the draft Man Kam To Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/NE-MKT/5 (**Attachment I**) as shown on the draft Man Kam To OZP No. S/NE-MKT/5A (**Attachment II**) and its Notes (**Attachment III**) are suitable for exhibition for public inspection under section 7 of the Town Planning Ordinance (the Ordinance); and
- (b) the revised Explanatory Statement (ES) of the OZP (**Attachment IV**) should be adopted as an expression of the planning intentions and objectives of the Town Planning Board (the Board) for various land use zonings of the OZP, and is suitable for publication together with the draft OZP and its Notes.

2. Status of the Current OZP

- 2.1 On 8.3.2024, the Secretary for Development (SDEV) referred the approved Man Kam To OZP No. S/NE-MKT/4 to the Board for amendment under section 12(1A)(a)(ii) of the Ordinance. On 15.3.2024, the reference back of the OZP was notified in the Gazette under section 12(2) of the Ordinance.
- 2.2 On 13.12.2024, the draft Man Kam To OZP No. S/NE-MKT/5 (**Attachment I**), incorporating amendment to rezone a site at Sandy Ridge from "Other Specified Uses" ("OU") annotated "Cemetery, Columbarium, Crematorium and Funeral Related Uses" to "OU" annotated "Innovation and Technology" ("OU(I&T)"), was exhibited for public inspection under section 5 of the Ordinance. During the two-month exhibition period, one representation was received. After giving consideration to the representation on 21.3.2025, the Board decided not to propose any amendment to the draft OZP to meet the representation.

3. Background

- 3.1 In March 2021, the National Congress approved the National 14th Five-Year Plan, supporting Hong Kong's development as an international innovation and technology (I&T) centre. In October 2023, the Northern Metropolis Action Agenda outlined plans to develop the New Territories North (NTN) New Town and Lo Wu/Man Kam To (LW/MKT) Area into a

Boundary Control Point (BCP) business district, fostering emerging industries that could complement the I&T industry in San Tin Technopole. The Chief Executive announced in the 2023 Policy Address (PA) to change the land use of a 2-hectare (ha) formed site at Sandy Ridge, originally planned for development of columbarium, crematorium and related facilities to I&T and related purposes, considering sufficient supply of public niches in the future.

- 3.2 In June 2024, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB) and the Digital Policy Office (DPO) invited expressions of interest (EOI) for the development of data centres and related purposes at Sandy Ridge, which received positive responses from local, Mainland and overseas enterprises. Considering the site's location, infrastructure planning, the supply of digital infrastructure facilities, and the industry's demand, the Government was of the view that the 2-ha formed site and the surrounding formed slope of about 8ha (i.e. about 10ha in total) can be developed for data centres and related purposes. Subsequently, the 2024 PA announced that the site would be expanded to 10ha and that the rezoning process would commence in 2024.
- 3.3 The Development Planning and Housing Committee of North District Council (NDC) and the Ta Kwu Ling District Rural Committee (TKLRC) were consulted in October 2024, both expressing general support for data facility cluster development at Sandy Ridge. An Engineering Feasibility Study (EFS) conducted by the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) confirms that the rezoning proposal is technically feasible with no insurmountable problems in the technical aspects. To take forward the PA initiative, the site was subsequently rezoned from "OU(Cemetery, Columbarium, Crematorium and Funeral Related Uses)" to "OU(I&T)" on the draft Man Kam To OZP No. S/NE-MKT/5 to facilitate the data facility cluster development.
- 3.4 Taking into account the views collected from the EOI exercise, and to help formulate the optimal land disposal arrangements, a "Request for Information" (RFI) exercise was conducted by ITIB and DPO from 17.3.2025 to 11.4.2025 to inform the industry of the development parameters of the site and the planned arrangement of disposing the entire 10-ha site as a single land lot, as well as to gather some insights on the scale and design of data centre development and the related requirements of utility supply. While the industry is generally supportive to the proposed development at Sandy Ridge, some responses indicate that the current site layout including sharp corners, may limit the scale of installations and operations as well as the development potential.
- 3.5 To provide adaptability for various development scenarios that may be undertaken by future developer(s) and maximise the development potential of the site through higher synergy and efficiency, it is considered necessary to re-configure the site to make it more rectangular in shape or slightly expand the boundary to avoid sharp corners with an attempt to attract more innovative and effective development proposals from the market. Considering the industry feedback collected from the RFI exercise, the proposed minor boundary expansion would provide flexibility to cater for

