

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION
UNDER SECTION 16 OF THE TOWN PLANNING ORDINANCE

APPLICATION NO. A/KTN/105

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| <u>Applicant</u> | : Government Property Agency represented by Urban Design & Planning Consultants Limited |
| <u>Site</u> | : Area 29 (Part), Kwu Tung North, New Territories |
| <u>Site Area</u> | : 20,980m ² (about) |
| <u>Land Status</u> | : Government Land (GL) |
| <u>Plan</u> | : Approved Kwu Tung North Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/KTN/4 |
| <u>Zoning</u> | : “Government, Institution or Community” (“G/IC”) <i>[restricted to a building height (BH) restriction of 130mPD]</i> |
| <u>Application</u> | : Proposed Minor Relaxation of BH Restriction for Permitted Joint-user Complex (JUC) and Joint-user General Office Building (JUB) |

1. The Proposal

- 1.1 The applicant seeks planning permission for minor relaxation of BH restriction from 130mPD to 170mPD (i.e. +40m or +30.8% in mPD/+33.6% in absolute height) for permitted Government, institution and community (GIC) uses to be accommodated at the proposed JUC and JUB (the proposed development) at the application site (the Site), which falls within an area zoned “G/IC” subject to a maximum BH of 130mPD on the OZP (**Plan A-1a**). According to the Notes of the OZP for the “G/IC” zone, the proposed GIC uses, including ‘Government Uses (not elsewhere specified)’, ‘Library’, ‘Place of Recreation, Sports or Culture’, ‘School’, ‘Public Clinic’ and ‘Social Welfare Facility’, are Column 1 uses which are always permitted, and based on the individual merits of a development proposal, minor relaxation of the BH restriction may be considered by the Town Planning Board (the Board) on application. The Site falls within the First Phase of the Kwu Tung North New Development Area (KTN NDA) where site formation and infrastructural works are being carried out by the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) (**Plan A-1b**).
- 1.2 According to the Explanatory Statement (ES) of the OZP, Area 29 where the Site is located within will serve as a hub of civic activities and social services (**Plan A-6**). The Site is located near the future KTN Town Centre and has been

zoned “G/IC” stipulated with a BH restriction of 8 to 10 storeys for development of schools as well as community and sports facilities on the draft KTN OZP No. S/KTN/1 for KTN NDA. BH restriction for the Site was subsequently amended to 130mPD on the draft KTN OZP No. S/KTN/3 gazetted in 2022 to facilitate the development of a major government office building to support the development of the Northern Metropolis (NM) together with the originally planned community complex with sports and community facilities (including a library, a sports centre, a community hall, a post office, a kindergarten and some social welfare facilities). In amending the BH restriction to 130mPD for the Site, considerations had been given to the prevailing BH restriction and the relaxed BH restrictions as agreed by the Rural and New Town Planning Committee (the Committee) of the Board from 2018 to 2022 for development sites to the north ranging from 120mPD to 151mPD (**Plan A-5**) (details on the BH profile of KTN NDA and relaxation of BH restrictions of other development sites at paragraphs 4 and 6 below). Subsequently, a notional scheme of 130mPD with a plot ratio (PR) of about 7.8 was initially formulated by the relevant government departments for the proposed government office and community complex at the Site in 2023 under the Government’s “Single Site, Multiple Uses” initiative.

- 1.3 With a view to optimising land uses within the proposed development, achieving better air ventilation, improving visual permeability, minimising potential impact on an existing tree within the Site as well as enhancing pedestrian connectivity, a scheme of enhanced design with an increased BH up to 170mPD is proposed (the Proposed Scheme) (**Drawing A-2**). As claimed by the applicant, the proposed relaxation of BH restriction from 130mPD to 170mPD could accommodate more planning and design merits that could not be achieved under the Baseline Scheme (**Drawing A-1**), which is an OZP-compliant scheme modified from the abovementioned notional scheme, with the same development intensity in terms of PR (**Drawings A-10a and b**).
- 1.4 Under the Proposed Scheme, the proposed development comprises two blocks, i.e. JUC and JUB (**Drawing A-2**). The JUC, with BHs of 63mPD and 47.2mPD for its southern and northern portions respectively, is proposed to be a sports centre providing sports and recreation facilities including an indoor swimming pool, activity rooms, fitness rooms and table tennis rooms etc.. The JUB is proposed to be a government office building with a BH of 170mPD to accommodate government offices, including those currently located in central business districts with no specific location requirements, as well as community and social welfare facilities including library, child care centre, kindergarten, outpatient clinic and post office, etc. (**Drawings A-3 and A-4a to f**). The Site will be accessible from the planned Road L1 and Castle Peak Road – Chau Tau with ingress/egress points at both the northern and southern parts of the Site (**Drawing A-2 and Plan A-2**). The master layout plans of the Baseline Scheme and Proposed Scheme, floor plans, section plans and landscape master plans of the Proposed Scheme are at **Drawings A-1 to A-7c** and major development parameters are detailed as follows:

