

**TOWN PLANNING BOARD**

**Minutes of 786<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the  
Metro Planning Committee held at 9:00 a.m. on 17.4.2026**

**Present**

Director of Planning  
Mr C.K. Yip

Chairperson

Ms Sandy H.Y. Wong

Vice-chairperson

Mr Ben S.S. Lui

Professor Bernadette W.S. Tsui

Ms Kelly Y.S. Chan

Mr Daniel K.W. Chung

Dr Tony C.M. Ip

Professor Simon K.L. Wong

Mr Derrick S.M. Yip

Professor Janet K.Y. Chan

Mr Vincent K.C. Cheung

Professor Herbert P.K. Chia

Dr Chris K.T. Lam

Assistant Commissioner/Urban,  
Transport Department  
Mr B.K. Chow

Chief Engineer (Works),  
Home Affairs Department  
Mr Bond C.P. Chow

Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Territory North),  
Environmental Protection Department  
Ms Clara K.W. U

Assistant Director/Regional 1,  
Lands Department  
Ms Catherine W.S. Pang

Deputy Director of Planning/District  
Ms Donna Y.P. Tam

Secretary

**In Attendance**

Assistant Director of Planning/Board  
Ms Caroline T.Y. Tang

Chief Town Planner/Town Planning Board  
Mr K.K. Lee

Assistant Town Planner/Town Planning Board  
Ms Alanna W.H. Chan

## **Agenda Item 5**

### **Section 16 Application**

[Open Meeting (Presentation and Question Sessions Only)]

A/K14/839                      Proposed Hotel (Student Hostel) in “Other Specified Uses” annotated  
“Business” Zone and area shown as ‘Road’, 31 Chong Yip Street,  
Kwun Tong, Kowloon  
(MPC Paper No. A/K14/839)

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53.            Mr Vincent K.C. Cheung declared an interest on the item as he knew the director of the applicant (i.e. Allied Nice Enterprise Limited). Professor Herbert P.K. Chia also declared an interest on the item as his business partner was renting a unit in the vicinity of the application site (the Site). As Mr Vincent K.C. Cheung had no discussion with the director of the applicant on the application and the interest declared by Professor Herbert P.K. Chia was considered indirect, the Committee agreed that they could stay in the meeting.

### **Presentation and Question Sessions**

54.            With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Jeff C.N. Leung, TP/K, briefed Members on the background of the application, the proposed development under the Hostels in the City Scheme (the Scheme), departmental and public comments, and the planning considerations and assessments as detailed in the Paper. The Planning Department (PlanD) had no objection to the application.

### *Design and Operation of the Proposed Student Hotel*

55.            Some Members raised the following questions:
- (a) the user-to-facility ratio of the shared toilet and shower facilities among student residents, and the rationale for providing such shared facilities;
  - (b) whether there were any restrictions on forbidding the conversion from standard beds to bunk beds;
  - (c) whether the proposed minimum room size of 5.4m<sup>2</sup> was appropriate, and

whether a requirement on minimum per capita living area had been established under the Scheme;

- (d) the provision of communal facilities, including pantries, activity rooms and laundry facilities;
- (e) the arrangements for cooking in the proposed student hostel; and
- (f) whether there were mixed-gender floors.

56. In response, Ms Florence Y.S. Lee, STP/K, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, made the following main points:

- (a) students living on 2/F to 11/F would need to share toilet and shower facilities. There were 14 toilets and 10 shower rooms proposed on 2/F which were to be shared by 47 students, while on 3/F to 11/F, 14 toilets and eight shower rooms were to be shared by about 52 to 53 students per floor. Besides, en-suites with toilet and shower facilities would be provided on 12/F and 13/F, each accommodating two students per room. However, the applicant did not provide information and explanations for the sharing arrangement for most of the floors;
- (b) there were 31 single rooms of smaller size in the proposed student hostel. Under the current proposal, no bunk beds would be provided and all beds were single beds. As advised by the Education Bureau (EDB) and the Development Bureau (DEVB), a maximum of two students per room was preferred. The operation of the proposed student hostel would be closely monitored by EDB under the Scheme. It was unlikely that the single beds would subsequently be converted into bunk beds to increase occupancy per room;
- (c) on 3/F to 11/F, there were eight rooms with a room size below 6m<sup>2</sup> (ranging from 5.4m<sup>2</sup> to 5.9m<sup>2</sup>). At present, there was no specific requirement regarding room size or minimum per capita living area under the Scheme.

