

MPC Paper No. A/K18/347C
For Consideration by
the Metro Planning Committee
on ~~6.9.2024~~ **20.9.2024**

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

APPLICATION NO. A/K18/347

- Applicant** : Bethel Mission of China represented by DeSPACE (International) Limited
- Site** : 45-47 Grampian Road (Part), Kowloon City, Kowloon
- Site Area** : About 2,088.32m²
- Land Status** : (a) New Kowloon Inland Lot (NKIL) 1382 (part). Lease term will expire on 30.6.2047
- (b) Subject to the following main restrictions:
- (i) education purposes only;
 - (ii) buildings not exceeding six storeys and structure not exceeding 51.816 metres above Principal Datum (mPD) in height;
 - (iii) provide space for parking of not less than six private cars; and
 - (iv) the design, disposition and height, non-building area and offensive trade clauses.
- Plan** : Approved Kowloon Tong Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/K18/21
- Zoning** : “Government, Institution or Community (12)” (“G/IC(12)”)
- (a) Sun Hok Building (SHB) shall be preserved in-situ and restricted to its existing Gross Floor Area (GFA) and building height (BH);
 - (b) any major addition, alteration and/or modification to the existing SHB and any new development or redevelopment of the buildings in the remaining part of the zone requires planning permission from the Town Planning Board (the Board);
 - (c) new developments in the remaining part of the zone is subject to a maximum GFA of 7,203m² and BH of 8 storeys (excluding basement floor(s)) and 47.55mPD.
- Application** : Proposed ‘Religious Institution’ (Redevelopment of Bethel Bible Seminary (BBS) with in-situ Preservation of Sun Hok Building (SHB))

1. The Proposal

- 1.1 The applicant seeks planning permission for redevelopment of BBS with in-situ preservation of the SHB at the Site for proposed seminary use with ancillary dormitories, which is regarded as ‘Religious Institution’ that is always permitted within “G/IC(12)” on the approved Kowloon Tong OZP No. S/K18/21 (**Plan A-1**). According to the Notes of the OZP, SHB shall be preserved in-situ and any new development or redevelopment of the buildings in the remaining part of the zone requires planning permission from the Board¹. The Notes also stipulate that development within the remaining part of this zone is restricted to a maximum GFA of 7,203m² and BH of 8 storeys (excluding basement floor(s)) and 47.55mPD.
- 1.2 Bethel Mission of China (i.e. the applicant) is a charitable religious organization, which provides theological education, spiritual growth, church pastoring and academic research on Christianity for the community at the BBS. Early in 2011, the applicant obtained approval via application No. Y/K18/6 to rezone the seminary compound comprising SHB and four other buildings at 45-47 Grampian Road for seminary use (the eastern portion, i.e. the Site) and residential use (the western portion) and the OZP was so amended in 2013. Later the applicant submitted a section 16 application No. A/K18/322 for redevelopment of BBS with in-situ preservation of SHB at the Site for seminary use with ancillary student hostel and faculty quarters, was approved by the Metro Planning Committee (the Committee) with conditions on 14.7.2017. In the approved scheme, there is a common basement carpark covering the entire seminary compound (save for the SHB) and a vehicular access to the Site is made from Inverness Road via the residential portion (**Plans A-10 and A-11**). The applicant submits this application proposing an adjustment of the non-domestic use and domestic use in the new seminary block (paragraph 1.7 below) as well as a new ingress/ egress arrangement (paragraph 1.5 below).
- 1.3 Based on the applicant's proposal, the proposed development shall preserve the existing SHB building in-situ (**Drawing A-1**) with its GFA remains unchanged. The applicant will make only minimal changes to the building façade and restore the interiors as practically as possible so that its original architectural features can be reinstated. The other existing structures at the rear of SHB that are neither graded building nor buildings proposed to be graded, will be demolished and redeveloped into a 8-storey new extension block excluding one level of basement (**Drawing A-10**). The preserved SHB will accommodate classrooms, counselling rooms and staff offices; and the new extension block will cater for classrooms and other facilities providing support to the staff and students, including sky chapel and ancillary dormitories. The tentative completion year is 2026.
- 1.4 The applicant has submitted architectural renderings to demonstrate that the new block will be compatible with SHB (**Drawings A-16 to A-20**). As a general