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|---------------------------------------|--|
| Site Area (about) | 20,980m ² |
| Total Gross Floor Area (GFA) (about) | 163,400m ² (including 129,300m ² for JUB and 34,100m ² for JUC) |
| G/IC Facilities | 42,500m ² |
| Government Offices | 119,900m ² |
| Shop and Restaurant ¹ | 1,000m ² |
| PR (about) | 7.8 |
| Maximum BH (not more than) | 170mPD |
| JUC | 47.2mPD (northern portion) 63mPD (southern portion) |
| JUB | 170mPD |
| Maximum Number of Storeys | 34 storeys |
| JUC | 6 storeys (northern portion) 4 storeys (southern portion) |
| JUB | 34 storeys (including L/G floor) (All above 1 storey of basement carpark) |
| Site Coverage (about) | 60% |
| No. of Blocks | 2 |
| Public Open Space (POS) | Not less than 10,000m ² |
| Greenery Provision (about) | - At-grade: 3,470m ² (greenery coverage about 16.5%) - Overall: 9,700m ² (greenery coverage about 46.24%) |
| Car Parking Provision | 380 |
| Private Cars | 346 |
| Motorcycles | 25 |
| Medium/Heavy Goods Vehicles & Coaches | 7 |
| Ambulance | 2 |
| Loading/unloading Spaces | 33 |
| Anticipated Completion | December 2031 |

- 1.5 Comparing with the Baseline Scheme, for achieving better visual permeability, daylight penetration and air ventilation under the Proposed Scheme, BH of the JUC block is reduced from 82.2mPD and 65mPD to 47.2mPD (-35m/-49.16% in absolute height) and 63mPD (-2m/-3.7% in absolute height) respectively, whereas the two JUB towers are replaced with a single tower of about 170mPD, resulting in a reduction in the overall building mass (**Drawings A-10b, A-11 and A-12**). Additional or wider building setbacks can be allowed from all sides of the Site, including wider setbacks along the eastern and western boundaries (increased from 9m to 17m and from 12m to 13m respectively), an additional setback of 4m from Castle Peak Road as well as a setback area of considerable size (i.e. 46m x 44m) at the northwestern corner of the Site, that could not be accommodated under the Baseline Scheme (**Drawing A-10a**). In particular, the setback area at the northwestern corner will enable the preservation of a Tree

¹ This will occupy a minor portion (about 0.61% of total GFA) of the JUC which could be regarded as ancillary uses.

of Particular Interest (TPI)² (T059) and create an Entrance Plaza fronting the future Road L1 to the north. In respect of POS, the Proposed Scheme will provide not less than 10,000m² of POS at various levels of the proposed development (on LG/F, G/F and 1/F), i.e. an additional provision of about 1,000m² as compared with the Baseline Scheme (**Drawing A-9**). An Urban Plaza on G/F with a void of about 6-storey high (about 30m) designed with seating and landscaped areas is proposed at the eastern edge of the Site which will serve as a major public space for public enjoyment (**Drawings A-5, A-10a and A-10b**).

- 1.6 According to the submitted landscape impact assessment (LIA), a total of 72 trees are identified within/in close proximity of the Site, including seven TPIs. Three of the TPIs (including the abovementioned T059 and two other outside the Site) will be preserved under the Proposed Scheme while the remaining 69 trees (including 8 of undesirable species³) will be felled. A compensation ratio of 1:1 will be achieved with the planting of 61 new standard to heavy standard trees along the eastern and western site boundaries which will also serve to soften the building edges, integrate with the adjoining Green Spine⁴ to the east and provide screening from Castle Peak Road to the south (**Drawing A-7a**). Besides, the overall greenery provision at various levels of the proposed development (on LG/F, G/F, 2/F, 5/F and R/F) is about 9,700m², i.e. an additional provision of 3,330m² as compared with the Baseline Scheme (**Drawing A-8**).
- 1.7 To enhance the accessibility and walkability of the Site and connectivity of the locality, an integrated multi-level pedestrian walkway system with various access points connecting with the surrounding areas will be provided under the Proposed Scheme. There will be a 24-hour barrier-free covered walkway within the proposed development providing an all-weather north-south connection between the future Road L1 to the north on G/F and Castle Peak Road to the south on LG/F (**Drawing A-5**). The covered pedestrian walkway along the widened setback at the eastern edge of the proposed development on LG/F will also serve as another all-weather north-south connection and seamlessly connect to the adjoining Green Spine (**Drawing A-6**).
- 1.8 In respect of technical feasibility of the Proposed Scheme, the applicant has submitted relevant technical assessments on visual, landscape, air ventilation, environmental, water supply, drainage, sewerage and traffic aspects to demonstrate that the proposed development would not pose significant adverse impact on the surrounding areas.
- 1.9 In support of the application, the applicant has submitted the following documents:

² Together with the other two TPIs in close proximity of the Site, three out of seven identified TPIs will be preserved.

³ According to the submitted LIA, a total of 69 trees are identified within/in close proximity of the Site, including eight undesirable species e.g. *Leucaena leucocephala* (銀合歡). The eight undesirable species could be excluded from tree compensation according to Development Bureau Technical Circular (Works) No. 4/2020.

⁴ The Green Spine to the immediate east of the Site is a planned district open space forming part of the open space system of the KTN NDA.

(a) Application Form and Supplementary Information (SI) (**Appendix I**)
received on 17.4.2025, 22.4.2025 and 24.4.2025
respectively.

(b) Further Information (FI) received on 3.6.2025[#] (**Appendix Ia**)

[#] *accepted and exempted from publication and recounting requirements*

2. **Justifications from the Applicant**

The justifications put forth by the applicant in support of the application are detailed in the application form with SI and FI in **Appendices I and Ia** and can be summarised as follows:

- (a) Visual permeability and air ventilation under the Proposed Scheme are improved as compared with that of the Baseline Scheme. With only one JUB tower proposed, despite its increase in BH (i.e. from 130mPD to 170mPD), the building orientation and massing of the Proposed Scheme achieves better visual permeability and air ventilation. The reduced building bulk of the JUC also enhances daylight penetration and natural ventilation at lower levels due to improved building separation.
- (b) The increase of BH allows a smaller building footprint and more building setbacks, enabling the retention of a TPI in the northwest corner of the Site. A landscaped open space surrounding the retained TPI is created for public enjoyment and serving as an inviting gateway to the proposed development.
- (c) The proposed development commits to sustainable building design. Modular Integrated Construction method is adopted to improve construction efficiency. The building permeability of the proposed development at low, middle and high zones exceeds the minimum requirements outlined in the Sustainable Building Guidelines. The total greening ratio also exceeds the minimum greenery coverage of 30%. The proposed development is also aimed to achieve a BEAM Plus New Building Platinum status.
- (d) Mitigation measures to offset the loss of TPIs will be implemented through compensatory planting and integrating the landscape design with the adjacent open space to mitigate the landscape impact. A 1:1 tree compensation ratio is achieved such that there is a zero net loss in tree quantity. New standard to heavy standard trees are proposed to soften the building frontage on the eastern and western sides of the Site which integrates with the adjoining Green Spine of KTN NDA and provides screening from Castle Peak Road.
- (e) The Proposed Scheme prioritises accessibility and walkability for pedestrians. Covered pedestrian connections within the proposed development and along the eastern edge of the Site will be provided.

- (f) Given the Site's strategic location within the KTN NDA as a focal point for community activities, the Proposed Scheme presents the opportunity to provide a landmark tower in the area with distinctive design and enhanced greenery space, contributing to the identity and vibrancy of the KTN NDA.
- (g) The technical reports submitted in support of the application (including visual impact assessment (VIA), LIA, air ventilation assessment – expert evaluation (AVA-EE), environmental review, water impact assessment, drainage impact assessment, sewerage impact assessment and traffic impact assessment) conclude that the proposed development would not have any insurmountable impact.
- (h) In response to the public comments received (**Appendix IV**), the applicant supplemented that the proposed development with a BH of 170mPD and enhanced building design is in line with the urban design concepts of KTN NDA. Various factors including the user requirements, required facilities provision and the technical concerns as raised in the public comments have been duly considered in the Proposed Scheme. Taking into account the various design merits and planning gains offered by the Proposed Scheme and that there will be no insurmountable impacts on various technical aspects, the Proposed Scheme is considered the best available option.

