



**PlanD**

- Ms Josephine Y.M. Lo - District Planning Officer/Fanling, Sheung Shui and Yuen Long East (DPO/FSYLE)
- Mr Kimson P.H. Chiu - Senior Town Planner/Fanling, Sheung Shui and Yuen Long East (STP/FSYLE)
- Ms Jane C.K. Lau - Assistant Town Planner/Fanling, Sheung Shui and Yuen Long East

**Applicant's Representatives**

*Capital Chance Limited*

Mr Andy Mok  
Ms Jovial Wong  
Mr Felix Wo  
Mr S.H. Lai

*KTA Planning Limited*

Mr Kenneth To  
Ms Gladys Ng  
Mr Wilson Man

*AECOM*

Mr Willie Wan  
Mr David Yeung  
Mr Sam Wong

*ESCM Company Limited*

Dr Michael Lau

*Ove Arup & Partners Hong Kong Limited*

Mr Franki Chiu  
Mr Ivan Wan

*Ramboll Hong Kong Limited*

Mr Henry Ng

12. The Chairperson extended a welcome and explained the procedures of the meeting. To ensure smooth and efficient conduct of the meeting, a time limit of 15 minutes was set for presentation of the applicant. He then invited PlanD's representatives to brief Members on the background of the application.

13. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Kimson P.H. Chiu, STP/FSYLE, briefed Members on the background of the application, the proposed rezoning of the Site from "Residential (Group D)" ("R(D)") to "Residential (Group C) 1" ("R(C)1") to facilitate a proposed comprehensive residential development with commercial use, transport lay-by facilities and government, institution and community facilities, departmental comments, and planning considerations and assessments as detailed in the Paper. PlanD had no in-principle objection to the application.

[Professor B.S. Tang joined the meeting during PlanD's presentation.]

14. The Chairperson then invited the applicant's representatives to elaborate on the application. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Kenneth To, the applicant's representative, made the following main points:

- (a) the Site was located within the 'Innovation and Technology Zone' of the Northern Metropolis (NM), and was surrounded by low-density residential developments, Ngau Tam Mei (NTM) Drainage Channel (NTMDC) and Yau Pok Road Light Public Housing. The planned Sha Po public housing development, NTM Station of the Northern Link (NOL) Main Line and the San Tin Technopole (the Technopole) were also located nearby. Under the development proposal of NTM New Development Area (NDA) in NM, or referred to as NTM Tech-Knowledge Hub, located to the east of the Site across San Tin Highway, there would be high-density residential sites with domestic plot ratio (PR) up to 6 and building height (BH) more than 40 storeys, as well as a nine-hectare Integrated Hospital;
- (b) the Site had been zoned "R(D)" for over 30 years since the publication of the first Mai Po & Fairview Park Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) and development

had not been realised. It was involved in a previous section 16 application (No. A/YL-MP/205) approved in 2013 for the development of 71 houses with a PR of 0.2. In light of substantial changes in the planning context of the area, as well as the latest housing land policy regarding rezoning of “Green Belt” sites for residential use and relaxing the PR of suitable sites for high-density developments in the past decade, the development intensity imposed for the Site was no longer appropriate and should be reviewed and increased accordingly;

- (c) after the rejection of the previous section 12A (s.12A) application No. Y/YL-MP/6 by the Committee in 2023, the land use proposal of NTM NDA was announced in 2024. In response to Members’ concerns raised during consideration of the rejected application, the current scheme was refined with reduced development intensity and ecological enhancements incorporated. Key planning and design features included provision of a redesigned landscape pond, setback of residential blocks from NTMDC and building separation, as well as reduction of domestic PR from 1.8 to 1.5 and BH from 19 storeys to 16 storeys with the stepped BH profile maintained. To respect the birds’ flight path along NTMDC, the redesigned landscape pond, with restricted human access in the future, was lengthened along the NTMDC interface and incorporated with ecological features, including deep and shallow water zones to create varied habitats that would support different aquatic plants and attract diverse bird species, insects and aquatic life. The current scheme also generally retained the planning and design merits of the previous application such as the provision of a neighbourhood activity node with retail spaces, neighbourhood elderly centre (NEC), kindergarten and transport lay-by facilities, and private open space open to the public. These initiatives were intended to serve the future residents and the local community;
- (d) the proposed development was technically feasible, and relevant government departments had no in-principle objection to or no adverse comment on the application. Development control could be enforced by the Government under various relevant ordinances including environmental legislation and the

land exchange process upon approval of the application; and

- (e) the proposed development at the Site aligned with the strategic development potential of the area while offering an alternative housing option with quality living environment for professionals and their families, thereby contributing to the diversity of housing in the area.

