

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION
UNDER SECTION 16 OF THE TOWN PLANNING ORDINANCE

APPLICATION NO. A/H25/24

- Applicant** : The Automall Limited represented by KTA Planning Limited
- Premises** : Part of Basement Level B1 of the Car Park Complex, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) (Phase 1), 1 Harbour Road, Wan Chai
- Total Floor Area** : About 3,967.065m²
- Lease** : Inland Lot (IL) 8593 governed by the Conditions of Grant No. UB11784 dated 28.2.1985 for a term of 75 years commencing on 19.2.1985 as varied or modified by a Modification Letter dated 8.6.1990
- (a) 1,070 car parking spaces shall be provided within the lot of which 670 car parking spaces shall be made available for short-term public parking
- (b) temporary waiver for the purpose of the display and sale of motor vehicles only (excluding the use as a trade fair or an exhibition centre or a general exhibition hall for the display of any vehicle of a special nature) and not exceeding 184 motor vehicles to be parked at the waiver area is granted and currently on a quarterly basis
- Plan** : Approved Wan Chai North Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/H25/6
- Zoning** : “Open Space” (“O”)
- Application** : Temporary Shop and Services (Motor-vehicle Showroom) for a Period of Five Years

1. The Proposal

- 1.1 The applicant seeks planning permission to continue the use of part of the Basement Level B1 of the Car Park Complex of HKCEC (Phase 1) (the Premises) (**Plan A-2**) for temporary shop and services (motor-vehicle showroom) for a period of five years. According to the Notes of the OZP for the “O” zone, ‘Shop and Services’ is a Column 2 use which requires planning permission from the Town Planning Board (the Board).

- 1.2 The Premises is the subject of eleven previous applications for similar temporary motor-vehicle showroom/ exhibition hall uses with different floor areas by the same applicant. Ten were approved between 2003 and 2024 (details at paragraph 5 below) (**Plan A-1**). All approval conditions of the last planning permission (under Application No. A/H25/23) have been complied with, and the temporary permission of two years lapsed on 20.9.2026¹.
- 1.3 The current application has the same layout and development parameters as the last approved application. The applied use, comprising a vehicle display area and an ancillary sales office, is to provide sales services for pre-owned vehicles. According to the applicant, the motor-vehicle showroom temporarily reduces the parking provision at HKCEC (Phase 1) from 1,070 to 875 spaces (195 affected). The display area accommodates up to 184 vehicles at any one time, with a maximum of 300 visitors permitted within the display area. The operation hours of the motor-vehicle showroom is from 10:30 to 19:30, Mondays to Sundays. The floor plans submitted by the applicant showing the layout of the Premises and the fire exit/escape routes are shown in **Drawings A-1** and **A-2**. The major development parameters are as follows:

Major Development Parameters	
Floor Area	3,967.065m ²
No. of Car Parking Spaces at HKCEC (Phase 1) Car Park Complex (the Complex)	1,070
No. of Affected Car Parking Spaces at the Complex	195
No. of Remaining Car Parking Spaces at the Complex	875 (125 monthly parking spaces & 750 public hourly parking spaces)
Maximum No. of Cars in the Display Area	184
Maximum No. of Visitors Permitted in the Display Area	300

- 1.4 To ensure fire safety, all fire services installations (FSIs) will continue to be provided at the Premises, including the sales office with a separated corridor and a block wall providing a four-hour fire resistance period to satisfy the 'Means of Escape' (MoE) requirement, as well as a smoke detection and extraction system, a public announcement system, CCTV and a fast response sprinkler system.
- 1.5 To assess the adequacy of the short-term public parking supply even with the motor-vehicle showroom in operation, a Parking Demand Study (PDS) has been carried out by the applicant to review the parking conditions of the Complex and