¹ According to the Explanatory Statement (ES), SHB is one of the buildings of BBS, which is a Grade 2 historic building. To reflect the applicant’s proposal to preserve the Grade 2 historic building under a section 12A application No. Y/K18/6, SHB should be preserved in-situ. The purpose of the planning application to the Board is to ensure that the design of the new building(s) would be compatible with the setting of the Grade 2 historic building (i.e. SHB).

principle, the historic building will remain visually distinguishable from the new extension block to maintain its identity. The proposed wall finishes and colour of the new block are targeted to form a neutral backdrop to the historic building, with a contemporary architectural style while drawing design inspiration from the historic building. Glasses with minimal reflection will be proposed to meet energy efficiency standards as well as respect the architectural expression of the historic building.

- 1.5 A new ingress/egress point is proposed at Dumbarton Road to provide access to the basement carpark via a car lift (**Drawings A-1 and A-4**). As a result, three existing on-street metered parking spaces on Dumbarton Road to the northwest of the Site will be shifted towards the east of Dumbarton Road in the north of the Site (**Drawing A-21 and Plan A-3**). Two existing pedestrian entrances accessing to the SHB are provided along Grampian Road.
- 1.6 According to the Tree Survey and Landscape Proposal, there are no existing trees at the Site. A landscape garden for leisure and relaxation including eight new trees will be provided on ground level and landscape design is also proposed on the roof of the new block (**Drawings A-13 to 15**).
- 1.7 The location plan, floor plans, section and elevation plans and landscape layout and section plans of the proposed scheme at **Drawings A-1 to A-15**. A comparison of the key development parameters of the approved and proposed schemes and the detailed uses of the existing SHB and the new extension block are as follows:

Development Parameters	Approved Scheme (No. A/K18/322) (a)	Proposed Scheme (No. A/K18/347) (b)	Difference (b)-(a)
Site Area (about) (m ²)	2,088.32	2,088.32	No change
Total GFA (about) (m ²)	8,649	7,446	-1,203 (-13.9091%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • existing SHB • proposed new seminary block (max.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ for non-domestic use ➤ for domestic use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,446 • 7,203 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ about 5,683 ➤ about 1,520 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,446 • 6,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ about 5,700 ➤ about 300 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change -1,203 (-13.9091%)^[1] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ +17 ➤ -1,220
Total PR (including SHB)	4.1416	3.5655	-0.5761
BH (at Main Roof Level) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • existing SHB • proposed new seminary block (max.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 storeys • 8 storeys excluding 2 basement levels (not more than 47.55mPD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 storeys • 8 storeys excluding 1 basement level (47.55mPD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change -1 basement level

Site Coverage (SC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> below 15m from street level above 15m from street level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> not more than 70% not more than 50% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> not more than 70% not more than 50% 	No change No change
No. of Block	1 inter-connected block including existing SHB and the proposed new seminary block	1 inter-connected block including existing SHB and the proposed new seminary block	No change
No. of Units/Rooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 units (staff quarters) 17 rooms (student hostel) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 units (staff quarters) 	-6 units (staff quarters) -17 rooms (student hostel)
No. of Parking Spaces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> private car parking motorcycle parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 (including 1 accessible) 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14 (including 1 accessible) 2 	-1 No change
No. of Loading/Unloading (L/UL) Spaces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Light Goods Vehicles (LGV) coach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 1 	No change +1

Remarks:

- [1] According to the applicant, the total GFA of 7,203m² requires more floor space for non-accountable GFA for the proposed voids and M&E provisions during detailed design stage. The proposed scheme with a reduced GFA will comply with the BH restrictions on the OZP.

