

Tuen Mun and Yuen Long West District

Agenda Item 3

Section 12A Application

[Open Meeting (Presentation and Question Sessions Only)]

Y/HSK/1 Application for Amendment to the Approved Hung Shui Kiu and Ha Tsuen Outline Zoning Plan No. S/HSK/2, To Amend the Building Height Restriction on a “Government, Institution or Community” Site from 3 Storeys to 47.9 metres above Principal Datum, Lot 2273 & Ext. in D.D. 125, Ha Tsuen, Yuen Long
(RNTPC Paper No. Y/HSK/1A)

9. The Secretary reported that AECOM Asia Company Limited (AECOM) was one of the consultants of the applicant, and Mr Vincent K.Y. Ho had declared an interest on the item for having current business dealings with AECOM. The Committee noted that Mr Vincent K.Y. Ho had tendered an apology for being unable to attend the meeting.

Presentation and Question Sessions

10. The following representatives from the Planning Department (PlanD) and the applicant’s representatives were invited to the meeting at this point:

PlanD

Mr Raymond H.F. Au	-	District Planning Officer/Tuen Mun and Yuen Long West (DPO/TMYLW)
Mr Simon P.H. Chan	-	Senior Town Planner/Tuen Mun and Yuen Long West (STP/TMYLW)
Ms Charlotte C.Y. Lam	-	Town Planner/Tuen Mun and Yuen Long West

Applicant's Representatives

Pok Oi Hospital - Applicant

Mr Vincent Tang

Ms Anny Yip

Ms Jenny Shek

Ms Gaea Wong

KTA Planning Limited

Ms Kitty Wong

Mr Wilson Man

P&T Architects Limited

Mr Sam Cheung

Ms Rosie Cheng

11. The Chairperson extended a welcome and explained the procedures of the meeting. He then invited PlanD's representatives to brief Members on the background of the application.

12. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Simon P.H. Chan, STP/TMYLW, briefed Members on the background of the application, the proposed amendment to the building height (BH) restriction of the "Government, Institution or Community" ("G/IC") zone in respect of the application site (the Site) from 3 storeys to 47.9mPD to facilitate in-situ redevelopment of the existing Pok Oi Hospital Yeung Chun Pui Care and Attention (C&A) Home into an 11-storey new building to accommodate various social welfare facilities and medical services, departmental comments, and the planning considerations and assessments as detailed in the Paper. PlanD had no objection to the application.

[Mr Lawrence S.C. Chan joined the meeting during PlanD's presentation.]

13. The Chairperson then invited the applicant's representatives to elaborate on the application. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Ms Kitty Wong, the applicant's representative, made the following main points:

- (a) the applicant, Pok Oi Hospital, had strived to provide quality medical and social services to the community since its foundation in 1919. It operated 121 service units in various districts in Hong Kong, serving more than 1.5 million people annually;

- (b) the Site was currently occupied by the existing Pok Oi Hospital Yeung Chun Pui C&A Home, which was a 3-storey building with 143 subvented beds. The existing premises, which had been in operation since 1984, were dilapidated and required frequent and costly maintenance. Its building design also failed to meet the contemporary requirements for fire safety and barrier free access for the disabled. As such, there was an imminent need for redevelopment. Pok Oi Hospital had applied for the Lotteries Fund to finance the implementation of the proposed redevelopment project under the Government's Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses and was currently conducting a technical feasibility study for the proposed redevelopment;

- (c) the proposed in-situ redevelopment could optimise land utilisation and eliminate the need to explore other new development sites. According to the indicative scheme, the proposed redevelopment would provide an additional gross floor area (GFA) of 15,571m², with an increase in BH from 3 to 11 storeys. Upon redevelopment, the C&A home would be expanded to provide 192 beds, and other new social welfare facilities (including a 59-place child care centre, a 50-place day activity centre, a 80-place integrated vocational rehabilitation services centre, a 50-place hostel for severely mentally handicapped persons (HSMH), a 40-place hostel for moderately mentally handicapped persons (HMMH) and a 80-place day care centre for the elderly) and other self-financed welfare-related ancillary facilities (including a clinic, a Chinese medicine clinic, a dental clinic, a massage service centre, a showroom for gerontechnology products and a canteen) would also be provided. Since the proposed social welfare facilities were subject to natural sunlight and air ventilation requirements, no basement floor was proposed. The proposed BH had been optimised under the current scheme;