¹ The planning permission under Application No. A/H25/23 was still valid when the Board received the current application on 10.6.2026. However, as further information was submitted to address departmental comments, the application was deferred once and is scheduled for consideration by the Metro Planning Committee of the Board at this meeting. Besides, since the approval period sought (i.e. for a period of five years) under the current application has exceeded that of the previous approval (i.e. for a period of two years), the current application for a longer period could not be regarded as a renewal of planning approval as set out in the Town Planning Board Guidelines No. 34D on Renewal of Planning Approval and Extension of Time for Compliance with Planning Conditions for Temporary Use or Development (TPB PG-No.34D).

the adjacent car parks. Based on parking records during major events held at HKCEC in 2025 and 2026, the PDS concludes that vacant spaces would generally remain available within the Complex, with additional capacity in adjacent car parks.

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

- (a) Application Form received on 10.6.2026 (Appendix I)
- (b) Supporting Planning Statement (SPS) received on 10.6.2026 (Appendix Ia)
- (c) Further Information (FI) received on 10.8.2026[#] (1st FI) (Appendix Ib)
- (d) FI received on 18.9.2026^{*} (2nd FI) (Appendix Ic)

[#] not exempted from publication and recounting requirements

^{*} exempted from publication and recounting requirements

1.7 On 24.7.2026, the Metro Planning Committee (the Committee) of the Board agreed to defer making a decision on the application for two months as requested by the applicant.

2. **Justifications from the Applicant**

The justifications put forth by the applicant in support of the application detailed in the SPS and FIs at **Appendices Ia to Ic** are summarised as follows:

No Material Change in Planning Circumstances

- (a) there has been no material change in the planning circumstances in the Wan Chai North area since the approval of the last planning application. There has been no change in the land uses of the surrounding areas;
- (b) the three government buildings will be vacated by the end of 2027, and the proposed composite development comprising convention and exhibition (C&E) facilities with office and hotel in the “Other Specified Uses” annotated “Exhibition Centre with Commercial Development (6)” (“OU(ECCD)(6)”) zone will be completed in 2034 at the earliest². Approval of the current planning application for another five years will not give rise to any adverse planning implication;

Efforts Put by the Applicant to Meet the Fire Safety Requirements

- (c) the applicant has made tremendous effort in complying with the approval conditions to meet the fire safety requirements for the Premises, including the installation of a mechanical monitoring system to control the number of visitors and the provision of enhanced FSIs (e.g. smoke detection system, public

² The site, currently occupied by the three existing government buildings, Gloucester Road Garden and Kong Wan Fire Station, was rezoned to “OU(ECCD)(6)” in 2024 to enable the development of C&E facilities, office and hotel uses to reinforce Hong Kong’s role as an exhibition, convention and commercial node.

announcement system, CCTV and fast response sprinkler system). Bi-monthly audit reports were submitted during the approval periods, and no exceedance of the permitted number of visitors inside the showroom has ever been recorded. Should the current application be approved, the applicant will continue to submit bi-monthly audit reports for monitoring the number of visitors within the Premises;

No Adverse Effect on Provision of Car Parking Spaces in the Wan Chai North Area

- (d) according to the records of maximum parking demand at the Complex during major events held at HKCEC from 2025 to 2026, the Complex generally still had vacant parking spaces even when the temporary motor-vehicle showroom at the Premises was in operation. While temporary full occupancy and vehicular queuing may occur during periods of high parking demand, the parking utilisation records indicate that such conditions are temporary rather than persistent;
- (e) a forecast has been carried out based on the surplus parking spaces available in the Complex on event days between 2015 and 2025, taking into account the growth trend in supply and demand from 2006 to 2011. The results indicate that there will be sufficient parking provision in Wan Chai District in 2031. In the absence of any major change in Wan Chai District, the parking condition in 2031 (i.e. following the expiry of the five-year temporary permission) is expected to remain similar to the current condition. The impact of extending the temporary motor-vehicle showroom for a further five years is considered insignificant;

