

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION
UNDER SECTION 16 OF THE TOWN PLANNING ORDINANCE

APPLICATION NO. A/I-TOF/6

- Applicant** : CLP Power Hong Kong Limited represented by CLPe Solutions Limited
- Site** : Government Land (GL) on Kat Hing Back Street, Po Chue Tam, Tai O, Lantau
- Site Area** : About 131.68 m²
- Land Status** : Government Land
- Plan** : Approved Tai O Fringe Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/I-TOF/2
- Zonings** : “Conservation Area” (“CA”) (about 59%)
“Open Space” (“O”) (about 24%)
“Government, Institution or Community” (“G/IC”) (about 17%)
- Application** : Proposed Public Utility Installation (Poles, Underground Cables and Overhead Cables) and Associated Excavation of Land

1. The Proposal

- 1.1 The applicant seeks planning permission for proposed public utility installation (poles, underground cables, and overhead cables) and associated excavation of land at the application site (the Site) which falls within an area partly zoned “CA”, partly zoned “O” and partly zoned “G/IC” on the approved Tai O Fringe OZP No. S/I-TOF/2 (**Plans A-1 and A-2**). According to the Notes of the OZP, ‘Public Utility Installation’ in the “O” and “CA” zones and excavation of land in the “CA” zone require planning permission from the Town Planning Board (the Board), whereas ‘Public Utility Installation’ is always permitted and planning permission is not required for excavation of land in the “G/IC” zone.
- 1.2 The Site is located partly along a section of Kat Hing Back Street and partly on a piece of vacant GL to the north of Po Chue Tam Barbecue Area (**Plan A-3**). The proposed public utility installation includes laying underground cables beneath the existing concrete pavement of Kat Hing Back Street with 106m long (where 87.5m of the underground cables fall within an area partly zoned “CA” and partly zoned “O”) for linking up the existing and proposed underground electricity network underneath Kat Hing Back Street and erection of 4 overhead line poles to the north of Po Chue Tam Barbecue Area to support a new overhead line. The proposed excavation area within

the “CA” zone for the underground cables has an area of about 73.7m² with a depth of about 1.2m while that for the poles has a total area of about 4.48m² with a depth of about 1.2m. The details of the installations are as below:

Installation	No. of provision	Dimension (m) (about) (Length × Width × Height)	Excavation Depth (m)
Underground Cables	1	87.5 × 1.2 ¹	1.2
Overhead Cable Poles	4	1.6 × 0.7 × 10.5	1.2

1.3 The subject public utility installation is to provide electricity during the construction and operation stages of the proposed Po Chue Tam Footbridge. As part of Phase 2 Stage 2 of Improvement Works at Tai O² which was authorised under the Roads (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance (Cap. 370) on 24 December 2021³, the construction works of the footbridge commenced in March 2023 and are expected to be completed by 2026. According to the applicant, the proposed installations are thoughtfully designed to ensure shortest alignment to the existing electricity infrastructure with minimum impacts on the existing natural resources. The works will be commenced upon obtaining approval from the Board and to be completed by March 2026. Upon completion of the proposed works, the excavated area for the underground cables will be backfilled and reinstated to its original ground level. The layout plans submitted by the applicant are at **Drawings A-1 to A-3**.

1.4 In support of the application, the applicant has submitted the following documents:

- (a) application form with attachments received on 20.6.2025; (Appendix I)
- (b) further information (FI) received on 31.7.2025*; (Appendix Ia)
- (c) FI received on 2.9.2025*; and (Appendix Ib)
- (d) FI received on 3.10.2025*. (Appendix Ic)

** accepted and exempted from publication and recounting requirement*

1.5 On 15.8.2025, the Rural and New Town Planning Committee (the Committee) agreed to defer making a decision on the application for two months as requested by the applicant.

¹ Excluding the section of underground cables falls within “G/IC” zone.

² In connection with the “Improvement Works for Tai O Facelift – Feasibility Study” commissioned by CEDD in June 2007, a “Tai O Improvement Plan” was prepared which included infrastructure to improve local connectivity, facilities to help preserve the heritage and facilitate visitors’ appreciation of natural attributes of Tai O as well as other supporting infrastructure. The Government has been implementing the improvement works in phases where Phase 1 and Phase 2 Stage 1 were completed in 2013 and 2019 respectively.

³ Besides the Footbridge, Phase 2 Stage 2 of Improvement Works at Tai O also includes construction of an amphitheatre-cum-open space and a public car park at Yim Tin and upgrading of the open area in front of Yeung Hau Temple (**Plans A-5a and A-5b**).