Main uses by floor		
	SHB	New Block
B1/F	N/A	car park, car lift, E&M rooms
LG/F	staff rooms	courtyard, pantry, multi-purpose room, utility rooms, car lift
UG/F	staff rooms, counselling rooms, meeting rooms	security room, E&M rooms, loading/unloading area, car lift, multi-purpose room for educational purposes
1/F	classrooms, staff rooms, counselling rooms, prayer rooms	classrooms, store room, voids
2/F	mediation garden	library for educational purposes and skylights
3/F	N/A	classrooms, staff room, multipurpose room, meeting rooms
4/F	N/A	classrooms, staff room, multipurpose room
5/F	N/A	classrooms, staff room, multipurpose room, meeting rooms

6/F	N/A	dormitories for staff (3 units), common area, sky chapel, meeting rooms
R/F	N/A	flat roof

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

- (a) Application form received on 12.12.2023 **(Appendix I)**
- (b) Supplementary Planning Statement (SPS) received on 12.12.2023 **(Appendix Ia)**
- (c) Further Information (FI) received on 29.12.2023* **(Appendix Ib)**
- (d) Further Information (FI) received on 2.2.2024* **(Appendix Ic)**
- (e) Further Information (FI) received on 25.3.2024[#] **(Appendix Id)**
- (f) Further Information (FI) received on 25.6.2024[#] **(Appendix Ie)**
- (g) Further Information (FI) received on 11.7.2024[#] **(Appendix If)**
- (h) Further Information (FI) received on 16.7.2024[#] **(Appendix Ig)**
- (i) Further Information (FI) received on 22.7.2024* **(Appendix Ih)**

* *accepted and exempted from publication and recounting requirements*

[#] *accepted but not exempted from publication and recounting requirements*

1.9 On 26.1.2024 and 24.5.2024, the Committee agreed to defer making a decision on the application for two months as requested by the applicant.

1.10 In light of ‘gale/storm signal No. 8’ announced by the Government on 5.9.2024, the Committee agreed on 8.9.2024 to defer considering of the application to this meeting.

2. Justifications from the Applicant

The justifications put forth by the applicant in support of the application are provided in the supplementary planning statement and FI submissions at **Appendices Ia to Ie**. They are summarized as follows:

In Line with Planning Intention

2.1 The proposed redevelopment is fully consistent with the planning intention of the “G/IC(12)” zone, as it maintains theological education and counselling services as

Government, Institution and Community (GIC) facilities to serve the needs of local residents and the general public; and it aims to preserve the existing historic building in-situ.

Provision of Educational and Counselling Facilities to Accommodate Growing Demands

- 2.2 Although the number of students has remained stagnant for the past seven years, the need for counseling services has been rising. The current facilities of BBS are insufficient to address the growing demand for education and counseling. The proposed redevelopment aims to provide more space to meet these community needs.

Merits of In-situ Preservation of the Historic Building and Design Compatibility

- 2.3 Although the Grade 2 historic building is not legally protected against demolition, the applicant is committed to honoring the principles of the grading system. The proposed scheme aims to preserve the historic building while minimizing any physical impacts on it during construction. Favourable considerations should be given for the proposed scheme in order to take forward the preservation-cum-development model.
- 2.4 The proposed new extension block will be compatible with the existing historic building of SHB as it will adopt conservation measures (paragraphs 1.3 and 11.3 refer). The architectural design of the new extension block aims to preserve the integrity and enhance the design compatibility with the SHB (**Drawings A-16 to A-20**), while creating an uplifting impact by drawing inspiration from the historic building's architectural style.

Compatible Development Intensity and BH with the Surroundings

- 2.5 The proposed redevelopment is compatible with the surrounding area in terms of land use and development intensity, which consists mainly of low to medium-density residential and GIC facilities. The proposed scheme adheres to the preservation-cum-development model without exceeding maximum restrictions.

No Material Change to the Previous Application and the Surrounding Context Remains Largely Unchanged

- 2.6 As compared with the approved scheme, most changes in the proposed scheme fall within Class A and Class B amendments according to the Town Planning Board Guidelines No. 36C, apart from the changes in distribution of the domestic GFA to non-domestic GFA to meet the operational requirements. The surrounding context has remained largely unchanged since the previous planning approval in 2017.