Suitability of the Applied Use at the Premises

- (f) the applied use at the Premises has been in operation by the same operator since 2003 and is considered compatible in land use terms with the Complex. The services provided have been well received by the public in the past 23 years and the showroom has continued to offer employment opportunities and support the second-hand car sale business in Hong Kong. In addition, 'Exhibition and Convention Hall' is neither a Column 1 or Column 2 use within the subject "O" zone. Further extension of the applied use for a further period of five years will enable the continual provision of sales services for pre-owned vehicles and reduce the administrative work of the government department in processing planning application every two years without affecting the space provision for C&E use; and

No Adverse Traffic Impact on the Surrounding Road Network

- (g) most of the vehicles within the Premises are for display purposes and will not move in and out frequently. The continued operation of the applied use with the same area and scale of operation will not worsen the existing traffic condition. Thus, no adverse traffic impact on the surrounding road network is anticipated. The temporary motor vehicle showroom is considered acceptable on traffic grounds.

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

The applicant is not a “current land owner” but has 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 sending notification letter to the owner. Detailed information would be deposited at the meeting for Members’ inspection.

4. Background

When the HKCEC (Phase 1) was developed, it could not meet all of its car parking requirements within the confines of its site. The HKCEC therefore proposed to extend its car parking area into the space underneath its adjacent public open space (**Plan A-2**).

5. Previous Applications

5.1 The Premises is the subject of eleven previous applications (No. A/H25/2, A/H25/6, A/H25/9, A/H25/10, A/H25/12, A/H25/14, A/H25/18, A/H25/19, A/H25/20, A/H25/21 and A/H25/23) for similar/same temporary motor-vehicle showroom/exhibition hall uses with different extents since 2003, of which ten were approved with conditions by the Committee/the Board, whilst Application No. A/H25/9 was rejected by the Committee in 2008 due to insufficient information in the submission to demonstrate the provision of FSIs. Details of the previous applications are set out in **Appendix II**.

5.2 Among the approved applications, a shorter-term temporary planning permission of two years, instead of the three- or five-year term applied by the applicant, was granted since 2009 in order to monitor the operation of the subject temporary motor vehicles exhibition hall (No. A/H25/10), and to monitor the future demand for car parking spaces in the area (No. A/H25/12, 14, 18 to 21 and 23).

6. Similar Application

There is no similar application for ‘Shop and Services (Motor-vehicle Showroom)’ use within “O” zone on the Wan Chai North OZP.

7. The Premises and Its Surrounding Areas (Plans A-1 to A-5)

7.1 The Premises is:

- (a) located at the lowest level of the three-storey car park-cum-public open space (POS) complex, namely Convention Plaza (Harbour Road) Carpark (two basement levels and one above-ground level with a POS at the roof);
- (b) currently used as a temporary showroom for second-hand motor vehicles with a sales office demarcated from the car display area and a dedicated corridor provided to satisfy the MoE requirements; and

- (c) accessible by vehicles via the existing car park entrances at Harbour Road and Convention Avenue. Pedestrians can access the Premises via a lift at the ground floor entrance at Harbour Road.

7.2 The surrounding areas have the following characteristics:

- (a) to the east and northeast are the Convention Plaza, Hong Kong Grand Hyatt Hotel, HKCEC and HKCEC Atrium Link Extension;
- (b) to the further east is the Exhibition Centre Station of the MTR East Rail Line;
- (c) to the southeast is the area zoned “OU(ECCD)(6)” reserved for the redevelopment of the existing Wan Chai Government Offices into C&E, office and hotel uses; and
- (d) to the south and southwest across Harbour Road are Government, Institution or Community (G/IC) facilities (including the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts and the Hong Kong Arts Centre) and some commercial developments such as Shui On Centre, Telecom House and The Harbourview (hotel).

8. Planning Intention

The planning intention of the “O” zone is primarily for the provision of outdoor open-air public space for active and/or passive recreational uses serving the needs of local residents as well as the general public.