2. Justifications from the Applicant

The justifications put forth by the applicant in support of the application are detailed in **Appendices I, Ia, Ib and Ic**, and summarised as follows:

- (a) the planning application is for electricity provision to the construction and operation stages of the proposed Po Chue Tam Footbridge to be completed in 2026, which is being constructed by CEDD as part of Improvement Works at Tai O – Phase 2, Stage 2 to enhance local connectivity. At present, residents near Yim Tin and Po Chue Tam need to make a long detour whenever they commute across river to the major facilities at another side of the river in Tai O, including temples and Tai O Town Centre. Emergency vehicles also have to make the same detour when commuting to the said areas and the situation is not desirable. The footbridge will enhance the connectivity of the Tai O riversides particularly between Sun Ki Street and Kat Hing Back Street to shorten the walking distance and time; bring convenience to the Tai O community especially the elderly, pregnant ladies and the disabled; and serve as an emergency vehicle access;
- (b) the electricity provision is essential for the testing and commissioning of the lighting system and the moveable components of the proposed footbridge in which the mid span of the footbridge can be rotated and opened during operation stage, allowing passage of divine statues and dragon boats during the traditional Dragon Boat Water Parade. The opened span will be transformed into viewing platform for residents and visitors to watch and appreciate the process at a close distance; and
- (c) the proposed installations are sensitively designed with the shortest alignment to the existing electricity infrastructure with most cables located beneath the existing concrete pavement of Kat Hing Back Street to minimise the adverse impacts on the existing natural environment and landscape resources. In addition, the proposed overhead poles have been positioned to avoid disrupting existing trees. Relevant guidelines and the best management practices will be followed during both the construction and operation stages to further mitigate any adverse impacts on the surrounding environment.

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

As the Site involves GL only, 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. Previous Application

There is no previous application at the Site.

5. Similar Application

There is no similar application within the same “CA” and “O” zones of the OZP.

6. **The Site and Their Surrounding Areas** (Plans A-1 to A-3 and site photos on Plans A-4a to A-4d)

- 6.1 The Site is located along a section of the existing concrete paved footpath of Kat Hing Back Street next to Tai O Creek which connects Tai O Town Centre, Po Chue Tam and Kau San Tei and on a piece of vacant GL with some vegetation to the north of Po Chue Tam Barbecue Area.
- 6.2 The surrounding areas are mainly rural in character predominated by coastal landscape features including mangrove, marsh and Po Chue Tam pond, as well as scattered village settlements. To the immediate east of the Site is the works site of the proposed Po Chue Tam Footbridge situated on Tai O Creek. The area to its further east across Tai O Creek is abandoned salt pans, marsh and fishponds. To the immediate south is the village cluster on Kat Hing Back Street. To the immediate west is Po Chue Tam Barbecue Area and Po Chu Tam Public Toilet. To its further north and northwest is the Yeung Hau Temple which is a Declared Monument and some squatter houses at Kau San Tei.

7. **Planning Intentions**

- 7.1 The “CA” zone is intended to protect and retain the existing natural landscape, ecological or topographical features of the area for conservation, educational and research purposes and to separate sensitive natural environment such as Country Park from the adverse effects of development. There is a general presumption against development in this zone. In general, only developments that are needed to support the conservation of the existing natural landscape or scenic quality of the area or are essential infrastructure projects with overriding public interest may be permitted.
- 7.2 The “O” zone is intended primarily for the provision of outdoor open-air space for active and/or passive recreational uses serving the needs of local residents as well as the general public.
- 7.3 According to the Explanatory Statement (ES) of the OZP, works relating to excavation of land within the “CA” zone may cause adverse drainage impacts on adjacent areas and adverse impacts on the natural environment. In view of the conservation value of the area within this zone, permission from the Board is required for such works and related activities.

8. **Comments from Relevant Government Departments**

All Government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) consulted have no objection to or no adverse comment on the application. Their general comments on the application and recommended advisory clauses are provided in **Appendices II and III** respectively.

9. Public Comment Received During Statutory Publication Period

On 27.6.2025, the application was published for public inspection. During the statutory publication period, one public comment from an individual was received (**Appendix IV**) which enquired the purpose of the proposed installations.