No Adverse Technical Impacts

- 2.7 A car lift analysis was conducted for the parking layout and access arrangement,

considering the new proposed run in/out. The Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) confirms that the proposed development will not have any adverse traffic impact. In terms of environmental impact, technical assessments demonstrated that no adverse impact on sewerage, noise and air quality aspects are anticipated. The Tree Survey also reflects that there are no existing trees within the Site. Landscape design will be provided on G/F and R/F of the new block.

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

The applicant is the sole “current land owner” of the Site. Detailed information would be deposited at the meeting for Members’ inspection.

4. Background

4.1 On 20.1.2011, the applicant submitted a section 12A planning application No. Y/K18/6 for rezoning 45-47 Grampian Road, previously zoned “G/IC(3)” (**Plan A-2**), for seminary use with ancillary student hostel and faculty quarters (in the eastern portion) and residential uses (in the western portion) and increase in building height and PR for the whole site, which was partially agreed by the Committee on 7.9.2012. At the meeting, Members considered that the proposed seminary and residential developments were not incompatible with the surrounding areas in terms of scale, there is the need for a compatible building design of the new block, involving aspects such as façade design, as well as integration design such as appropriate set back between the new block and SHB, and agreed that the future development on the Site would require planning approval from the Committee. On 15.2.2013, the draft Kowloon Tong OZP No. S/K18/17 was amended to incorporate (i) rezoning of the eastern portion (i.e. the Site) to “G/IC(12)” zoning for seminary use with requirements for in-situ preservation of SHB (a Grade 2 historic building) with the requirement for planning application for development on the Site as well as the GFA and BH restrictions as stipulated in the current OZP; and (ii) rezoning of the western portion to “Residential (Group C)9” (“R(C)9”) with maximum domestic PR of 3 and a BH restriction of 8 storeys (excluding basement floor(s)).

4.2 Subsequently, the applicant submitted a section 16 application No. A/K18/322 for redevelopment of BBS with in-situ preservation of SHB at the Site, which was approved by the Committee on 14.7.2017. Details of the application are at paragraph 1.2 and 1.7. No building plans for either the subject Site or the “R(C)9” site have been approved and the redevelopment has yet commenced.

5. Previous Application

The previous application (No. A/K18/322) aforementioned was approved on the grounds that the proposal is in compliance with the restrictions under the “G/IC(12)” zone and the proposed design of the new block is considered acceptable from the perspective of its

compatibility with SHB (**Plans A-8 to A-9**). Subsequently, a section 16A application No. A/K18/322-1 was approved to extend the validity of the planning permission under No. A/K18/322 until 14.7.2025 (**Plan A-1**).

6. Similar Applications

No similar application in respect of the “G/IC” zone on the Kowloon Tong OZP.

7. The Site and Its Surrounding Areas (Plans A-1 to A-2 and site photos on Plans A-3 to A-7)

7.1 The Site:

- (a) located at the south-eastern periphery of Kowloon Tong near the Kowloon City area;
- (b) at the junction of Dumbarton Road and Grampian Road, with existing vehicular access at Grampian Road;
- (c) currently occupied by SHB (a Grade 2 historic building) and other buildings of BBS proposed to be demolished at the rear of SHB (i.e. Tsz Kwong Building and Wing Kwong Building) (**Plan A-2**); and
- (d) well-served by public transport including mini-buses.

7.2 The surrounding areas have the following characteristics:

- (a) to the west is a site zoned “R(C)9”, owned by the applicant, occupied by BBS buildings currently used for Bethel kindergarten and nursery;
- (b) to the north, east and south are low to medium-rise/density residential developments. To the immediate north across Dumbarton Road is the Munsang College whereas to the further west across Inverness Road is the Kowloon Tsai Park; and
- (c) the area is characterised by a mix of schools, residential developments, GIC facilities and open space uses. To the further east is the old residential area of Kowloon City.

8. Planning Intention

The “G/IC(12)” zone is intended primarily for the provision of institution or community facilities serving the needs of the local residents as well as the general public, with the graded historic building, SHB of the BBS, preserved in-situ.