- (d) various design merits were incorporated into the indicative scheme, including a stepped terrace design, building setbacks, green coverage of not less than 20% and the planting of 18 additional trees. Besides, Modular Integrated Construction would be partially adopted to compress the construction period;
- (e) a seamless decanting arrangement was proposed to minimise interruption to the elderly residents, which involved suspending the intake of new residents in 2029, decanting the existing residents to the Pok Oi Lam Tei Elderly Home in 2030 to commence redevelopment works at the Site, and arranging for all decanted residents to return to the redeveloped premises in 2033/34 upon completion; and
- (f) the proposed redevelopment was technically feasible and there was no adverse comment from the relevant government bureaux/departments (B/Ds). Pok Oi Hospital also committed itself to actively engaging the stakeholders in the community, including residents in Sha Chau Lei Village, the Ha Tsuen Rural Committee and the Ching Chung C&A Home for the Aged, throughout the redevelopment process.

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

Service Demand and Labour Supply

15. In light of the Government's policy initiative to encourage elderly care in the Greater Bay Area and considering the labour-intensive nature of healthcare industry, a Member enquired about the estimated future demand for C&A homes in the proposed redevelopment and the measures to ensure a stable labour supply. In response, Mr Vincent Tang, the applicant's representative, said that the six C&A homes operated by Pok Oi Hospital were currently facing acute demand. With Hong Kong's ageing population, a strong demand for high-quality elderly care services was expected. In addition to elderly facilities, the proposed redevelopment would introduce other social welfare facilities

targeting at various underprivileged groups, such as HSMH and HMMH. Regarding labour supply, Pok Oi Hospital had recently signed memoranda with the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Metropolitan University to reserve placement quotas for students in the C&A homes operated by Pok Oi Hospital, aiming to attract their graduates to work in the C&A homes in the future. Pok Oi Hospital would also consider hiring imported workers for junior positions (e.g. welfare workers and care workers), and would recruit workers from the planned public and private housing developments nearby.

Decanting Arrangement and Development Timeline

16. Two Members raised the following questions:

- (a) whether there were measures in place to maintain the social ties of elderly residents temporarily decanted to the Pok Oi Lam Tei Elderly Home;
- (b) upon completion of the redevelopment, whether the decanted residents would have the option to remain in the Pok Oi Lam Tei Elderly Home; and
- (c) noting that the Pok Oi Lam Tei Elderly Home was expected to be completed in 2027, whether it was feasible to start the decanting of the residents before 2030 for an earlier commencement of the proposed redevelopment.

17. In response, Mr Vincent Tang, the applicant's representative, made the following main points:

- (a) the affected residents would be arranged to reside close to each other in the Pok Oi Lam Tei Elderly Home as far as practicable to minimise interruption to their social ties;
- (b) the wishes of the affected residents would be respected, and the residents would have the option to remain in the Pok Oi Lam Tei Elderly Home, subject to the agreement of the Social Welfare Department (SWD); and

- (c) if the application was approved, time would be required to undergo the statutory plan-making process for amendments of the Outline Zoning Plan (OZP). Meanwhile, Pok Oi Hospital would engage stakeholders in the community, apply to the Lands Department (LandsD) for lease modification, secure funding from the Lotteries Fund and conduct detailed design before construction. The process was expected to take about 3 years. As such, decanting of residents was anticipated to start in 2029/30 for the commencement of the proposed redevelopment.

Lease Modification and Building Design

18. Noting LandsD's comment that the self-financed welfare-related ancillary facilities with commercial nature would require approval by higher authority for lease modification, a Member enquired about the commercial components in the proposed redevelopment. In response, Mr Vincent Tang, the applicant's representative, explained that while the proposed social welfare facilities (e.g. C&A home) would be fully funded by SWD, other welfare-related ancillary facilities (e.g. clinics, massage service centre and showroom for gerontechnology products) would be self-financed and provide services to the community at a reasonable price.