9. Comments from Relevant Government Departments

- 9.1 The following government bureau/departments have been consulted and their views on the application are summarised as follows:

Land Administration

- 9.1.1 Comments of the District Lands Officer/Hong Kong East, Lands Department (DLO/HKE, LandsD):

- (a) the Premises falls within IL 8593 which is held under the Conditions of Grant No. UB11784 dated 28.2.1985 for a term of 75 years commencing on 19.2.1985 as varied or modified by a Modification Letter dated 8.6.1990 (the Conditions). Under Special Condition No. (10)(a) of the Conditions, 1,070 car parking spaces shall be provided within the lot of which 670 car parking spaces shall be made available for short term public parking. Special Condition No. (10)(e) of the Conditions stipulates that any spaces provided shall not be used for any other purpose than that specified in this Condition;

- (b) a temporary waiver issued on 31.12.2014 as amended by two supplementary agreements dated 20.12.2019 and 12.12.2024 respectively (the Waiver) permits car parking area at Basement Level 1 with waiver area of 3,967.065m² for the purpose of the display and sale of motor vehicles only (excluding the use of the area as a trade fair or an exhibition centre or a general exhibition hall for the display of any vehicle of a special nature) and not exceeding 184 motor vehicles to be parked at the waiver area. The Waiver is currently on quarterly basis;
- (c) it is noted that the subject application is basically the same as the planning application No. A/H25/23 previously approved on 20.9.2024 with an area of 3,967.065m² except the proposed approved period. The proposed boundary as shown in **Drawing A-1**, the area and maximum number of motor vehicles to be parked at the area as stated in the SPS also tally with the terms of the Waiver. Subject to the compliance with the terms and conditions of existing temporary waiver, this office has no in-principle objection to the subject application; and
- (d) other detailed comments are at **Appendix III**.

Traffic

9.1.2 Comments of the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (SCED):

- (a) having consulted the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC), vehicles have been observed queuing outside HKCEC whenever major events are held there, and the continued conversion of a portion of the basement carpark into the motor-vehicle showroom will reduce the number of parking spaces available to visitors and users of HKCEC;
- (b) in addition, the Government is taking forward the Wan Chai North Redevelopment (WCNR) Project near HKCEC as planned. The construction works for the reprovisioning buildings involving the relevant user departments of the Wan Chai Government Office Compound as well as the reprovisioning of the Kong Wan Fire Station are underway and are expected to be completed by the end of 2027. With the WCNR Project entering into the next phase upon the completion of relocation of the user departments concerned in due course, it may be necessary to further assess the traffic situation and the demand for parking space in the area; and
- (c) in light of the above, it would be more prudent to limit the period of approval for the present application, if granted by the Board, to no more than two years so that suitable flexibility would be allowed for further assessment of the traffic situation and the demand for parking space in the area in a timely manner.

9.1.3 Comments of the Commissioner for Transport (C for T):

- (a) no objection to the application subject to the following:
 - (i) the approval period should be limited to two years (instead of the five years applied for), given that the car parking supply and demand may change with ongoing developments in Wan Chai North over time, and the approval period of two years is in line with the previous applications approved in recent years since 2009; and
 - (ii) the parking requirements for HKCEC should be timely reviewed in view of the potential traffic impact of the future developments nearby, such as the redevelopment of Wan Chai Government Offices; and
- (b) no complaint is received relating to the temporary motor-vehicle showroom since the last planning permission (under Application No. A/H25/23) in 2024.

Environment

9.1.4 Comments of the Director of Environmental Protection (DEP):

- (a) no objection to the planning application from the environmental planning perspective; and
- (b) from air quality aspect, the applicant is advised to:
 - (i) switch on the vehicle engines only when necessary and switch off the engines immediately after use to minimize air pollutants in the proposed showroom;
 - (ii) make reference and comply with the Motor Vehicular Idling (Fixed Penalty) Ordinance (Cap. 611); and
 - (iii) make reference to the Professional Persons Environmental Consultative Committee (ProPECC) Practice Note : “Control of Air Pollution in Car Parks” (ProPECC PN2/96) which provides information on the air quality standards in car park.