more development options initiated by future developer(s), including the development of a single building with a larger floor area to facilitate the development of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) supercomputing centre of substantially larger scale, accommodating numerous Graphics Processing Units in clusters that require large floor space for large-scale AI model training. Furthermore, the expansion of the zoning boundary would allow the future developer(s) greater flexibility in designing the site layout and buildings in accordance with the relevant building regulations/guidelines such as Sustainable Building Design Guidelines (SBDG), while also facilitating a development scenario that involves a larger building footprint with an access road circumventing, instead of running through the site. According to ITIB, noting that the degree of benefit on the scale of installations and operations at the site is subject to individual development proposals, there is a genuine need to rationalise the site boundary to enhance overall development flexibility and efficiency of the site, which may facilitate the attraction of more innovative and effective development proposals from the market.

- 3.6 In view of the above, it is proposed to slightly enlarge the “OU(I&T)” zone by rezoning three land parcels with a total area of about 9,400m² (an increase of about 9%) (the Site) from “OU” annotated “Cemetery, Columbarium, Crematorium and Funeral Related Uses” to “OU(I&T)” for data centres and related purposes (**Amendment Item A**). ITIB renders support to the rezoning proposal. Given that the expansion of the boundary of the “OU(I&T)” zone arising from the addition of the three land parcels is minor in nature and the permissible development parameters for the “OU(I&T)” zone remain intact, the findings of the EFS conducted earlier by CEDD for the proposed data centres and related purposes under indicative scheme are still applicable, as confirmed by relevant bureaux/departments (B/Ds). The proposed rezoning of the three land parcels to rationalise the site boundary of the “OU(I&T)” zone is technically feasible with no insurmountable problem.
- 3.7 In the meantime, opportunity is also taken to update the ES of the OZP to reflect the latest planning circumstances.

4. Proposed Amendment

Amendment Item A – Rezoning of three land parcels at Sandy Ridge for Data Centres and Related Purposes (about 0.94ha) (Plans 1 and 2, aerial photos in Plans 3a and 3b and site photos in Plans 4a to 4c)

The Site and Its Surrounding Areas

- 4.1 The Site consists of three parcels of Government land adjoining the current “OU(I&T)” zone at Sandy Ridge, which covers a total area of approximately 0.94ha. Two of them (including one (about 1,800m²) near MacIntosh Fort (Nam Hang) and another (about 5,900m²) near the adjacent “Green Belt” (“GB”) zone) are located at the northern fringe of the “OU(I&T)” zone while the remaining one (about 1,700m²) is at the southern fringe. The Site is mainly natural slope area with vegetation and

currently vacant without existing urns/graves.

4.2 The surrounding areas of the Site have the following characteristics:

- (a) to its west and east are the Sandy Ridge Cemetery which is situated in mountainous terrains comprising valleys and ridges with undulating height profile ranging from about 86mPD to 129mPD along Man Kam To Road currently zoned “OU” annotated “Cemetery, Columbarium, Crematorium and Funeral Related Uses” on the OZP; and
- (b) to its north are vegetated areas in Nam Hang zoned “GB”; to its northwest are MacIntosh Fort (Nam Hang) zoned “Government; Institution or Community” (“G/IC”) and a wetland with mitigation habitats in Yuen Leng Chai zoned “Conservation Area” (“CA”); and to its further north across Shenzhen River are the residential and commercial clusters in Luohu District, Shenzhen.

Rezoning Proposal

- 4.3 It is proposed to rezone the Site from “OU” annotated “Cemetery, Columbarium, Crematorium and Funeral Related Uses” to “OU(I&T)” for data centres and related purposes subject to a maximum building height (BH) of 115mPD (**Plan 1**). While the rezoning proposal only involves a slight increase in the total site area of the “OU(I&T)” zone by 0.94ha (about 9%), the permissible development parameters in respect of building height (BH) restriction (i.e. 115mPD) and the recommended maximum gross floor area (GFA) (i.e. 250,000m²) remain unchanged. The total area of the “OU(I&T)” zone will be increased from about 10ha to about 11ha.