3. Compliance with the “Owner’s Consent/Notification” Requirements

As the Site only involves GL, the “owner’s consent/notification” requirements as set out in the Town Planning Board Guidelines on Satisfying the “Owner’s Consent/Notification” Requirements under Sections 12A and 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance (TPB PG-No. 31B) are not applicable to the application.

4. Background

- 4.1 A comprehensive planning and urban design framework for KTN NDA is specified in the ES of the OZP. A stepped BH concept is recommended with the overall development intensity and BH profile stepping down from the KTN Town Centre towards the periphery and riverside so as to enhance variety in height and massing of new developments and to ensure a better integration with the adjacent rural setting. With the Town Plaza around the future MTR Kwu Tung Station⁵ as the regional landmark and focal point, a comprehensive network of recreation and green spaces comprising regional, district and local open spaces running in north-south and east-west directions (including the Green Spine adjoining the eastern boundary of the Site) is also planned which will serve as major connecting spines and pedestrian corridors within the NDA and to the adjacent areas (**Plan A-6**).
- 4.2 The BH profile for KTN NDA has been evolving in recent years in view of the changing planning circumstances. The BH restriction of a number of sites were

⁵ MTR Kwu Tung Station of the East Rail Line is under construction for completion in 2027.

relaxed on the draft KTN OZP No. S/KTN/3 gazetted in 2022 in the context of the Government's policy to increase housing supply and to complement with the development position of the expanded KTN NDA and NM. CEDD has also submitted two planning applications (No. A/KTN/54 and A/KTN/93) for relaxation of PR and BH restrictions for various sites planned for public and private residential developments with GIC or other facilities in KTN NDA and the applications were approved by the Committee in 2018 and 2022 respectively (details at paragraph 6 below) (**Plans A-1b and A-5**). Under the latest approved application (No. A/KTN/93), BH restrictions for most of the development sites in the KTN Town Centre are relaxed to 130mPD to 180mPD. For sites not covered by these two applications, their BH restrictions are either maintained as 120mPD to 135mPD as stipulated on the OZP or relaxed under two other applications (No. A/KTN/84 for a public housing development with BH relaxed to 146mPD and 151mPD and No. A/KTN/97 for a private residential development with BH relaxed to 125mPD). With the above relaxed BH, the stepped BH concept is still generally maintained where sites of higher BH are concentrated at the northern and western part of the Town Centre, with BH gradually decreasing towards the medium-density residential areas and village settlements near Sheung Yue River to the east.

- 4.3 The land uses and development intensity of several sites currently zoned "Other Specified Uses" ("OU") annotated "Mixed Use" or "OU" annotated "Business and Technology Park" to the east of the Site (**Plan A-5**) are being reviewed under the Ma Tso Lung Area and Other Sites in Kwu Tung North New Development Area and North District - Feasibility Study, which is anticipated to be completed in 2026.

5. **Previous Application**

There is no previous planning application within the current "G/IC" zoning on the KTN OZP.

6. **Similar Applications**

While there are no similar applications in the same "G/IC" zone, four similar applications (No. A/KTN/54, 84, 93 and 97) for minor relaxation of BH and/or PR for permitted public and/or private housing developments with permitted/proposed commercial/GIC and or transport facilities in various zones, including "Residential (Group A)" ("R(A)"), "R(A)1", "R(A)2", "R(A)3", "Residential (Group B)", "Other Specified Uses" annotated "Commercial/Residential Development with Public Transport Interchange" ("OU(CRDPTI)"), "Green Belt" and area shown as 'Road', were approved by the Committee between 2018 and 2023. All these applications were approved mainly on the considerations that the proposed relaxation was in line with Government's policies of increasing housing supply and providing more social welfare facilities; the proposed relaxation was in line with the stepped BH profile and not incompatible with the surrounding planned context; and the proposed relaxation was technically feasible. Details of the applications are summarised at **Appendix II** and their locations are shown on **Plan A-1b**.

7. The Site and its Surrounding Areas (Plan A-2, aerial photo on Plan A-3 and site photo on Plan A-4)

7.1 The Site is:

- (a) located near the future Town Centre of KTN NDA and abutting the planned Green Spine which will be connected to the future KTN Town Plaza around the MTR Kwu Tung Station (with about 200m walking distance);
- (b) accessible from the planned Road L1 and Castle Peak Road – Chau Tau; and
- (c) currently under site formation works.

