

RNTPC Paper No. A/YL-SK/412  
For Consideration by  
the Rural and New Town  
Planning Committee  
on 11.4.2025

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**APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL OF PLANNING APPROVAL**  
**FOR TEMPORARY USE**  
**UNDER SECTION 16 OF THE TOWN PLANNING ORDINANCE**

**APPLICATION NO. A/YL-SK/412**

- Applicant** : Awareness Spiritual Growth Center Limited represented by Lawson David & Sung Surveyors Limited
- Site** : Lots 1556 (Part) and 1558 in D.D.114, Shek Kong, Yuen Long
- Site Area** : About 5,059m<sup>2</sup>
- Lease** : Block Government Lease (demised for agricultural use)
- Plan** : Approved Shek Kong Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/YL-SK/9
- Zoning** : “Conservation Area” (“CA”)
- Application** : Renewal of Planning Approval for Temporary Camping Ground for Meditation Use for a Period of 3 Years

**1. The Proposal**

- 1.1 The applicant seeks renewal of planning approval for temporary camping ground for meditation use for a period of three years at the application site (the Site), which falls within an area zoned “CA” on the OZP (**Plan A-1**). According to the covering Notes of OZP, temporary use or development of any land or building not exceeding a period of three years requires planning permission from the Town Planning Board (the Board). The Site is currently occupied by the applied use with valid planning permission under application No. A/YL-SK/325 until 22.4.2025 (**Plans A-2 and A-4**).
- 1.2 The Site is accessible from Route Twisk via a local track, footpath and nature trail (**Plans A-1 and A-2**). The applied use involves a total of 14 fixtures, including 11 wooden boards for meditation seating and three concrete-based/wooden boards with decorations of a Buddha statue, a pagoda feature and a plaque with heights ranging from 0.37m to 2.5m, occupying a total of about 217.6m<sup>2</sup>. The indicative layout plan and access arrangement plan submitted by the applicant are at **Drawings A-1 and A-2** respectively.
- 1.3 According to the applicant, there are less than ten meditation events per year and normally the events would be held during the weekends of semester. Each meditation event only lasts for about one to two days with around 40-50 participants. Canvas hiking tents will be only set during the events and will be removed afterwards. According to the applicant, no loudspeakers or any form of audio amplification system

will be used in any of the events and no open burning, eating or cooking activities will be conducted at the Site. No trees within the Site will be interfered with by any means, felled or topped, and the existing natural landscape resources, trees and landscaped planting would also be continuously maintained and conserved by the applicant.

- 1.4 The Site is the subject of eight previous applications (details at paragraph 6 below) including the last application No. A/YL-SK/325 submitted by the same applicant for the same use as the current application approved by the Rural and New Town Planning Committee (the Committee) of the Board on 22.5.2022. The planning permission is valid until 22.4.2025 and all approval conditions have been complied with. Compared with the last application No. A/YL-SK/325, the layout and development parameters under the current application remain unchanged.
- 1.5 In support of the application, the applicant has submitted an Application Form with a Supporting Planning Statement which was received on 19.2.2025 (**Appendix I**).

## **2. Justifications from the Applicant**

The justifications put forth by the applicant in support of the application are detailed in the Application Form at **Appendix I**, and can be summarised as follows:

- (a) The applied use is temporary in nature and does not involve site formation. The fixtures only occupy about 4.3% of the Site and no permanent buildings/structures have been and will be erected on the Site. The natural landscape and serenity of the area could be safeguarded and maintained. The applied use is considered in line with the planning intention of “CA” zone of protecting and retaining the existing natural landscape, ecological or topographical features of the area for conservation, educational and research purposes.
- (b) The applied use would be used infrequently, hence the interference to the existing landscape character is minimal. Since the Site is not identified as a site of ecological importance, it is considered suitable for camping ground use. With the on-going maintenance and conservation of existing natural landscape resources, trees and landscaped planting by the applicant, the applied use is not considered incompatible with the tranquil character of its surrounding woodland environment, and could help maintain a harmonious rural environment by preserving the natural landscape of the area.
- (c) The applied use provides a camping ground for secondary schools/university students and the followers of the applicant to practice meditation for educational purpose. The participants will bring their own food and eat at the public barbecue sites nearby where rubbish bins and toilets are available. The participants will take public transport and walk to the Site. Owing to the nature of the applied use, no adverse traffic, environmental and sewerage impacts are anticipated on the surrounding areas.
- (d) The applied use was approved by the Board with eight previous planning approvals at the same Site since 2010. The applicant had complied with all the approval conditions of the previous application (A/YL-SK/325) and will continue using the Site in accordance with the terms and conditions as imposed by the Board. Without the change in the nature of use and layout from the last application, approval of the renewal application would be in line with the previous decisions of the Board.

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

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

**4. Town Planning Board Guidelines**

The Town Planning Board Guidelines for ‘Renewal of Planning Approval and Extension of Time for Compliance with Planning Conditions for Temporary Use or Development’ (TPB PG-No. 34D) is relevant to the application. Relevant extract of the Guidelines is at **Appendix II**.