10. Planning Considerations and Assessments

- 10.1 The applicant seeks planning permission for proposed public utility installations and associated excavation of land at the Site within an area partly zoned “CA” (about 59%), partly zoned “O” (about 24%) and partly zoned “G/IC” (about 17%) on the OZP. While ‘Public Utility Installation’ is always permitted within the “G/IC” zone, ‘Public Utility Installation’ in the “O” and “CA” zones and excavation of land in the “CA” zone require planning permission from the Board. The proposed installations involve underground cables with a length of 106m (where 87.5m of the underground cables fall within an area partly zoned “CA” and partly zoned “O”) and overhead cable poles for the proposed Po Chue Tam Footbridge being constructed by CEDD situated on Tai O Creek. The total area for the excavation works within the “CA” zone is about 78.18m² with an excavation depth of about 1.2m. Upon completion of the proposed works, the excavated area will be backfilled and reinstated to its original ground level.
- 10.2 The planning intention of the “O” zone is primarily for the provision of outdoor open-air space for active and/or passive recreational uses serving the needs of local residents as well as the general public. The planning intention of the “CA” zone is to protect and retain the existing natural landscape, ecological or topographical features of the area for conservation, educational and research purposes and to separate sensitive natural environment such as Country Park from the adverse effects of development. There is a general presumption against development in this zone. In general, only developments that are needed to support the conservation of the existing natural landscape or scenic quality of the area or are essential infrastructure projects with overriding public interest may be permitted.
- 10.3 According to the applicant, the proposed installations are essential for the power supply necessary for the testing and commissioning of the lighting system and the moveable components in both the construction and operation stages of the proposed Po Chue Tam Footbridge being constructed, which will enhance the connectivity along the riversides in Tai O and serve as an emergency vehicle access to the nearby villages. The proposed installations are sensitively designed with the shortest cable alignment to connect the existing electricity infrastructure and located beneath the existing concrete pavement of Kat Hing Back Street where adverse impacts on the existing natural environment and landscape resources have been minimised. In this regard, the proposed installations could be considered as an essential infrastructure project with overriding public interest. Project Manager (South and Sustainable Lantau), Civil Engineering and Development Department supports the application and the proposed installations are to provide electricity to facilitate the commissioning and operation of the Po Chue Tam footbridge which enhances the connectivity of Tai O riversides. Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services also has no adverse comment on the application.

- 10.4 According to the ES of the OZP, works related to excavation of land in the “CA” zone may cause adverse drainage impacts on adjacent areas and adverse impacts on the natural environment, permission from the Board is required. However, given the relatively small scale of the excavation in the “CA” zone involving a total area of about 78.13m² mostly beneath the existing concrete pavement along Kat Hing Back Street and on a vacant land, and it would be backfilled and reinstated to its original ground level afterwards, no significant adverse drainage impacts and adverse impacts on the natural environment are anticipated. Director of Environmental Protection (DEP), Chief Engineer/Hong Kong & Islands, Drainage Services Department (CE/HK&I, DSD) and Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation (DAFC) have no objection to or no adverse comment on the application. As the underground cable is beneath the existing footpath while the overhead poles have been positioned on the existing vacant grassland outside Po Chue Tam Barbecue Area. In this regard, significant adverse impact on the existing barbecue area is not expected. Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (DLCS) has no adverse comment on the application. In addition, the location of the overhead poles avoid impact on the existing trees and the installation is small scale in nature, significant adverse impact on visual impact and landscape resources are not anticipated. Chief Town Planner/Urban Design and Landscape, Planning Department (CTP/UD&L, PlanD) have no adverse comment on the application. The applicant also confirms their commitment in following the relevant guidelines and the best management practices for the handling of the stormwater discharges during the construction and operation stages. Other relevant government departments, including Commission for Transport (C for T) and Chief Engineer/ Construction, Water Supplies Department (CE/C, WSD) have no objection to or no adverse comment on the application.
- 10.5 Regarding the concern raised in the public comment as detailed in paragraph 9 above, the departmental comments and planning assessments above are relevant.

11. Planning Department’s Views

- 11.1 Based on the assessments made in paragraph 10 and having taken into account the public comment mentioned in paragraph 9, the Planning Department has no objection to the application.
- 11.2 Should the Committee decide to approve the application, it is suggested that the permission shall be valid until **24.10.2029**, 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 at **Appendix III** are also suggested Member’s reference.
- 11.3 There is no strong reason to recommend rejection of the application.

12. Decision Sought

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

12.2 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.

12.3 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.

13. Attachments

Appendix I	Application form with attachments received on 20.6.2025
Appendix Ia	Further Information received on 31.7.2025
Appendix Ib	Further Information received on 2.9.2025
Appendix II	Government Departments' General Comments
Appendix III	Recommended Advisory Clauses
Appendix IV	Public Comment
Drawing A-1	Layout Plan
Drawing A-2	Excavation of Land Drawing
Drawing A-3	Filling of Land Drawing
Plan A-1	Location Plan
Plan A-2	Site Plan
Plan A-3	Aerial Photo
Plans A-4a to A-4d	Site Photos
Plans A-5a and A-5b	Improvement Works at Tai O – Proposed Po Chue Tam Footbridge

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT
OCTOBER 2025**