15. As the presentations of PlanD's representative and the applicant's representative had been completed, the Chairperson invited questions from Members.

*The Proposed Scheme*

16. The Vice-chairperson and some Members raised the following questions:

- (a) noting that the neighbourhood activity node was relatively small in scale, whether the target customers and users of the proposed commercial and community facilities would be the nearby residents, and whether a public car park would be provided at the proposed development;
- (b) in view of the increased future private and public housing supply in the Technopole nearby, how to evaluate the additional demand for housing at the Site and the proportion of workers commuting back and forth from the Mainland so as to justify the proposed increase in PR;
- (c) whether building gaps of 15m were provided between all of the residential blocks;
- (d) the access arrangement for the private open space to be opened to the public;
- (e) the intended purpose of the community farm at the Site; and
- (f) the future management responsibilities of the facilities within the Site.

17. In response, Mr Kenneth To, the applicant's representative, with the aid of some

Powerpoint slides, made the following main points:

- (a) the neighbourhood activity node would have a gross floor area of about 3,000m<sup>2</sup> for commercial uses such as convenience stores, restaurants and laundromats to serve the immediate daily needs of the residents, and was strategically placed at the site boundary to enhance accessibility. The proposed community facilities, including kindergarten and NEC, were also modest in size to serve the residents at the Site. A basement car park would be provided at the neighbourhood activity node for visitors. The activity node would be a neighbourhood-level facility in the retail hierarchy which was different from the higher-tier commercial facilities planned at the NTM NDA, which would cater for district-wide needs;
- (b) with a maximum PR of 0.2 under the “R(D)” zone, it was likely that the Site would be developed into luxurious houses with larger unit size. While the Technopole and NTM NDA would provide high-density residential developments, the proposed medium-rise residential development at the Site would create a small-scale community with enhanced quality of life, which was currently lacking in NDAs but would better suit professionals and high-tech talents. The applicant had confidence that there would be sufficient demand for the proposed private housing development;
- (c) building gaps of not less than 15m would be provided between each pair of residential blocks, with larger gaps between the clubhouse and certain residential blocks;
- (d) the private open space to be opened to the public would be a small-scale open space. While visitors would not be allowed to pass through the private residential portion to access it from the neighbourhood activity node, the open space could be accessed via Fung Chuk Road and Ha Chuk Yuen Road, offering both pedestrian and vehicular accesses for nearby villagers, and a northern entrance along Kam Pok Road would be provided with a transport layby;

- (e) the community farm would be made available for residents of the private development to rent; and
- (f) the future management responsibilities would be divided into two parts. The commercial operator would oversee all commercial facilities and the private open space open to the public, while the future owners of the residential development would be responsible for maintaining the landscape pond.

*Design and Management of the Landscape Pond*

18. The Vice-chairperson and some Members raised the following questions:

- (a) the design features and measures to enhance bird habitats, and how the long-term maintenance and sustainability of the landscape pond would be ensured;
- (b) whether there would be fishes in the landscape pond to enhance its habitat for birds commonly found along NTMDC; and
- (c) noting that the landscape pond was designed primarily as an ecological feature and future residents could view it from the proposed seating areas around the landscape pond, whether the landscape pond would be fenced off with access prohibited.