7.2 The surrounding areas fall within the First Phase of KTN NDA where site formation/infrastructural works are being carried out by CEDD. Under the planned context of KTN NDA as set out in paragraph 4 above:

- (a) to the immediate west of the Site are two planned schools of 8 to 10 storeys, the KTN Multi-welfare Services Complex of 8 storeys and an infeed substation of 30mPD;
- (b) to the north and northeast are planned public and private housing developments of 120mPD to 140mPD, including Fanling Sheung Shui Town Lot No. 279 at the “OU(CRDPTI)” zone where a public transport interchange will be provided, and to the further north are public housing developments of 160mPD to 180mPD;
- (c) future MTR Kwu Tung Station and Town Plaza are located to the northeast with a planned north-south Green Spine extending from the Town Plaza to the southern entrance of KTN NDA abutting the eastern boundary of the Site;
- (d) to the further east is the Remaining Phase of KTN NDA where site formation and infrastructure works commenced in July 2024 are in progress; and
- (e) to the south is Castle Peak Road and Fanling Highway, across which to the further south is the residential cluster of Kwu Tung South with BHs ranging from about 20mPD to 81.5mPD.

8. Planning Intention

The “G/IC” zone is intended primarily for the provision of Government, institution or community facilities serving the needs of the local residents and/or a wider district, region or the territory. It is also intended to provide land for uses directly related to or in support of the work of the Government, organisations providing social services to meet community needs, and other institutional establishments. Based on the individual merits of a development or redevelopment proposal, minor relaxation of the building height restriction may be considered by the Board on application.

9. Comments from Relevant Government Bureau/Departments

9.1 The following government bureau/departments have been consulted and their views on the application are summarised as follows:

Development of NM

9.1.1 Comments of the Secretary for Development (SDEV):

- (a) to drive the development of KTN NDA, which is the first NDA in the NM entering the construction stage, the Site within KTN NDA has been reserved for the development of a JUC and JUB. The Site will not only provide recreational, community and social facilities serving the future community, but will also accommodate the relocation of certain government offices currently in central business districts with no specific requirements with a view to releasing land in the central business districts.
- (b) the current application seeks to relax the BH restriction for the planned JUC/JUB development in order to achieve a more sustainable and green design, with the target of achieving a BEAM Plus New Building Platinum status. This would complement the vision for the development of NM to provide quality and green environment. From the perspective of driving the development of KTN NDA and NM, as well as to facilitate the provision of quality recreational, community and social facilities as well as public open space to meet the need of the community, we support the application.

Land Administration

9.1.2 Comments of the Chief Estate Surveyor/New Development Area, Lands Department (CES/NDA, LandsD):

- (a) no adverse comment on the application; and
- (b) this office is currently processing an application from the applicant for a Permanent Government Land Allocation (PGLA) for implementing the proposed JUC and JUB development on the Site.

Upon approval of the subject planning application, this office will reflect/incorporate the relevant development parameters under the approved planning scheme into the PGLA conditions (if applicable) in due course.

Traffic

9.1.3 Comments of the Commissioner for Transport (C for T):

- (a) no in-principle objection to the application from traffic engineering point of view; and
- (b) advisory comments are at **Appendix III**.

9.1.4 Comments of the Chief Highway Engineer/New Territories East, HyD (CHE/NTE, HyD):

- (a) no objection to the application from highways maintenance perspective; and
- (b) advisory comments are at **Appendix III**.

Environmental and Sewerage

9.1.5 Comments of the Director of Environmental Protection (DEP):

- (a) there is no insurmountable environmental problems arising from the proposed relaxation of BH restriction. He has no objection to the application from environmental planning perspective; and
- (b) advisory comments are at **Appendix III**.

9.1.6 Comments of the Chief Engineer/Mainland North, Drainage Services Department (CE/MN, DSD):

- (a) no comment on the SIA; and
- (b) advisory comments are at **Appendix III**.

Urban Design, Air Ventilation and Landscape

9.1.7 Comments of the Chief Town Planner/Urban Design and Landscape, Planning Department (CTP/UD&L, PlanD):

Urban Design and Visual

- (a) no adverse comment on the application from urban design and visual perspectives;

- (b) the proposed development comprises JUC and JUB. As compared to the Baseline Scheme, the maximum BH of JUC was decreased from 82.2mPD to 57mPD, whilst the BH of JUB was increased from 130mPD to 170mPD. The PR of 7.8 is the same under the Proposed Scheme. The applicant claimed that the increase in BH can achieve better visual permeability and enhance pedestrian connectivity to the open space on G/F and LG/F for public enjoyment; and
- (c) the Site is located near the future KTN Town Centre. It is also located within Area 29 which is planned as a focal point serving as a hub of civic activities and social services. Considering the BH restriction/agreed BH of the residential developments to the north of the Site ranging from 120mPD to 180mPD, the proposed development is considered not incompatible with the planned context of the KTN NDA. Judging from photomontages of the submitted VIA, no significant adverse visual impact is anticipated.