19. The Vice-chairperson enquired about the considerations behind adopting a universal floor-to-floor height of 3.6m in the indicative scheme and the floor area of the proposed canteen. In response, Mr Wilson Man, the applicant's representative, said that the proposed 3.6m floor-to-floor height from 1/F to 10/F had taken into consideration that some social welfare facilities could not be situated above 24m from ground level according to relevant regulations, SWD's requirement on vertical clearance, and the contemporary electrical and mechanical requirements. The proposed canteen had a floor area of about 120m², which was equivalent to about 1% of the total GFA.

Ching Chung C&A Home for the Aged

20. In response to a Member's query, Mr Vincent Tang, the applicant's representative, said that the Ching Chung C&A Home for the Aged to the south of the Site

within the same “G/IC” zone was operated by Ching Chung Koon. While Pok Oi Hospital had no formal affiliation with Ching Chung Koon, the two organisations maintained a close cooperative relationship. For instance, Pok Oi Hospital would share its redevelopment experience with Ching Chung Koon which also had an intention to redevelop its C&A home. The same Member enquired whether Pok Oi Hospital was intending to uplift the BH restriction for the entire “G/IC” zone under the current application. In response, Ms Kitty Wong, the applicant’s representative, clarified that the rezoning proposal was confined to the Site only, and the BH restriction for the site of the Ching Chung C&A Home for the Aged would not be affected by the current application.

21. 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 representatives and the applicant’s representatives for attending the meeting. They left the meeting at this point.

Deliberation Session

22. The Chairperson remarked that the current BH restriction of the “G/IC” zone was to reflect the as-built condition. In general, PlanD would have no objection to amending the BH restriction for a “G/IC” site upon application provided that the proposal was supported with technical assessments to demonstrate its technical feasibility and no insurmountable problems, and there were no objection/adverse comments from relevant B/Ds. The current application met those criteria and aligned with the ‘single site, multiple use’ development approach for optimising land resources. Should the application be agreed, the amended BH restriction would be incorporated into the OZP and confined to the Site, since the relaxation of development restrictions for other areas within the “G/IC” zone had yet to be substantiated by the proposed development scheme and technical assessments.

23. Members generally supported the application, taken into consideration that the existing structure was dilapidated and could not meet the contemporary needs, Pok Oi Hospital was experienced in operating social welfare facilities, the proposed redevelopment could provide additional floor space for social welfare facilities and the proposed

development intensity was reasonable and justifiable. The Committee noted that the number of places for the proposed social welfare facilities would be optimised and would be subject to further liaison between the applicant and SWD at the detailed design stage. There would be control on the operation of the social welfare facilities under a separate licensing mechanism by SWD.

24. Two Members expressed concerns about the future labour shortage in the elderly healthcare sector, particularly given that there was currently a vacancy rate of about 20%. Nevertheless, Members generally noted that the tight labour condition might be alleviated through appropriate adaptation of artificial intelligence, introduction of imported labour and the establishment of the new professional rank of ‘Health and Care Practitioner’, while attention should be given to offering local training for the imported workers.

25. After deliberation, the Committee decided to agree to the application. The relevant proposed amendments to the Hung Shui Kiu and Ha Tsuen Outline Zoning Plan, together with the revised Notes and the Explanatory Statement, would be submitted to the Committee for consideration prior to gazetting under the Town Planning Ordinance.

Agenda Item 4

Section 12A Application

[Open Meeting]

Y/YL-PN/11

Application for Amendment to the Approved Sheung Pak Nai and Ha Pak Nai Outline Zoning Plan No. S/YL-PN/9, To rezone the application site from “Coastal Protection Area” to “Other Specified Uses” annotated “Columbarium”, Lot 118 in D.D.135, Ha Pak Nai, Yuen Long

26. The Secretary reported that the application was withdrawn by the applicant.