9. Comments from Relevant Government Departments

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

Education and Religious Aspects

9.1.1 Comments of the Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs (SHYA):

- (a) based on the SPS, the applicant aims at erecting a seminary for theology education and worshipping. According to the applicant, it has been organising various religious activities on a regular basis. In view of the above, she is satisfied that the applicant is a bona fide religious organisation. Having checked the official website of the Inland Revenue Department, she notes that the applicant is a charitable organisation registered under section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112); and
- (b) according to the submission, the proposed facilities including classrooms, library and multi-purpose rooms for theology education, Sky Chapel for worshipping and other ancillary facilities including staff office, dormitory and common area will be provided within the Site. As the proposed facilities appear to be religious-related, she should have no objection to the proposed religious institution in the application.

9.1.2 Comments of the Secretary for Education (SED):

pursuant to Section 9(1)(b) of Education Ordinance (Cap. 279), any school that provides education which is solely religious shall be exempted from the Ordinance.

Land Administration

9.1.3 Comments of the District Lands Officer/Kowloon East, Lands Department (DLO/KE, LandsD):

- (a) the Site falls within and is part of the NKIL No. 1382 (the Lot), with lease term to be expired on 30.6.2047. Details of the main lease restrictions are at **Appendix IV**; and
- (b) the proposed redevelopment will be in conflict with the development restrictions under existing lease governing the Lot. Should the application be approved by the Board, the applicant has to apply to LandsD for lease modification to implement the proposal. However, there is no guarantee that the lease modification will be approved. Such application, if received, will be considered by LandsD acting in its capacity as the landlord at its sole discretion and any approval given

will be subject to such terms and conditions including, inter alia, payment of premium and administrative fee as may be imposed by LandsD.

Heritage Preservation

9.1.4 Comments of the Commissioner for Heritage's Office, Development Bureau (C for H of DEVB) and Antiquities and Monuments Office, DEVB (AMO of DEVB):

- (a) the historic building of BBS or SHB, has been confirmed as Grade 2 historic building by the Antiquities Advisory Board. Grade 2 historic buildings by definition are 'buildings of special merit; efforts should be made to selectively preserve';
- (b) according to the submission, the graded building will continue to be preserved in-situ in accordance with the OZP, while some of the existing buildings at its rear which are not graded buildings will be redeveloped into a new seminary block connecting to the graded building;
- (c) the applicant's response-to-comments at Appendix J of **Appendix Ic**, mainly about the adherence to the guiding heritage preservation principle, minimum physical intervention to the graded building and the evaluation of vibration impact to the graded building at detailed design stage should be applicable to the application, and the applicant should follow up on AMO's comments to ensure proper preservation of the graded building; and
- (d) should the application be approved, an approval condition at paragraph 12.2 requiring the submission of a conservation management plan (CMP) is suggested to be imposed.

Urban Design and Landscape

9.1.5 Comments of the Chief Architect/Advisory & Statutory Compliance, Architectural Services Department (CA/ASC, ArchSD):

no comment on the proposal from architectural and visual impact point of view. Her advisory comments are at **Appendix V**.

9.1.6 Comments of the Chief Town Planner/Urban Design and Landscape, Planning Department (CTP/UD&L, PlanD):

Urban Design and Visual Aspects

- (a) she has no adverse comments from urban design and visual perspectives;

- (b) the Site with an area of 2,088.32m² is located at the junction of Dumbarton Road and Grampian Road at the northwestern periphery of Kowloon City. The surrounding areas of the Site are mainly characterised by an intermix of GIC uses of 1 to 9 storeys and low to medium-rise residential developments of 3 to 12 storeys. According to paragraph 8.4.8 of the ES of the OZP, any new development or redevelopment of the building requires planning permission from the Board so as 'to ensure that the design of the new building(s) would be compatible with the setting of the Grade 2 historic building'. The proposed development complies with the OZP restrictions for the Site. Given the site context, the proposed development with a BH of 8 storeys excluding basement (47.55mPD) will unlikely induce significant adverse impact to the visual character of the surrounding areas; and
- (c) according to the submission, the applicant has provided relevant discussion and drawings/plans to illustrate the design concepts on how the historic building will integrate with the new building, including glass walls and skylights as interfacing between the old and new block, courtyards and voids on LG/F to 1/F as transitional space, as well as appropriate colour, materials and architectural design. Landscape treatment such as at-grade landscape garden with shrub planting at the SHB and rooftop edge planting at the new extension block has been proposed. Incorporation of these design measures may promote visual interest to the surrounding.

