

**APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION**  
**UNDER SECTION 16 OF THE TOWN PLANNING ORDINANCE**

**APPLICATION NO. A/NE-HLH/87**

- Applicant** : Voluntary Mount Search Team Hong Kong Limited represented by LCH Planning & Development Consultants Limited
- Site** : Lots 611 (Part) and 682 (Part) in D.D. 84, Hung Lung Hang, New Territories
- Site Area** : About 5,430m<sup>2</sup>
- Lease** : Block Government Lease (demised for agricultural use)
- Plan** : Approved Hung Lung Hang Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/NE-HLH/11
- Zoning** : “Agriculture” (“AGR”)
- Application** : Proposed Temporary Mountain Search and Rescue Training Centre with Ancillary Facilities and Associated Filling of Land for a Period of Three Years

**1. The Proposal**

- 1.1 The applicant seeks planning permission for proposed temporary mountain search and rescue training centre with ancillary facilities and associated filling of land for a period of three years at the application site (the Site) falling within an area zoned “AGR” on the OZP (**Plan A-1**). According to the Notes of the OZP, temporary use or development of any land or building not exceeding a period of three years, and filling of land within the “AGR” zone require planning permission from the Town Planning Board (the Board). The Site is fenced-off, partly hard-paved and currently vacant (**Plans A-4a and 4b**).
- 1.2 The Site is accessible from its west via a local track leading to Ping Che Road (**Plan A-2**). According to the applicant, a non-profit, volunteer-based organisation<sup>1</sup>, the proposed use is for a training centre providing mountain search and rescue training programmes. The proposed use, with a total floor area of about 1,540m<sup>2</sup> and building height of not more than 3m, consists of three functional areas, i.e. Western Operational Support Area, Central Sustainable and Energy Zone, and Eastern Intensive Training Zone<sup>2</sup>. It involves a

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<sup>1</sup> The applicant is registered as a charitable institution and has been granted tax exemption under section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112).

<sup>2</sup> According to the development proposal (refer to Diagram 5 of **Appendix Ia**), the Western Operational Support Area functions as a logistic hub for storing and maintaining specialised rescue equipment with parking provisions. The Central Sustainable and Energy Zone serves as an agricultural training and biodiversity education facility, comprising greenhouses for cultivating edible plants and native Hong Kong flora to enable hands-on agricultural and biodiversity training, with roof-top solar panels providing renewable energy for the centre. The Eastern Intensive Training Zone is dedicated to practical training and administration, featuring four purpose-built structures for indoor instruction, simulated scenarios, drone operations, and first-aid workshops, aluminium rope frames for both high and low-angle rope training, an administrative office, and grassland areas for overnight camping in multi-day rescue simulations.

total of 21 temporary structures, including 14 greenhouses<sup>3</sup>, store rooms, activity halls, staff office and toilet, as well as an H-pole mounted transformer substation with 11kV switchgear. The proposed use also comprises about 205 ancillary solar panels (2.3m (L) x 1.1m (W) each) on the rooftop of the greenhouses, as well as 10 cable ducts and four draw pits for an underground cable trench<sup>4</sup> to provide electricity supply for the proposed use. A total of five parking spaces (5m (L) x 2.5m (W) each) for private cars (staff use) and two parking spaces (7m (L) x 3.5m (W) each) for light buses/light goods vehicles (LGV) (participant/visitor use) are proposed within the Site. An ingress/egress with 12m wide is proposed at the western boundary of the Site. Fencing will be erected along the site boundaries. The proposed use will operate 24 hours a day, 7 days per week on a year-round basis<sup>5</sup>, accommodating up to 60 users at any one time. The layout plans submitted by the applicant are shown in **Drawings A-1** and **A-2**.