Air Ventilation

- (d) the proposed development is considered acceptable from air ventilation perspective as the major breezeways for the KTN NDA generally align with the planned road networks and will not be affected by the proposed development. According to the submitted AVA-EE, the air ventilation impact arising from the Proposed Scheme would be comparable to that of the Baseline Scheme.

Landscape

- (e) taking into account the justifications provided in the submission and the merits of the Proposed Scheme against the Baseline Scheme as detailed in Section 5 of the submitted LIA, she has no objection to the application from landscape planning perspective;
- (f) according to the LIA, a total of 72 trees (including eight trees of undesirable species) were recorded within/adjoining to the Site. Seven number of those trees are TPIs. All of them are *Ficus microcarpa* (細葉榕) of large size with trunk diameter at breast height over 1m. The height and/or the crown spread of six TPIs is over 25m. Four TPIs are proposed to be felled (i.e. T064, T069, T070 and T073) and three TPIs are proposed to be retained (i.e. T059 within the Site, and T038 & T042 outside the Site);
- (g) while there will be adverse impact on landscape resources and character within the Site arising from the removal of four TPIs (i.e. T064, T069, T070 and T073), justifications on the adjustment of building footprint to preserve a TPI (i.e. T059) under the Proposed Scheme as well as the defects and anticipated low survival rate after transplanting of the TPIs concerned have been elaborated in

Section 4 of the LIA. According to the Landscape Proposal detailed in Section 5 of the Planning Statement and Appendix V of the LIA, certain mitigations to the loss of the TPI are envisaged;

- (h) the Site is bounded by Castle Peak Road – Chau Tau in the south, Po Lau Road in the east and proposed Road L1 in the north. With reference to the aerial photo, the original private residential care homes for elderly (i.e. “the Dills Corner Garden”) have been cleared. Site formation works are ongoing within the Site amongst other development sites of the KTN NDA. The proposed minor relaxation of BH restriction for permitted JUC and JUB is considered not incompatible with the landscape character in the surroundings; and
- (i) advisory comments are at **Appendix III**.

Fire Safety

9.1.8 Comments of the Director of Fire Services (D of FS):

- (a) he has no specific comments on the application. Detailed fire safety requirement will be formulated upon receipt of formal submission of general building plans; and
- (b) advisory comments are at **Appendix III**.

9.2 The following government departments have no objection to/no comment on the application. Their advisory comments, if any, are at **Appendix III**:

- (a) Project Manager/North, CEDD;
- (b) Head of Geotechnical Engineering Office, CEDD;
- (c) Chief Building Surveyor/New Territories West, Buildings Department;
- (d) Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services;
- (e) Chief Engineer/Construction, Water Supplies Department (CE/C, WSD);
- (f) Chief Architect/Advisory & Statutory Compliance Division, Architectural Services Department (CA/ASC, ArchSD);
- (g) District Officer/North, Home Affairs Department; and
- (h) Commissioner of Police.

10. Public Comments Received During Statutory Publication Period

On 25.4.2025, the application was published for public inspection. During the statutory public inspection period, three public comments were received including one from the North District Council Member indicating no comment on the application; one from an individual expressing doubts on the quality of the proposed open space provision under the Proposed Scheme and the VIA conducted by the applicant; and one from the owner of the adjacent private Lot at FSSTL No.279 providing views on the stepped height profile, landmark character of the proposed development, open space

design, building design and air and visual impacts of the Proposed Scheme as well as proposing alternative development schemes and making recommendations for improvement of the Proposed Scheme (**Appendix IV**).

11. Planning Considerations and Assessments

- 11.1 The application is for proposed minor relaxation of BH restriction from 130mPD to 170mPD for permitted GIC uses at the Site zoned “G/IC”. In accordance with the ES of the OZP, the Site is planned for a government office and community complex. According to the applicant, the proposed development will provide community, leisure, sports and welfare facilities as well as government offices to serve the KTN NDA and wider areas. While the proposed development is in line with the planning intention of the “G/IC” zone, the applicant, upon exploration of alternative layouts with a view to optimising the land uses, improving the design and minimising potential impacts on an existing tree within the Site, put forward the Proposed Scheme with a maximum BH of 170mPD, is considered an enhanced scheme compared to the Baseline Scheme with a maximum BH of 130mPD and the same development intensity in terms of PR.