Landscape Planning

- (d) she has no adverse comments from landscape planning perspective;
- (e) according to the aerial photo of 2022, the Site is situated in an urban landscape character dominated by low to medium rise residential blocks, educational institutes and open space. The proposed redevelopment with 3 storeys existing SHB and 8 storeys new extension block (above one basement level) is considered not incompatible with the landscape character of the surrounding area; and
- (f) according to the Tree Survey and Landscape Proposal, 'no existing trees is found within the Site'. Significant adverse landscape impact arising from the development is not anticipated. According to the FI submission (**Appendix Ic**), landscape provisions such as planters and eight trees are proposed in the landscape garden at ground level outside the existing SHB and peripheral planting along northern, eastern and southern edges on roof of the new extension block are proposed.

Environment

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

having reviewed the submission, insurmountable environmental impact associated with the proposed development is not anticipated and he has no in-principle objection to the application.

Building Matters

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

- (a) no objection in principle under the Buildings Ordinance (BO) subject to his advisory comments at **Appendix V**; detailed comments on compliance with the BO will be given upon formal building plans submission;
- (b) the proposed development is considered as an 8-storey building over a basement. LG/F is situated at a storey in which existing entrance is from Grampian Road, he has no objection for LG/F counting as ground storey in the context of assessment for means of escape; and
- (c) in the construction safety aspect, his detailed comments are at **Appendix IV**.

Traffic

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

- (a) no adverse comments on the application;
- (b) the applicant's TIA report has assessed the net increase in traffic generated by the proposed development and the operating performance of nearby road junctions of Inverness Road taking into account the future traffic flows generated/attracted by the development and nearby planned/committed developments. The nearby road junctions will operate within capacity according to the TIA report. There is limited net trip generation compared with the existing use given the development parameters; and
- (c) although the pedestrian and traffic flows at Inverness Road and Dumbarton Road were observed to be relatively high during school peak hours, the TIA report has substantiated that the operating performance of nearby road junctions could operate within capacity.

9.1.10 Comments of the Commissioner of Police (C of P):

no adverse comments on the proposal based on the submission and his advisory comments are at **Appendix V**.

Fire Safety

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

- (a) no objection in principle to the application subject to fire service installations and equipment being provided to the satisfaction of D of FS under regulatory regimes;
- (b) detailed fire services requirements will be formulated upon receipt of formal submission of general building plans; and
- (c) as no details of the emergency vehicular access (EVA) have been provided, comments could not be offered by his department at the present stage. His advisory comments are at **Appendix V**.

Tree Maintenance

9.1.12 Comments of Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (DLCS)

- (a) no adverse comment on the application; and
- (b) having studied the Tree Survey and Landscape Proposal of the submission, it is confirmed that there is no pavement tree at Dumbarton Road and Grampian Road adjacent to the redevelopment of BBS. Besides, the development does not affect any pavement trees at Inverness Road according to the submission.

9.1.13 Comments of Chief Highway Engineer/Kowloon, Highways Department (CHE/K of HyD)

- (a) no adverse comment on the application; and
- (b) with reference to the Tree Survey and Landscape Proposal, the development only affects the existing plantings within the lot. There are no tree plantings along Grampian Road and the development is located at Grampian Road only. Thus, it is envisaged that the construction works would not affect the existing tree plantings at Inverness Road.

9.2 The following Government departments have no adverse comments on the application:

- (a) Project Manager (East), Civil Engineering and Development Department (PM(E) of CEDD);

- (b) Head of the Geotechnical Engineering Office, Civil Engineering and Development Department (H(GEO) of CEDD);
- (c) Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services (DEMS);
- (d) Chief Engineer/Mainland South, Drainage Services Department (CE/MS of DSD);
- (e) Chief Engineer/Construction, Water Supplies Department (CE/C of WSD); and
- (f) District Officer (Kowloon City), Home Affairs Department (DO(KC), HAD).