1.3 The applicant also applies for filling of land covering about 2,890m<sup>2</sup> (53% of the Site) at the central and western portions of the Site with concrete to a depth of about 0.3m for site formation purpose (**Drawing A-3**). A swept path analysis for private cars and light buses/LGVs has been submitted in support of the application. According to the traffic management measures proposed by the applicant, an advance booking of parking spaces will be required to prevent illegal parking and vehicles queuing outside the Site; pedestrian access will be provided via a dedicated entrance directly connecting to the existing public footpath/road, and pedestrian walkways of at least 4m in width will be provided within the Site linking the main entrance to key facilities; pedestrian priority/warning signs will be installed at the ingress/egress to ensure the pedestrian safety; and a staff will be deployed to direct vehicles entering the Site to ensure vehicle and pedestrian safety. In addition, there are existing drainage facilities, including peripheral U-channels and catchpits along the eastern boundary of the Site, which will be connected to the nearby drainage watercourses. No tree felling is required for the proposed use.

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

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|-----|--|----------------------|
| (a) | Application Form with attachments received on 24.11.2025 | <b>(Appendix I)</b>  |
| (b) | Supplementary Information (SI) received on 8.12.2025     | <b>(Appendix Ia)</b> |
| (c) | Further Information (FI) received on 12.1.2026*          | <b>(Appendix Ib)</b> |
| (d) | FI received on 13.1.2026 and 16.1.2026*                  | <b>(Appendix Ic)</b> |
| (e) | FI received on 20.1.2026*                                | <b>(Appendix Id)</b> |

*\* accepted and exempted from publication and recounting requirements*

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<sup>3</sup> According to the applicant, a total of 29 agricultural structures (greenhouses) on Lots 611 and 682 in D.D. 84 were approved by the Lands Department (LandsD) under Letter of Approval (LoA) No. 6585 in 2015. As advised by the District Lands Officer/North (DLO/N) of LandsD, the proposed layout and number of agricultural structures do not tally with that permitted under the LoA. The structures covered by the LoA shall be used only for agricultural purposes and shall not be used for other purposes.

<sup>4</sup> The underground cable trench will be constructed and maintained by CLP Power Hong Kong Limited (CLP).

<sup>5</sup> According to the applicant, audio amplification system will only be used for training purposes (including mountaineering safety briefings, large-scale practical drills and scenario simulations) and only during day time, i.e. 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on a limited and occasional period. Suitable noise mitigation measures, such as orientating loudspeakers away from noise sensitive receivers, are proposed to mitigate any potential environmental impacts. The applicant has undertaken to strictly comply with the 'Noise Control Guidelines for Music, Singing and Instrument Performing Activities' to avoid any noise impact to the surrounding areas.

## **2. Justifications from the Applicant**

The justifications put forth by the applicant in support of the application are detailed in the Application Form, SI and FIs at **Appendices I to Id**, as summarised below:

- (a) the applicant is a non-profit, volunteer-based organisation in Hong Kong committed to enhancing hiking safety awareness, training volunteer search-and-rescue teams, and supporting government efforts in response to the surging number of hiking-related incidents and missing persons cases since 2021. The proposed use would maintain and enhance quality and efficiency of emergency services and rescue operations;
- (b) there is a lack of space for further expansion in the current facility in Yuen Long. Due to increasing number of volunteers and participants in recent years, the applicant is seeking a larger site, which could accommodate a maximum of 60 users at one time, and provide space for indoor and outdoor training facilities (e.g. simulated rescue scenarios, drone operations, first-aid workshops, overnight training), pre-deployment preparation, and climate-controlled store rooms for search-and-rescue related equipment (e.g. drones, stretchers, rope rescue systems, medical supplies);
- (c) the training programme for hiking clubs, schools and community groups could enhance outdoor recreation skills and knowledge of the trainees, promoting eco-tourism as outlined in the Government's Development Blueprint for Hong Kong's Tourism Industry 2.0;
- (d) edible plants and native flora species (e.g. berries, medicinal fungi) would be cultivated in the proposed greenhouses to serve as agricultural training and biodiversity conservation education facilities, which could enhance environmental awareness and survival skills of the trainees. No on-site sale of edible plants will be carried out at the Site;
- (e) the provision of solar panels on the greenhouse rooftop, which would generate renewable energy for the use of internal facilities, coincides with the Government's objective of meeting carbon neutrality target by 2050;
- (f) by integrating agricultural training into rescue operations, approval of the application on a temporary basis would align with the long-term planning intention of the "AGR" zone. It would help retain and safeguard arable land for cultivation and other agricultural purposes. Furthermore, the Site does not fall within any of the proposed agricultural priority areas;
- (g) there are similar approved applications (No. A/NE-TKL/774, A/YL-KTS/1011, A/YL-KTN/1103 and A/NE-LYT/848) for educational and training centre uses in "AGR" zones in the Ping Che and Ta Kwu Ling, Kam Tin North, Kam Tin South and Lung Yeuk Tau areas;
- (h) the proposed use is considered compatible with the surrounding areas. No adverse environmental, visual, landscape, drainage and traffic impacts are anticipated. Should the application be approved, the applicant is committed to strictly comply with all environmental protection/pollution control ordinances at all times during the planning approval period; and will follow the requirements in the 'Code of Practice on Handling the Environmental Aspects of Temporary Uses and Open Storage Sites' (COP) to minimise adverse environmental impacts and nuisance to the surrounding areas; and