Land Use Compatibility

- 4.4 The Site falling within the Sandy Ridge Cemetery, currently comprises natural slopes covered by vegetation without any existing graves/urns. Considering that the Amendment Item A only involves rezoning of the Site of small size for minor expansion of the boundary of the current “OU(I&T)” zone to facilitate the proposed development at Sandy Ridge and there is no change to the maximum BH and total recommended maximum GFA, adverse impacts on the surroundings, including the vegetated areas in Nam Hang zoned “GB” to its north, a wetland in Yuen Leng Chai to its further northwest as well as the nearby village settlements at the foothill of Sandy Ridge, are not anticipated.

Technical Considerations

- 4.5 The proposed rezoning, resulting in a slight increase of the “OU(I&T)” zone area by about 9%, is considered minor in nature. In this regard, the findings of the EFS for the proposed data centres and related purposes under the indicative scheme conducted earlier by CEDD remain valid for the Amendment Item A, as confirmed by relevant B/Ds. The proposed rezoning is technically feasible with no insurmountable problem.

Traffic

- 4.6 No additional traffic is anticipated in association with the proposed rezoning as it would not involve any change in the recommended GFA for the proposed development at the “OU(I&T)” zone. Given that the number of employees/visitors and the traffic generated by the proposed data centres and related uses would be limited, there should be no overloading issue for the key road links and junctions in Fanling/Sheung Shui areas. The Commissioner for Transport (C for T) has no adverse comment on the proposed rezoning from traffic engineering perspective.

Visual

- 4.7 Noting that the Site and the current “OU(I&T)” zone would be generally bounded by the nearby ridgeline, the future developer(s) is/are advised to cater for the sensitivity of visual experience to the neighbourhood and take into account the overall aesthetics and visual interests of the proposed development at the detailed design stage. Besides, the requirements under SBDG including building separation and setback would be incorporated into the land sales conditions as appropriate to avoid incompatible built-form and massive building bulk of the development. The Chief Town Planner/Urban Design and Landscape of Planning Department (CTP/UD&L, PlanD) has no adverse comment on the proposed rezoning from visual impact perspective.

Landscape

- 4.8 The Site is currently covered by trees and vegetation of common species. No Old and Valuable Tree nor Tree of Particular Interest is identified within the Site. In accordance with the SBDG, a minimum of 30% overall greenery coverage (at least half of them are at-graded greenery area) should be provided to ensure that a desirable landscape setting will be achieved in the development. The requirements under SBDG on the greenery provision and the standard clause on preservation of trees and landscaping would be incorporated into the land sales conditions as appropriate, covering the Site and the current “OU(I&T)” zone. CTP/UD&L, PlanD has no comment on the proposed amendment from landscape planning perspective.

Geotechnical

- 4.9 The Site mainly comprises natural slopes adjoining the existing cut or fill slopes within the “OU(I&T)” zone. Subject to the development proposals, the future developer(s) may be required to undergo site formation works including formation of new man-made slopes or retaining walls and modification works of the existing formed slopes, which under prevailing mechanism, would be closely scrutinised by concerned departments to ensure their compliance with the relevant legislations/regulations prior to commencement of works. The Head of Geotechnical Engineering Office of CEDD (H(GEO), CEDD) has no adverse comment on the proposed amendment from geotechnical perspective.

Environmental, Infrastructural and Others

- 4.10 The EFS conducted earlier by CEDD has covered various technical aspects including environmental, air ventilation, ecology, sewerage, drainage, water supply and electricity supply, etc. and concluded that the proposed development will not result in insurmountable problems in technical terms. In view that the rezoning proposal involving areas of small size is intended to rationalise the boundary of the current “OU(I&T)” zone without change in development parameters including maximum BH and recommended GFA, relevant B/Ds confirm that the findings of the EFS are still applicable to ascertain the technical feasibility of the proposed amendment. In addition, the relevant requirements and standard clauses pertaining to compliance with various legislation and regulations for taking forward the proposed development would be incorporated into the land sales conditions as appropriate. When proceeding to the detailed design and construction stages, the future developer(s) is/are obliged to address the technical concerns of relevant departments including the provision of environmental mitigation measures, if needed, and other infrastructural requirements. Relevant departments consulted, including the Director of Environmental Protection (DEP), Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation (DAFC), Chief Engineer/Mainland North of Drainage Services Department (CE/MN, DSD), Chief Engineer/Construction of Water Supplies Department (CE/C, WSD) and Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (DEMS) have no adverse comment on the proposed amendment.