19. In response, Dr Michael Lau and Mr Kenneth To, the applicant's representatives, with the aid of some Powerpoint slides, made the following main points:

- (a) the landscape pond had been designed to achieve ecological synergy with the adjacent NTMDC, which was transformed from a flood-control structure into a valuable habitat after the removal of the fabric dam. The landscape pond was redesigned under the current application to align with NTMDC and provide an extended interface, allowing birds to forage across

both systems. The enhanced design incorporated deep water areas for aquatic plants, reedbed and shallow marsh zones for water birds. The varied elevations of the landscape pond would support a diversity of species, including butterflies and dragonflies. The pond was designed to operate with minimal maintenance in the future. A thin concrete partition wall was included to separate the reedbed in the shallow water area from the deeper sections. During dry seasons, rainwater would be pumped from the detention tank of the residential development into the landscape pond to maintain its hydrological condition and ecological function before being discharged into NTMDC;

- (b) fishes would be raised in the landscape pond, and biodiversity measures including insects and frogs would indirectly benefit water birds by creating a more robust food web. While the landscape pond was small in scale compared to NTMDC and hence would have limited standalone impact, it would serve as a drought-resilient water source during low tides; and
- (c) while direct access to the landscape pond would be prohibited to avoid disturbance to habitats, a boardwalk encircling the landscape pond would be provided, allowing residents to view from multiple angles without affecting wildlife. For active recreational needs, a dedicated clubhouse would be provided for residents' use.

#### *Traffic Aspect*

20. In response to a Member's enquiry on the potential traffic impact on San Tin Highway after the completion of the proposed development in 2031 and before the completion of the San Tin Section of NM Highway tentatively by 2036, Mr Sam Wong, the applicant's representative, with the aid of some Powerpoint slides, said that the vehicle-to-capacity (v/c) ratio for San Tin Highway would be 1.07 before 2036, which was within the Transport Department's acceptable threshold of 1.0 to 1.2. With the completion of the San Tin Section of NM Highway in 2036, it was expected that the traffic condition of San Tin Highway would be improved.

*Development Intensity*

21. The Vice-chairperson and a Member raised the following questions:

- (a) whether there were any restrictions for developments within the Wetland Buffer Area (WBA) of the Deep Bay Area; and
- (b) how the proposed density compared against the existing or planned developments in the surroundings.

22. In response, Ms Josephine Y.M. Lo, DPO/FSYLE, with the aid of some Powerpoint slides, made the following main points:

- (a) with reference to Town Planning Board Guidelines No. 12C on ‘Development within the Deep Bay Area under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance’, the intention of WBA was to protect the ecological integrity of the fish ponds and wetland within the Wetland Conservation Area (WCA) and prevent development that would have a negative off-site disturbance impact on the ecological value of fish ponds. As certain areas within the WBA had already degraded, an appropriate level of development might be allowed so as to provide an incentive to phase out the incompatible use and/or to restore some of the fish ponds or wetland lost as long as the applicant could demonstrate that the ecological impact was acceptable or mitigated. As for the Site, the “R(D)” zoning was intended for improvement and upgrading of existing degraded rural areas through appropriate level of development; and
- (b) apart from the established low-rise residential developments in the area like Fairview Park, to the northwest and west of the Site across Kam Pok Road and NTMDC were the sites of the existing Yau Pok Road Light Public Housing, which were at the same time the subjects of two s.12A applications (No. Y/YL-MP/7 and 8) for proposed residential developments currently under processing. The proposed domestic PR of these two s.12A applications was about 1.2 with a maximum BH of about 16 storeys or

57.85mPD. Other developments to the immediate south of the Site included an approved house development with a PR of 0.2 and a Land Sharing Pilot Scheme development in Nam Sang Wai to the further south with a domestic PR of about 2 for the private residential portion. The development context of the area was undergoing transformation and the proposed medium-rise development at the Site might provide a gradual transition between the future high-rise and high-density developments at the Technopole and NTM NDA with domestic PR of about 6 to 6.5 and the existing low-rise and low-density residential developments and wetlands to the west of the Site.