Minor Relaxation of BH Restriction

- 11.2 KTN NDA is an important source of Hong Kong’s medium to long-term land and housing supply in the NM. The development of a JUC and JUB at KTN NDA, which is the first NDA in the NM entering the construction stage, will accommodate the relocation of certain government offices with no specific requirements corresponding to the Government’s initiative in taking the lead to relocate more jobs to the NM. Also, a wide variety of recreational, community and social facilities serving the future community will be provided in the proposed development which is in line with the Government’s policy of “Single Site, Multiple Uses”, enabling better use of valuable land resources. Taking the locational advantage of being within the hub of civic activities and social services at the southern entrance of KTN NDA and in proximity to the future KTN Town Centre, the proposed increase in BH will provide scope to enhance the surrounding pedestrian environment and connections, fostering an even better integration between the future civic hub and the Town Centre. Also, the improvement in building layout and landscape would help achieve a more sustainable and green design which would complement the vision for the development of NM to provide quality and green environment. SDEV supports the application from NM development perspective.
- 11.3 According to the planning and design framework as well as BH concept for KTN NDA as set out in paragraph 4 above, there is a stepped BH concept with the overall BH profile stepping down from the Town Centre towards the periphery and riverside. With subsequent relaxation of BH restrictions of the development sites in the Town Centre under various approved planning applications (**Plan A-5**), the stepped BH concept is still generally maintained where sites of higher BH up to 180mPD are concentrated at the northern and western part of the Town Centre, with BH gradually decreasing towards the

medium-density residential areas and village settlements with BH of 55mPD near Sheung Yue River to the east and southeast (**Plan A-6**). The proposed development with a BH of 170mPD at the Site, which is located in the midst of the gradual transition and at the southern entrance of the KTN NDA, is considered not incompatible with the planned BH profile of KTN NDA taking into account the planning and design merits set out below. CTP/UD&L of PlanD considers that as revealed in the photomontages of the VIA (**Drawings A-11 and A-12**), no significant adverse visual impact is anticipated and hence has no adverse comment on the application from visual impact point of view.

Planning and Design Merits

- 11.4 According to the applicant, the Proposed Scheme could accommodate more planning and design merits that could not be achieved under the Baseline Scheme (as detailed at paragraphs 1.4 to 1.7 above). As compared with the Baseline Scheme, the visual permeability of the Site under the Proposed Scheme is improved with reduction of one JUB block and reduced building bulk of the JUC (**Drawing A-10b**). Despite the increase of BH of the JUB block from 130mPD to 170mPD, the smaller building footprint of JUB and reduced building bulk of JUC enable the provision of additional green space and open space as well as additional/wider setbacks (**Drawing A-12**), with which improvement on air ventilation and daylight penetration for the surrounding areas and less view obstruction for nearby residential developments could be achieved. In particular, deletion of one JUB block could enable the creation of an Entrance Plaza with an area of considerable size at the northwestern corner of the Site, with which an existing TPI thereat could be retained (**Drawing A-10a**). With the provision of more landscaped area for tree planting, a 1:1 tree compensation ratio will also be achieved. Two TPIs outside the Site will also be preserved. CTP/UD&L of PlanD has no objection to the application from landscape planning perspective taking into account the justifications provided and the merits of the Proposed Scheme against the Baseline Scheme.
- 11.5 The Proposed Scheme also allows the provision of additional POS (not less than 10,000m² which is about 1,000m² more than that under the Baseline Scheme) and landscaped areas at different levels for public enjoyment, including an Urban Plaza with a void of about 6-storey high (about 30m) designed with seating and landscaped areas at the eastern edge of the Site (as detailed at paragraphs 1.5 and 1.6 above) (**Drawing A-10b**). In particular, a total of 9,700m² (i.e. additional provision of 3,330m² comparing with the Baseline Scheme) of greenery will be provided, achieving a total greening ratio of about 46% at various levels which exceeds the minimum greenery coverage of 30%.
- 11.6 According to the applicant, the building permeability of the proposed development at low, middle and high zones under the Proposed Scheme also exceeds the minimum requirements outlined in the Sustainable Building Guidelines. In this regard, the AVA-EE conducted by the applicant concludes that the Proposed Scheme will have comparable wind performances with the Baseline Scheme, and significant adverse impact on the surrounding pedestrian wind environment is not anticipated. CTP/UD&L of PlanD considers the proposed development acceptable in air ventilation perspective as the major

breezeways for the KTN NDA generally aligned with the planned road networks and not affected by the proposed development.