10. Public Comments Received During Statutory Publication Period

- 10.1 During the public inspection periods of the planning application and FIs published, a total of five public comments were received (**Appendix III**), including one from the Incorporated Owners of Grand Court; and four identical comments from the Incorporated Owners of Inverness Villa, all expressing objecting views.
- 10.2 The concerns from owners of Inverness Villa are summarized as follows,
 - (i) changing the seminary to residential use can harm the area's ambience;
 - (ii) the application not involving minor relaxation of BH does not capitalise the potential of the land;
 - (iii) potential traffic congestions and issues on Inverness Road and nearby roads;
 - (iv) the proposed development may negatively affect old trees along Inverness Road; and
 - (v) the safety of students at Munsang College can be at risk due to traffic concerns near the Site.
- 10.3 Both groups of owners raised concerns about the construction's potential vibrations affecting building stability, structures, retaining walls, and leading to soil loss.

11. Planning Considerations and Assessments

Comply with Restrictions under the “G/IC(12)” zone

- 11.1 The application is for in-situ preservation of SHB and redevelopment of the remaining part of the Site for a seminary, which is regarded as a ‘Religious Institution’ use, that is always permitted under the “G/IC(12)” zone. The staff quarters on 6/F (having a floor area of 300m²) can be regarded as ancillary use to the seminary. The seminary has a total GFA of 7,446m² (including a maximum GFA of 6,000m² for the new seminary block), and 8 storeys over 1 level of basement (a maximum of 47.55mPD at main roof level). The proposed uses, total GFA and BH of the redevelopment and the in-situ preservation of SHB all comply with the respective restrictions under the “G/IC(12)” zone.

Design Compatibility with SHB

- 11.2 The planning intention of the G/IC(12)” zone is for the provision of institution or community facilities serving the needs of the local residents as well as the general public, with the graded historic building, SHB of the BBS, preserved in-situ. As stated in the ES of the OZP, the requirement for planning permission is to ensure that the design of the new building(s) will be compatible with the setting of the SHB. Thus, the main planning consideration of the subject application is on design compatibility with SHB.
- 11.3 The applicant has submitted information and architectural drawings/renderings to substantiate how the new development will be compatible with SHB in character, scale, design and materials (**Drawings A-2 to A-12 and A-16 to A-20**). As outlined in paragraphs 1.3 and 2.4 above, as a general principle, the existing historic building will visually stand apart from the new extension block to preserve its distinct identity and character. Glasses with minimal refraction for the proposed curtain wall are suggested to respect the architectural expression of the historic building. The approach with the contemporary design serving as a subtle yet complementary backdrop to the historic structure aims to create a harmonious coexistence and ensure compatibility with SHB. The major design elements and conservation measures are summarized as follows:
- (a) the SHB will be preserved in-situ and only minimal change would be made to the building façade. The interior of SHB will be restored as practically as possible so that its original architectural features could be reinstated;
 - (b) massing of the new development will be organized in a way that positions larger elements farther away from the heritage features;
 - (c) connecting the existing SHB with the new extension block by extending the current balcony of the SHB to link up with the proposed balcony of the new block, with minimal impact on the existing walls and structures of the graded building;
 - (d) a courtyard on LG/F and voids on UG/F and 1/F are planned as transitional spaces between the existing SHB and the new block, utilizing glass walls and skylights to enable natural sunlight to penetrate these areas;
 - (e) the proposed wall finishes and color of the new block will become a natural backdrop to the graded building, allowing the SHB to stand out with its own distinct identity and character (**Drawing A-16**); and
 - (f) protective measures of the SHB will be provided to ensure the structural safety of the SHB.
- 11.4 It is noted from the above that the scheme design has adopted measures to preserve the identity of SHB while create a compatible new block in terms of façade design, the materials used and treatment of the transitional space, and finishes and colour.

CTP/UD&L considers that in integrating the new block with the historic building, the incorporation of the proposed design measures may promote visual interest to the surrounding. CA/ASC of ArcSD has no comment on the proposal from architectural and visual point of view while the building elevations and balconies can be further reviewed during detailed design stage in blending the new and historic buildings. From heritage preservation perspective, both CHO and AMO have no comment on the submission. An approval condition requiring submission of a CMP for preservation of SHB prior to commencement of any work is suggested at paragraph 12.2 should the Committee decide to approve the application.