- (i) the applicant will liaise with the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department and LandsD on the land administration matters should the Committee approve the application.

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

The applicant is not a “current land owner” but have complied with the 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) by obtaining consent of three current land owners. Detailed information would be deposited at the meeting for Members’ inspection.

### **4. Background**

The Site is not subject to any planning enforcement action.

### **5. Previous Application**

There is no previous application at the Site.

### **6. Similar Application**

There is no similar application for training centre use within the same “AGR” zone on the OZP in the past five years.

### **7. The Site and Its Surrounding Areas (Plans A-1 to A-4b)**

7.1 The Site is:

- (a) fenced-off, partly hard-paved and currently vacant; and
- (b) accessible from its west via a local track leading to Ping Che Road.

7.2 The surrounding areas are rural in character comprising temporary structures, active/fallow agricultural land, vacant land and wooded area. A pond is adjoining the western boundary of the Site and Ping Yuen River is running at about 25m to the east of the Site. To the immediate north and south of the Site are permitted burial grounds intermixed with scattered storage yards zoned “Green Belt”. To the further northeast and southeast across the watercourse are the village proper of Tai Po Tin and Sheung Shan Kai Wat respectively, which are zoned “Village Type Development” on the approved Ping Che and Ta Kwu Ling OZP No. S/NE-TKL/14.

### **8. Planning Intention**

8.1 The planning intention of the “AGR” zone is primarily to retain and safeguard good quality agricultural land/farm/fish ponds for agricultural purposes. It is also intended to

retain fallow arable land with good potential for rehabilitation for cultivation and other agricultural purposes.

- 8.2 According to the Explanatory Statement of the OZP for “AGR” zone, as filling of land may cause adverse drainage and environmental impacts on the adjacent areas, permission from the Board is required for such activities.

## **9. Comments from Relevant Government Departments**

- 9.1 Apart from the government departments as set out in paragraph 9.2 below, other departments consulted have no objection to or no adverse comment on the application. Their general comments on the application and advisory comments are provided at **Appendices II and III** respectively.
- 9.2 The following government departments do not support or have adverse comment on the application:

### **Land Administration**

#### **9.2.1 Comments of DLO/N, LandsD:**

- (a) he has adverse comment on the application;
- (b) the Site comprises Old Schedule Agricultural Lot held under the Block Government Lease which contains the restriction that no structures are allowed to be erected without the prior approval of the Government. The proposed ingress/egress of the Site is required to pass through Government land (GL) but no right of access via GL is granted to the Site;
- (c) the Site is covered by LoA No. 6585 for the purposes of erection of agricultural structures with built-over area and height not exceeding 92.9m<sup>2</sup> and 4.57m respectively. The proposed use is not in line with the LoA, and the proposed layout and number of agricultural structures do not tally with that permitted under the LoA. The structures covered by the LoA shall be used only for agricultural purposes and shall not be used for other purposes;
- (d) the following irregularity not covered by the subject planning application has been detected by his office:

#### **Unlawful occupation of GL not covered by the planning application**

the GL adjoining the Site has been fenced off without permission and occupied with structure. The GL being illegally occupied is not included in the application. The lot owners should advise any toleration was given by competent authority to the structure. Any occupation of GL without Government's prior approval is an offence under the Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance (Cap. 28). His office reserves the rights to take necessary land control action against the illegal occupation of GL without further notice;

- (e) the lot owners/applicant shall cease the illegal occupation of GL immediately and, subject to the approval of the Town Planning Board to the planning application which shall have reflected the rectification as aforesaid required, apply to his office for a Short Term Waiver (STW) to permit the structure(s) erected/to be erected. The application for STW will be considered by the Government in its capacity as a landlord and there is no guarantee that it will be approved. The STW, if approved, will be on whole lot basis and subject to such terms and conditions including the payment of back-dated waiver fee from the first date when the structure was erected and administrative fee as considered appropriate by LandsD. In addition, LandsD reserves the right to take enforcement action against the lot owner for any breach of the lease conditions, including the breach(es) already in existence or to be detected at any point of time in future and land control action for any unlawful occupation of GL. Besides, given the proposed use is temporary in nature, only erection of temporary structure(s) will be considered;
- (f) unless and until the unlawful occupation of GL is duly rectified by the lot owners/applicant, his office has adverse comment on the application which must be brought to the attention of the Board when it considers the application; and
- (g) the applicant should comply with all land filling requirements imposed by relevant government departments. GL should not be disturbed unless with prior approval.

### **Agriculture**

#### **9.2.2 Comments of the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation (DAFC):**

- (a) he does not support the application from agricultural perspective as the Site possesses potential for agricultural rehabilitation; and
- (b) agricultural activities are active in the vicinity, and agricultural infrastructures such as road access and water source are also available. The Site can be used for agricultural activities such as open-field cultivation and plant nurseries, etc.

## **10. Public Comments Received During Statutory Publication Periods**

On 9.12.2025, the application was published for public inspection. During the statutory public inspection period, eight public comments were received (**Appendix IV**). Five individuals support the application as the Site is a suitable location for providing training facilities and the proposed use could enhance the efficiency in rescue operations. Two comments from the Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden Corporation and an individual object to the application on the grounds that the proposed use is not in line with the planning intention of “AGR” zone; the Site may involve suspected unauthorized development; and the genuine intention of the proposed use (which involves greenhouses, solar panels and a large site area) is in doubt. The remaining comment from a member of the North District Council indicates no comment on the application.

## **11. Planning Considerations and Assessments**

- 11.1 The application is for proposed temporary mountain search and rescue training centre with ancillary facilities and associated filling of land for a period of three years at the Site zoned “AGR” on the OZP (**Plan A-1**). The proposed use is not in line with the planning intention of the “AGR” zone and DAFC does not support the application from agricultural perspective as the Site possesses potential for agricultural rehabilitation. Nonetheless, taking into account the planning assessments below, there is no objection to the proposed use with associated filling of land on a temporary basis of three years.
- 11.2 The application involves filling of land covering about 2,890m<sup>2</sup> (53% of the Site) at the central and western portions of the Site with concrete to a depth of about 0.3m for site formation purpose (**Drawing A-3**). Filling of land within the “AGR” zone requires planning permission from the Board as it may cause adverse drainage and environmental impacts on the surrounding areas. In this regard, the Chief Engineer/Mainland North of Drainage Services Department and Director of Environmental Protection have no objection to on the application from drainage and environmental planning perspectives respectively. As the Site is zoned “AGR”, an approval condition requiring the reinstatement of the Site upon expiry of the planning permission so as to uphold the planning intention of the “AGR” zone and restore the greenery of the area is recommended should the Committee decide to approve the application.
- 11.3 The Site, which is located away from the nearby village settlements, is fenced-off, partly hard-paved and currently vacant, and is situated in an area of rural character intermixed with temporary structures, active/fallow agricultural land, vacant land and wooded areas (**Plans A-2 to A-4b**). The proposed use is considered not incompatible with the surrounding land uses. Noting that no distinctive landscape resources are observed within the Site and adverse landscape impact arising from the proposed use is not anticipated, the Chief Town Planner/Urban Design and Landscape of Planning Department (PlanD) has no adverse comment on the application from landscape planning perspective.
- 11.4 Other concerned government departments consulted, including the Commissioner for Transport and Director of Fire Services, have no objection to or no adverse comment on the application. Should the application be approved, the applicant will be advised to follow the latest COP to minimise the possible environmental nuisance on the surrounding areas. To address the technical requirements of concerned government departments, appropriate approval conditions are recommended in paragraph 12.2 below. Regarding DLO/N, LandsD’s concerns relating to the non-compliance with the LoA and alleged illegal occupation of GL, the applicant will be advised to liaise with LandsD on these land administration matters should the Committee approve the application.
- 11.5 Regarding the public comments as detailed in paragraph 10 above, the government departments’ comments and the planning assessments above are relevant.