- 11.7 In terms of pedestrian connectivity, an integrated multi-level pedestrian walkway system with various access points connecting with the surrounding areas will be provided within the proposed development. There will be a 24-hour barrier-free covered walkway within the proposed development providing an all-weather north-south connection between the future Road L1 to the north on G/F (where the proposed Entrance Plaza located with connection to the pedestrian walkway system leading to the future KTN Town Plaza) and Castle Peak Road to the south on LG/F (which will be connected to Kwu Tung South area via an existing footbridge) (**Drawings A-5, A-10a and A-10b**). The covered pedestrian walkway along the widened setback at the eastern edge of the proposed development on LG/F together with the proposed Urban Plaza located on G/F will also serve as another all-weather north-south connection and seamlessly connect to the adjoining Green Spine to the east which forms part of the open space system of the KTN NDA (**Drawings A-6, A-10a and A-10b**).

Other Technical Aspects

- 11.8 In support of the application, the applicant has submitted technical assessments which have demonstrated that the proposed development is technically feasible from visual, air ventilation, environmental, traffic, water supply, drainage and sewerage perspectives. Relevant concerned departments consulted including C for T, CHE/NTE of HyD, DEP, CE/MN of DSD, CE/C of WSD and D of FS have no objection to or no comment on the application.

Similar Applications

- 11.9 There are four similar applications for minor relaxation of BH and/or PR for various sites for residential developments with commercial/GIC/other facilities in the vicinity of the Site approved by the Committee between 2018 and 2023. While the current application is to support the provision of GIC uses, approving the current application for minor relaxation of BH restriction is in line with the Committee's previous decisions.

Public Comments

- 11.10 Regarding the public comments as mentioned in paragraph 10 above, the departmental comments and planning assessments above are relevant. In particular for the views raised by the individual and owner of the adjoining lot, the applicant has provided responses as summarised in paragraph 2(h) above. According to the applicant, various factors have been taken into account in the formulation of the Proposed Scheme and efforts have been put in to minimise the potential impact of the increased BH for the proposed development on the surrounding areas.

12. Planning Department's Views

12.1 Based on the assessments made in paragraph 11 and taken into account the public comments as mentioned in paragraphs 10 above, PlanD has no objection to the application.

12.2 Should the Committee decide to approve the application, it is suggested that the permission shall be valid until 6.6.2029 and after the said date, the permission shall cease to have effect unless before the said date, the development permitted is commenced or the permission is renewed. The recommended advisory clauses are attached at **Appendix III**.

12.3 Alternatively, should the Committee decide to reject the application, the following reason for rejection is suggested for Members' reference:

there is no strong planning justification given in the submission for the proposed minor relaxation of BH restriction for the site.

13. Decision Sought

13.1 The Committee is invited to consider the application and decide whether to grant or refuse to grant the permission.

13.2 Should the Committee decide to approve the application, Members are invited to consider the approval condition(s) and advisory clause(s), if any, to be attached to the permission, and the date when the validity of the permission should expire.

13.3 Alternatively, should the Committee decide to reject the application, Members are invited to advise what reason(s) for rejection should be given to the applicant.

14. Attachments

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| Appendix I | Application Form with Planning Statement and Technical Assessments received on 17.4.2025 |
| Appendix Ia | FI received on 3.6.2025 |
| Appendix II | Similar Applications |
| Appendix III | Recommended Advisory Clauses |
| Appendix IV | Public Comments |
| Drawing A-1 | Master Layout Plan (Baseline Scheme) |
| Drawing A-2 | Master Layout Plan (Proposed Scheme) |
| Drawing A-3 | Section Plan |
| Drawings A-4a to A-4g | Floor Plans |
| Drawing A-5 | Connectivity Diagram |
| Drawing A-6 | Greenery and Public Space Diagram |
| Drawings A-7a to A-7c | Landscape Master Plans |
| Drawing A-8 | Greenery Plan |

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| Drawing A-9 | Open Space Demarcation Plan |
| Drawings A-10a and A-10b | Enhancement to Development Scheme |
| Drawing A-11 | Illustration |
| Drawing A-12 | Photomontage |
| Plan A-1a | Location Plan |
| Plan A-1b | Similar Applications |
| Plan A-2 | Site Plan |
| Plan A-3 | Aerial Photo |
| Plan A-4 | Site Photo |
| Plan A-5 | BH of KTN Town Centre |
| Plan A-6 | Urban Design and Landscape Framework of KTN NDA |

PLANNING DEPARTMENT
JUNE 2025