Previous Application

- 11.5 After obtaining planning approval (application No. A/K18/322) in 2017, the applicant considers that more non-domestic floor spaces should be allocated within the proposed seminary for its long-term development in serving the community and the use of space becomes more efficient as there are solutions for off-site accommodations for staff and students. As such, the proposed scheme, after changing some floor space from domestic to non-domestic use, has a reduction in total GFA from 8,649m² to 7,446m² due to a cut of GFA for staff/students quarters. As discussed in paragraphs 11.1 to 11.4 above, the applicant has developed a comparable scheme with its previous application in applying conservation measures to ensure the design compatibility between SHB and the new block and development parameters are in compliance with the restrictions under the OZP.

Technical Aspects

- 11.6 The applicant has submitted relevant technical assessments to demonstrate that the proposed development will not have insurmountable impacts. On environmental aspect, DEP has no in-principle objection to the application as insurmountable environmental impact associated with the proposed development is not anticipated. D of FS has no objection in principle to the application. CEDD, DEMS, CBS/HKE&H of BD, CE/MS of DSD, CE/C of WSD and CHE/K of HyD have no comments on the proposed redevelopment from technical points of view. C for T and C of P have no comments on the application including the change of ingress/ egress arrangement from traffic engineering and safety viewpoints respectively.

Public Comments

- 11.7 Regarding the concerns on the adverse impact on traffic and old trees outside the Site, justifications provided by the applicant in paragraph 2.7 and planning assessments in paragraph 11 above are relevant, and the concerned departments including C of P, C for T and CHE/K of HyD have no adverse comments on the application. Regarding the structural safety of the nearby buildings related to the construction vibrations of the redevelopment, comments of the relevant government department in paragraph 9 above are relevant. The objection concerning the change of seminary to residential use and the absence of minor relaxation of BH in the proposal is considered not relevant to the application.

12. Planning Department's Views

- 12.1 Based on the assessments made in paragraph 11 above and having taken into account the public comments mentioned in paragraph 10, the Planning Department 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 until ~~6.9.2028~~ **20.9.2028**, and after the said date, the permission shall cease to have effect unless before the said date, the development permitted is commenced or the permission is renewed. The following approval condition is suggested for Members' reference:

Approval Condition

- (a) the submission of a conservation management plan (CMP) including a detailed conservation proposal for the graded building prior to the commencement of any works and implementation of the works in accordance with the CMP to the satisfaction of the Antiquities and Monuments Office of ~~Leisure and Cultural Services Department~~ ***Development Bureau*** or of the Town Planning Board.

Advisory Clauses

The recommended advisory clauses are attached at **Appendix V**.

- 12.3 There is no strong reason to recommend rejection of the application.

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 date when the validity of the permission should expire.
- 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 and letter received on 12.12.2023
Appendix Ia	Supplementary Planning Statement received on 12.12.2023
Appendix Ib	FI received on 29.12.2023
Appendix Ic	FI received on 2.2.2024

Appendix Id	FI received on 25.3.2024
Appendix Ie	FI received on 25.6.2024
Appendix If	FI received on 11.7.2024
Appendix Ig	FI received on 16.7.2024
Appendix Ih	FI received on 22.7.2024
Appendix II	Previous Applications
Appendix III	Public Comments
Appendix IV	Detailed Departmental Comments
Appendix V	Recommended Advisory Clauses
Drawing A-1	Block Plan
Drawings A-2 to A-12	Floor, Section and Elevation Plans
Drawings A-13 to A-15	Landscape Concept and Section Plans
Drawings A-16 to A-20	Artist's Renderings
Drawing A-21	Relocation of On-street Parking Spaces
Plan A-1	Location Plan
Plan A-2	Site Plan
Plans A-3 to A-7	Site Photos
Plans A-8 to A-11	Design Proposal and Plans Submitted Under Previous Application No. A/K18/322

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT
SEPTEMBER 2024**