5. Provision of Government, Institution and Community (GIC) Facilities and Open Space

The proposed amendment to the OZP is mainly for rezoning of the Site for data centres and related purposes, which do not have additional population implication. Therefore, there is no implication on the provision of GIC facilities and open space within the planning scheme area of Man Kam To OZP.

6. Proposed Amendment to the Matters shown on the OZP

The proposed amendment as shown on the draft Man Kam To OZP No. S/NE-MKT/5A (**Attachment II**) are as follows:

Amendment Item A (about 0.94ha) (Plan 1)

Rezoning of three land parcels at Sandy Ridge from “OU” annotated “Cemetery, Columbarium, Crematorium and Funeral Related Uses” to “OU(I&T)”.

7. Proposed Amendment to the Notes of the OZP

No amendment to the Notes of the OZP is required. A copy of the Notes is at

Attachment III for Members' reference.

8. Revision to the ES of the OZP

The ES of the OZP has been revised to take into account the proposed amendment as mentioned in the above paragraphs. Opportunity has also been taken to update the general information for the various land use zones to reflect the latest status and planning circumstances of the OZP. The proposed amendments to the ES of the OZP (with additions in ***bold and italics*** and deletions in '~~crossed-out~~') are at **Attachment IV** for Members' consideration.

9. Plan Number

Upon exhibition for public inspection, the OZP will be renumbered as S/NE-MKT/6.

10. Consultation

Departmental Consultation

10.1 The proposed amendment has been circulated to relevant B/Ds for comment. Comments from relevant B/Ds have been incorporated into the above paragraphs, where appropriate. The following B/Ds have no objection to/no comment on the proposed amendment:

- (a) SDEV;
- (b) Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry;
- (c) Executive Secretary (Antiquities and Monuments), Antiquities and Monuments Office;
- (d) Commissioner for Digital Policy;
- (e) Chief Engineer/Land Works, CEDD;
- (f) Director of Social Welfare;
- (g) District Lands Officer/North, Lands Department;
- (h) Chief Estate Surveyor/Land Supply, Lands Department;
- (i) C for T;
- (j) Chief Architect/3, Architectural Services Department;
- (k) Commissioner of Police;
- (l) Chief Highway Engineer/New Territories East, Highways Department;
- (m) CE/MN, DSD;
- (n) CE/C, WSD;
- (o) Director of Fire Services;
- (p) DAFC;
- (q) Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene;
- (r) Director of Leisure and Cultural Services;
- (s) Project Manager/North, CEDD;
- (t) H(GEO), CEDD;
- (u) Chief Building Surveyor/New Territories West, Buildings

- Department;
- (v) DEMS;
- (w) DEP;
- (x) District Officer (North), Home Affairs Department; and
- (y) CTP/UD&L, PlanD.

Public Consultation

- 10.2 If the proposed amendment are agreed by the Committee, the draft OZP (to be renumbered as S/NE-MKT/6 upon exhibition) and its Notes will be exhibited under section 7 of the Ordinance for public inspection. Members of the public can submit representations on the OZP to the Board during the two-month statutory public inspection period. NDC and TKLRC will be informed of the proposed amendment during the exhibition period of the draft OZP.

11. Decision Sought

Members are invited to:

- (a) agree to the proposed amendment to the draft Man Kam To OZP No. S/NE-MKT/5 and that the draft Man Kam To OZP No. S/NE-MKT/5A at **Attachment II** (to be renumbered to S/NE-MKT/6 upon exhibition) and its Notes at **Attachment III** are suitable for public exhibition under section 7 of the Ordinance; and
- (b) adopt the revised ES at **Attachment IV** for the draft Man Kam To OZP No. S/NE-MKT/5A (to be renumbered as S/NE-MKT/6) as an expression of the planning intentions and objectives of the Board for various land use zonings of the OZP and the revised ES will be published together with the OZP.

12. Attachments

Attachment I	Draft Man Kam To OZP No. S/NE/MKT/5 (reduced size)
Attachment II	Draft Man Kam To OZP No. S/NE-MKT/5A
Attachment III	Notes of the Draft Man Kam To OZP No. S/NE-MKT/5A
Attachment IV	ES of the Draft Man Kam To OZP No. S/NE-MKT/5A
Plan 1	Location Plan
Plan 2	Site Plan
Plans 3a and 3b	Aerial Photo
Plans 4a to 4c	Site Photos

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT
MAY 2025**