Nevertheless, by reference to the student hostels across various universities in Hong Kong, the average living area per person was about 5m<sup>2</sup> to 6m<sup>2</sup>. While the proposed room size might not be ideal, it was not significantly lower than the referenced figures. The dimensions and design of the hostel rooms would be monitored by EDB to ensure the living quality of the student residents;

- (d) according to the applicant's proposal, pantries with floor areas ranging from about 13m<sup>2</sup> to 15m<sup>2</sup> were provided on the 2/F to 11/F, while a larger pantry and multiple activity rooms were located on 13/F to serve as communal spaces for the student residents. Furthermore, laundry facilities would be provided, although their locations had not yet been reflected in the current layout plan. The design of the pantries, including their size and configuration, as well as the integration of laundry facilities, would be dealt with during the detailed design stage and subject to further review by EDB;
- (e) similar to hotel development and constrained by the building design and relevant restrictions, cooking was prohibited within individual rooms of the student hostel. However, the applicant did not indicate whether cooking facilities would be available within the common pantries; and
- (f) there was no information from the applicant on whether there were any mixed-gender floors in the student hostel.

57. A Member expressed concern that there might not be any restriction on using bunk beds under the relevant student hostel licence. Consequently, there would be a perceived lack of regulatory control over this aspect, which could potentially lead to unauthorised increase in occupancy. Regarding the communal facilities, the Member remarked that referencing the average room size of on-campus student hostels was not appropriate, as students have access to ample activity rooms and common areas on campus. Besides, the Member also suggested that it would be preferable to set a per capita communal space or a user-to-facility ratio, designating specific toilet and shower facilities to a small group of students (e.g. 4 to 6 students), rather than having all students on the same floor to share those facilities without assigned use, in order to maintain hygiene and management

standards. In response, the Chairperson supplemented that the layout design of the student hostel would be vetted by EDB at subsequent stage to ensure its appropriateness.

#### *Air Ventilation*

58. Noting that the windows would generally remain closed during operation, a Member enquired whether the windows were openable and whether there were any requirements for air ventilation of the hostel rooms under the Scheme. In response, Ms Florence Y.S. Lee, STP/K, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, said that considering that the proposed student hostel was located in Kwun Tong Business Area (KTBA), there might be interface issues between the student hostel and the neighbouring uses. To address this issue, the proposed development would not rely on open windows for ventilation. The proposed fresh air intake points of the air supply system would be located about 15m away from adjacent roads so as to mitigate potential noise and air quality impacts from KTBA. While the windows would generally remain closed during daily operations, they were openable to ensure compliance with the relevant building regulations. As no chimney was found within a 200m radius of the Site, the largest source of air pollution would be road emissions. Given that the proposed development would not rely on open-window ventilation, no insurmountable air quality impact was anticipated. It should be noted that the primary objective of the Scheme was to encourage the market to convert commercial buildings into student hostels, thereby increasing the supply of student accommodation. To ensure the liveability of the converted hostels, student hostels under the Scheme should comply with the same natural lighting and ventilation standards applicable to domestic buildings, such as the requirement that the distance between the required window and any part of a hostel room should be within 9m. However, there was no mandatory requirement for the development to adopt fresh air ventilation.

#### *Provision on Car Parking Spaces and Loading/Unloading (L/UL) Facilities*

59. Two Members enquired whether the proposed parking and L/UL spaces could adequately cater for the needs of student residents, particularly during the two peak periods of check-in and check-out. In response, Ms Florence Y.S. Lee, STP/K, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, said that the building, now known as LT Tower, was wholesale-converted to commercial purposes in 2020. It provided eight parking spaces and two L/UL spaces on

G/F for shared use of the building. There was no specific L/UL provision requirement stipulated under the Scheme. Nevertheless, two parking spaces and one L/UL space were specifically allocated to the proposed student hostel, while the remaining spaces would serve the shops and restaurants located on G/F and 1/F. Students might use the designated L/UL space for loading and unloading of luggage during the check-in and check-out periods. As it was anticipated that the student residents would not be driving, the two parking spaces reserved for the student hostel were mainly intended for use by staff (such as wardens) and visiting scholars.

*Others*

60. Two Members raised the following questions:

- (a) the distances between the proposed student hostel and various post-secondary institutions; and
- (b) whether the student residents were from a specific post-secondary institution or from multiple institutions.

61. In response, Ms Florence Y.S. Lee, STP/K, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, made the following main points:

- (a) the Site was well served by public transport, with Ngau Tau Kok MTR Station located in close proximity. It was also adjacent to Kwun Tong Road, which was served by a wide range of bus routes to different parts of Hong Kong. The student residents could reach a number of post-secondary institutions on the 'List of Eligible Post-secondary Institutions' under the Scheme (the List), such as the City University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Baptist University, within an hour via public transport; and
- (b) eligibility for residency in the student hostels under the Scheme was restricted to students from the 31 post-secondary institutions on the List. The applicant had not entered into a partnership with any specific

post-secondary institution. In principle, all full-time local or non-local students enrolled in relevant programmes of any of the 31 eligible institutions might apply for residency at the proposed student hostel.