## **12. Planning Department’s Views**

- 12.1 Based on the assessments made in paragraph 11 and having taken into account the public comments mentioned in paragraph 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 on a temporary basis for a period of three years until 23.1.2029. The following conditions of approval and advisory clauses are suggested for Members' reference:

Approval Conditions

- (a) the submission of a drainage proposal within 6 months from the date of planning approval to the satisfaction of the Director of Drainage Services or of the Town Planning Board by 23.7.2026;
- (b) in relation to (a) above, the implementation of the drainage proposal within 9 months from the date of planning approval to the satisfaction of the Director of Drainage Services or of the Town Planning Board by 23.10.2026;
- (c) in relation to (b) above, the implemented drainage facilities should be maintained at all times during the planning approval period;
- (d) the submission of a fire service installations proposal within 6 months from the date of planning approval to the satisfaction of the Director of Fire Services or of the Town Planning Board by 23.7.2026;
- (e) in relation to (d) above, the implementation of the fire service installations proposal within 9 months from the date of planning approval to the satisfaction of the Director of Fire Services or of the Town Planning Board by 23.10.2026;
- (f) the implementation of traffic management measures, as proposed by the applicant, within 9 months from the date of planning approval to the satisfaction of the Commissioner for Transport or of the Town Planning Board by 23.10.2026;
- (g) in relation to (f) above, the implemented traffic management measures should be maintained at all times during the planning approval period;
- (h) if any of the above planning condition (c) or (g) is not complied with during the planning approval period, the approval hereby given shall cease to have effect and shall be revoked immediately without further notice;
- (i) if any of the above planning condition (a), (b), (d), (e) or (f) is not complied with by the specified date, the approval hereby given shall cease to have effect and shall on the same date be revoked without further notice; and
- (j) upon the expiry of the planning permission, the reinstatement of the Site, including the removal of fill materials and hard paving, and grassing of the Site to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning or of the Town Planning Board.

Advisory Clauses

The recommended advisory clauses are at **Appendix III**.

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



the proposed use with associated filling of land is not in line with the planning intention of the “AGR” zone which is primarily to retain and safeguard good quality agricultural land/farm/fish ponds for agricultural purposes, and to retain fallow arable land with good potential for rehabilitation for cultivation and other agricultural purposes. There is no strong planning justification in the submission for a departure from the planning intention, even on a temporary basis.

### **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 period of which the permission should be valid on a temporary basis.
- 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**

<b>Appendix I</b>	Application Form received on 24.11.2025
<b>Appendix Ia</b>	SI received on 8.12.2025
<b>Appendix Ib</b>	FI received on 12.1.2026
<b>Appendix Ic</b>	FI received on 13.1.2026 and 16.1.2026
<b>Appendix Id</b>	FI received on 20.1.2026
<b>Appendix II</b>	Government Departments’ General Comments
<b>Appendix III</b>	Recommended Advisory Clauses
<b>Appendix IV</b>	Public Comments
<b>Drawing A-1</b>	Layout Plan
<b>Drawing A-2</b>	Proposed Structures Required by CLP
<b>Drawing A-3</b>	Filling of Land Plan
<b>Plan A-1</b>	Location Plan
<b>Plan A-2</b>	Site Plan
<b>Plans A-3a and 3b</b>	Aerial Photos
<b>Plans A-4a and 4b</b>	Site Photos

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
JANUARY 2026**