### *Environmental and Drainage Aspects*

23. Noting that NTMDC was adjacent to the Site, a Member enquired whether there had been flooding or seawater intrusion during previous storm surges. In response, Mr Willie Wan, the applicant's representative, said that the Site was no longer classified as a flooding blackspot by the Drainage Services Department (DSD) following the completion of drainage improvement works including NTMDC and Chuk Yuen Stormwater Pumping Station by DSD. The proposed site formation level of 5.4mPD would exceed both the historical flood levels (i.e. 4.41mPD and 4.03mPD during typhoons Hato (天鴿) and Mangkhut (山竹) in 2017 and 2018 respectively) and the standards set out in DSD's Stormwater Drainage Manual.

24. Ms Josephine Y.M. Lo, DPO/FSYLE, supplemented that the Civil Engineering and Development Department was conducting a study to strategically address the potential risks associated with flooding under extreme weather conditions in Hong Kong. Relevant guidelines to be formulated under the study would be released in due course, providing clear guidance for the industry on how to manage flooding issues under extreme weather conditions.

25. In response to a Member's question on the environmental impact assessment (EIA) process and monitoring mechanism, Ms Josephine Y.M. Lo, DPO/FSYLE, said that as the Site fell within the Deep Bay Buffer Zone, an EIA was required for the proposed development under the EIA Ordinance (Cap. 499) (EIAO). The proposed mitigation measures in the EIA report submitted by the applicant, if agreed by relevant government

departments, would form part of the environmental permit (EP) subject to further monitoring by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD).

26. Ms Clara K.W. U, Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Territory North), EPD supplemented that the proposed residential development would constitute a designated project under EIAO and an EP was required before the construction and operation of the proposed residential development. For the subject case, apart from air quality, noise and water quality aspects, a habitat creation and management plan with details of the landscape pond design would likely be required as part of the EIA report. The habitat creation and management plan would be subject to monitoring and improvement where necessary.

27. As the applicant's representatives had no further points to raise and there were no further questions from Members, the Chairperson informed the applicant's representatives that the hearing procedure of the application had been completed and the Committee would deliberate on the application in their absence and inform the applicant of the Committee's decision in due course. The Chairperson thanked PlanD's and the applicant's representatives for attending the meeting. They left the meeting at this point.

[Mr Ryan M.K. Ip joined the meeting during the question and answer session.]

#### Deliberation Session

28. The Chairperson remarked that the Site was involved in a previous s.12A application (No. Y/YL-MP/6) submitted by the same applicant, which was rejected by the Committee in 2023. The applicant had proposed changes to the development scheme to address Members' concerns raised under the previous application. There had been changes in planning circumstances since the release of the land use proposal for NTM area in 2024. The Site was located about 300m from the future residential neighbourhood of NTM area, and the area's connectivity would be significantly improved upon completion of major transport infrastructures including the NTM Station of the NOL Main Line. Regarding the implementation of ecological features including the landscape pond, the proposed development was a designated project under EIAO and would be subject to monitoring under the EP.

29. Members generally supported the rezoning application and commended the applicant's efforts to enhance the development scheme with the support of technical assessments. The PR and BH for the proposed medium-density development were considered reasonable and appropriate, and would not set an undesirable precedent for future developments in the area. The Vice-chairperson acknowledged the ecological enhancements under the current scheme and considered the future management of ecological features reasonable. A Member opined that the proposed development would serve as a catalyst for NM, leveraging private-sector initiative to accelerate progress ahead of public infrastructure completion. The project could effectively attract new residents while supporting Hong Kong's wider development objectives. Another Member remarked that the risk of storm surge at the Site could be mitigated by elevating the site level exceeding the historical flood level during super typhoons.

30. Regarding a Member's concern about any possible oversupply of housing in the area, the Chairperson said that given the Site's proximity to the Technopole and NTM area for innovation and technology development, there would be relatively strong demand from overseas talents seeking high-quality housing options. The proposed medium-density development would offer a different housing choice, while market viability would be best assessed by the private developer.

31. After deliberation, the Committee decided to agree to the application. The relevant proposed amendments to the Mai Po & Fairview Park Outline Zoning Plan (including the appropriate development restrictions and requirements for the application site), together with the revised Notes and Explanatory Statement, would be worked out in consultation with relevant government departments and submitted to the Committee for consideration prior to gazetting under the Town Planning Ordinance.