Building Matters

9.1.5 Comments of the Chief Building Surveyor/Hong Kong East and Heritage, Buildings Department (CBS/HKE&H, BD):

- (a) no adverse comment under the Buildings Ordinance (BO) on the planning application;
- (b) no objection in-principle to impose the approval conditions regarding the maximum number of visitors permitted, employment

of an independent professional to monitor the mechanical monitoring system and an Authorised Person to conduct bi-monthly audit checks on the monitoring system as well as submission of bi-monthly audit reports for the purpose of monitoring the mode of operation as proposed by the applicant in order to ensure not to affect the MoE and FSIs requirements; and

- (c) the applicant is reminded that all building works should be carried out in accordance with BO.

Fire Safety

9.1.6 Comments of the Director of Fire Services (D of FS):

no objection in-principle to the planning application subject to FSIs and equipment being provided to the satisfaction of the Fire Services Department. Detailed fire services requirements will be formulated upon receipt of the formal submission of general building plans.

9.2 The following departments have no adverse comments on or no objection in principle to the application:

- (a) Chief Highway Engineer/Hong Kong, Highways Department (CHE/HK, HyD);
- (b) Commissioner for Harbourfront, Development Bureau (C for HF);
- (c) Commissioner for Police (C of P); and
- (d) District Officer (Wan Chai), Home Affairs Department (DO(WC), HAD).

10. Public Comments Received During Statutory Publication Periods

During the statutory publication periods, two objecting public comments (**Appendices IVa** and **IVb**) were received from an individual and the Convention Plaza Apartment Owners' Committee. Their major grounds of objection and main concerns are summarised below:

- (a) the Premises should be used for exhibition-related purposes, given the increasing C&E activities in Hong Kong;
- (b) using the Premises as a motor-vehicle showroom reduces the parking supply at HKCEC and worsens local traffic and road safety;
- (c) there is insufficient information to demonstrate that there will be no adverse traffic, noise, air quality and nighttime lighting impacts on nearby residents;
- (d) a basement showroom may pose additional fire and public safety risks; more operational details are required;
- (e) the proposed five-year period is too long, and the repeated applications for the temporary motor-vehicle showroom use at the Premises may convert the car parking spaces into permanent commercial use;

- (f) the motor-vehicle showroom use does not conform with the planning intention of the “O” zone; and
- (g) approval may set an undesirable precedent by converting public parking spaces to private commercial use, which would weaken the overall planning of the Wan Chai North area and give rise to additional adverse impacts.

11. Planning Considerations and Assessments

- 11.1 The application seeks planning permission for the continued use of the Premises for a motor-vehicle showroom for a period of five years. While the applied use is not in line with the planning intention of the “O” zone, the site of the Premises is currently occupied by a one-storey aboveground car park with its roof developed as a POS over a two-level basement car park. The subject car park is built to meet the car parking requirement of HKCEC. The temporary motor-vehicle showroom, which has been in operation within Basement Level B1 of the Complex since 2003, would not affect the POS at the top of the car park. Thus, the use is considered not unacceptable from a land use point of view.
- 11.2 The Premises is the subject of ten previously approved applications for similar temporary motor-vehicle showroom/exhibition hall uses since 2003. Compared with the last approved application No. A/H25/23, there is no change in the floor area and the number of parking spaces to be affected by the temporary vehicle showroom. A total of 875 car parking spaces at the Complex would still be available for the use of the general public and visitors.
- 11.3 According to the PDS carried out by the applicant to review the current car parking condition of the Complex, the Complex would generally still have adequate parking spaces during major exhibitions held at HKCEC even with the temporary motor-vehicle showroom in operation. According to the applicant’s forecast, the provision of private car parking spaces is still sufficient up to 2031. The survey conducted by the applicant also revealed vacancies in other car parks near the Complex within the Wan Chai North area during major exhibition/ event periods. Nevertheless, SCED considers that the conversion of the basement car park into a motor-vehicle showroom would reduce the number of parking spaces available to visitors and users of HKCEC, and that the planning approval period should be limited to two years to allow suitable flexibility for further assessment of the traffic situation and demand for parking space in the area in a timely manner, given that parking demand may change over time and with the on-going developments around the Premises. C for T has no objection to the application subject to the condition that the approval period should be limited to two years, as the car parking supply and demand may change with the developments in the Wan Chai North area and the parking requirements for HKCEC should be reviewed on a timely basis. To address these concerns, it is recommended that the approval period be limited to two years, rather than the five years sought by the applicant, should the application be approved by the Committee.
- 11.4 On the safety aspect, the applicant has implemented the measures required under the approval conditions of the last application to meet fire safety requirements,