62. To provide the Town Planning Board (the Board) with a consistent set of benchmarks for considering similar applications for student hostels in the future, a Member opined that EDB should formulate clear requirements regarding minimum room sizes and the provision of ancillary and communal facilities, such as parking and L/UL facilities, toilets and shower rooms. Guidelines on measures to prevent unauthorised occupancy (e.g. overnight stays by non-tenants) should also be introduced.

[Ms Kelly Y.S. Chan left the meeting during the question and answer session.]

#### Deliberation Session

63. The Chairperson recapitulated that student hostels supported by Government's policy were regarded as 'Hotel' use under the Definitions of Terms promulgated by the Board. According to Schedule I of the Notes for the "Other Specified Uses" annotated "Business" ("OU(B)") zone, 'Hotel' was a Column 2 use which required planning permission from the Board. The proposed development was located in KTBA, with several hotel developments located nearby. The proposed student hostel under the Scheme was considered generally in line with the planning intention of the "OU(B)" zone and not incompatible with the surrounding land uses. The Board might assess the subject application from planning perspective, such as land use compatibility with the surrounding area. As for the detailed design of the proposed student hostel, it would be vetted by EDB at a later stage.

64. Members generally had reservation on the application and expressed the following views/suggestions:

- (a) whilst the location of the proposed student hostel was generally considered appropriate and not incompatible with the surrounding land uses, the interior layout was not ideal as most of the hostel rooms were generally narrow and elongated in configuration (with a minimum width of about 1.6m excluding wall thickness) and small in size (the smallest being 5.4m<sup>2</sup>).

Only the layout on 12/F, with rooms generally having a larger size and a more reasonable configuration, was deemed relatively acceptable. Given the Government's commitment to tackling the issue of substandard subdivided units (typically those with a living area of 8m<sup>2</sup> or less), the design of the proposed student hostel should be reviewed in order to enhance the living quality of student tenants;

- (b) apart from the adequacy of per capita communal space, and whilst acknowledging that the proposed student hostel would be developed through the partial conversion of an existing commercial development, which inevitably encountered design constraints, designating corner areas with no access to natural sunlight as communal spaces appeared to be an 'opportunistic' design choice;
- (c) the occupancy density of the proposed student hostel was considered excessively high. Given that the interior layouts of most rooms were narrow and elongated and windows would remain closed most of the time without fresh air ventilation, the student residents who generally stayed longer than hotel visitors would be prone to poor hygienic conditions and fire risk, ultimately affecting their well-being. It was suggested that the applicant should consider increasing per capita living space by reducing the number of beds or rooms, thereby improving the overall living quality for the student residents; and
- (d) regarding air ventilation, it was noted that the proposed development would not rely on open windows for ventilation, but instead an air supply system would be used. There were concerns that if the air supply system malfunctioned, the lack of air exchange would significantly compromise indoor air circulation and quality.

65. Two Members opined that to consolidate Hong Kong's position as an international hub for post-secondary education, maintaining a decent living quality for student residents, especially those from outside Hong Kong, was essential. The Board had the responsibility to act as a gatekeeper to safeguard and promote the health, safety,

convenience and general welfare of the students.

66. Noting the anticipated increase in student hostel applications and considering that approval of substandard proposals could lead to potential damage to Hong Kong's reputation as an international education hub, some Members requested PlanD to liaise with EDB on the formulation of appropriate and clear design requirements, guidelines and controls for a decent student hostel, as opposed to those for a standard hotel for short-stay visitors, in order to ensure a consistent standard of living quality for all student residents. There should also be measures to prevent non-eligible persons (e.g. tenants displaced from substandard subdivided units) from residing in the student hostels under the Scheme. Members noted that EDB would be invited to provide information regarding the Scheme as appropriate in response to Members' concerns.

67. While acknowledging that the proposed student hostel, situated in a convenient location, would contribute to the supply of student accommodation, the Chairperson noted Members' concerns regarding the interior layout and room size of the proposed student hostel, as well as its potential air ventilation, hygiene and fire safety impacts. In that regard, the Chairperson said that the Committee might consider deferring a decision on the application pending the applicant's submission of supplementary information to address Members' concerns as stated above.

68. After deliberation, the Committee decided to defer a decision on the application for 2 months pending the submission of further information from the applicant, including (i) a review of the layout, room size and supporting facilities of the student hostel; and (ii) clarifications or further assessments on the potential air ventilation, hygienic and fire safety impacts, for consideration by the Committee.

[The Chairperson thanked PlanD's representatives for attending the meeting. They left the meeting at this point.]