including the provision of a corridor to satisfy MoE requirements, the installation of a mechanical monitoring system to control the number of visitors, and enhanced FSIs (such as a smoke detection system, a public announcement system, CCTV and a fast response sprinkler system). All approval conditions of the last application were complied with during its approval period. The applicant has committed to continuing to comply with these requirements. In this regard, CBS/HKE&H, BD and D of FS have no adverse comment on/ no objection in-principle to the application. Besides, the applicant will be advised to follow the 'Practice Note for Professional Persons: Control of Air Pollution in Car Parks' issued by the Environmental Protection Department and other relevant environmental guidelines and legislation, in order to control potential air pollution and address the concern of DEP.

- 11.5 The Premises is the subject of ten previously approved applications for similar temporary motor-vehicle showroom/exhibition hall uses since 2003 as detailed in paragraph 5 above. Approval of the current application is in line with the Committee's previous decisions.
- 11.6 Regarding the objecting public comments received as mentioned in paragraph 10, the applicant's justifications set out in paragraph 2 and the planning assessments in paragraphs 11.1 to 11.5 above are relevant.

12. Planning Department's Views

- 12.1 Based on the assessments made in paragraph 11 above and having taken into account the public comments in paragraph 10 above, the Planning Department has no objection to the application.
- 12.2 Should the Committee decide to approve the application on a temporary basis, a shorter period of two years until 9.10.2028 instead of five years sought is recommended. The following conditions of approval and advisory clauses are suggested for Members' reference:

Approval conditions

- (a) no motor shows or car fairs or any related events should be undertaken at the application premises;
- (b) the number of cars to be parked at the car parking area of the application premises shall not exceed 184 at any time;
- (c) the number of visitors allowed at the car parking area of the application premises shall not exceed 300 at any time;
- (d) to employ an independent professional to monitor the mechanical monitoring system to control the number of visitors to the car parking area of the application premises and prepare monitoring reports on a monthly basis;

- (e) to employ an Authorised Person to conduct audit checks on the monitoring system and the monitoring reports on the number of visitors to the car parking area of the application premises on a bi-monthly basis;
- (f) in relation to (e) above, to submit the audit reports every two months highlighting any non-compliance on the number of visitors to the car parking area of the application premises to the satisfaction of the Director of Buildings or of the Town Planning Board; and
- (g) if any of the above planning conditions (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) or (f) 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.

Advisory clauses

The recommended advisory clauses are attached 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 applicant fails to demonstrate that with the conversion of public car parking space for the temporary motor-vehicle showroom at the application premises, sufficient public car parking spaces will still be available to meet the car parking demand in the area.

13. Decision Sought

- 13.1 The Committee is invited to consider the application and decide whether to grant or refuse to grant 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

Appendix I	Application Form received on 10.6.2026
Appendix Ia	SPS received on 10.6.2026
Appendix Ib	FI received on 10.8.2026
Appendix Ic	FI received on 18.9.2026
Appendix II	Previous Applications
Appendix III	Recommended Advisory Clauses
Appendices IVa and IVb	Public Comments
Drawing A-1	Layout Plan
Drawing A-2	Floor Plan showing the Sales Offices, Fire Exit and Fire Escape Route
Plan A-1	Location Plan
Plan A-2	Site Plan
Plans A-3 to A-5	Site Photos

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT
OCTOBER 2026**