**5. Background**

The Site is not subject to any active planning enforcement action.

**6. Previous Applications**

6.1 The Site is the subject of eight previous applications (No. A/YL-SK/161, 165, 176, 197, 206, 213, 250 and 325) for the same use submitted by the same applicant at the same Site, which were all approved by the Committee or the Board upon review each for a period of one or three years between 2010 and 2022 mainly on the considerations that the proposed/applied use was not incompatible with the rural and tranquil character of its surrounding woodland environment and would not generate significant environmental impact on the surrounding areas; the Site was not identified as a site of ecological importance; there was no felling of trees and the interference to the existing landscape character was minimal; and there was no adverse comment from concerned government departments or their concerns could be addressed by imposing relevant approval conditions. For the last application No. A/YL-SK/325, all approval conditions have been complied with and the planning permission is valid until 22.4.2025.

6.2 Details of the previous applications are at **Appendix III** and their location are shown on **Plan A-1**.

**7. Similar Application**

There is no similar application within the subject “CA” zone on the OZP.

**8. The Site and Its Surrounding Areas (Plans A-1 to A-4)**

8.1 The Site is:

- (a) accessible from Route Twisk via a local track; and
- (b) currently occupied by the applied use with valid planning permission (No. A/YL-SK/325) until 22.4.2025.

8.2 The surrounding areas are rural in character predominated by densely-vegetated woodland. Village houses in Lui Kung Tin, graves and a barbeque area are located to

the further north of the Site, and Tai Lam Country Park and Kap Lung Ancient Trail are to the east and south uphill respectively.

## **9. Planning Intention**

The planning intention of the “CA” zone is to protect and retain the existing natural landscape, ecological or topographical features of the area for conservation, educational and research purposes and to separate sensitive natural environment such as Country Park from the adverse effects of development. There is a general presumption against development in this zone. In general, only developments that are needed to support the conservation of the existing natural landscape or scenic quality of the area or the development is an essential infrastructure project with overriding public interest may be permitted.

## **10. Comments from Relevant Government Departments**

10.1 Apart from the government department as set out in paragraph 10.2 below, all government departments consulted have no objection to or no adverse comment on the application. Their general comments on the application and advisory comments in the Recommended Advisory Clauses, if any, are provided in **Appendices IV** and **V** respectively.

10.2 The following government department conveyed local objection on the application:

### **District Officer’s Comments**

Local comments conveyed by the District Officer (Yuen Long), Home Affairs Department (DO/YL, HAD) are as follow:

the village representative of Lui Kung Tin objects to the application mainly on the grounds that the applied use may induce traffic issues and create nuisance to the residents nearby.

## **11. Public Comment Received During Statutory Publication Period**

On 28.2.2025, the application was published for public inspection. During the statutory public inspection period, one public comment was received from an individual raising concerns that the applied use would induce traffic issues and create nuisance to the villagers and residents nearby (**Appendix VI**).

## **12. Planning Considerations and Assessments**

12.1 The application is for renewal of planning approval for temporary camping ground for meditation use for a period of three years at the Site zoned “CA” (**Plan A-1**). While the applied use is not in line with the planning intention of the “CA” zone, it does not involve permanent buildings or site formation but only wooden platforms or fixtures being placed on ground (occupying about 4.3% of the Site), and the existing natural landscape resources, trees and landscape plantings would be maintained and conserved by the applicant. The Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation has no strong view on the application from nature conservation perspective. In view of the above and

taking into account the assessments below, it is considered that the renewal of planning approval on a temporary basis for a period of three years would not frustrate the long-term planning intention of the “CA” zone. As the Site is zoned “CA”, an approval condition requiring the reinstatement of the site upon expiry of the planning permission so as to uphold the planning intention of the “CA” zone and restore the greenery of the area is recommended should the Committee decide to approval the application.

- 12.2 The Site is currently used for the applied use, which is the same as that approved under the last application No. A/YL-SK/325. Given its scale and nature, the applied use is considered not incompatible with the surrounding land uses which are rural in character predominated by densely-vegetated woodland. The Chief Town Planner/Urban Design and Landscape, Planning Department (PlanD) advises that no further significant adverse landscape impact within the Site is anticipated and has no adverse comment on the application from landscape planning perspective.
- 12.3 According to the applicant, there are less than ten meditation events per year and each event only lasts for about one to two days with around 40-50 participants, who will access the Site by means of walking from Route Twisk only. No loudspeakers or any form of audio amplification system will be used and no open burning, eating or cooking activities will be conducted at the Site. The Director of Environmental Protection has no objection to the apparition and advises that no environmental complaints relating to the Site was recorded in the past three years. On traffic aspect, the Commissioner for Transport has no comment on the application from traffic engineering point of view. Other relevant government departments consulted, including the Director of Fire Services and Chief Engineer/Mainland North of Drainage Services Department have no objection to or no adverse comment on the application. It is recommended to advise the applicant to follow the “Code of Practice on Handling the Environmental Aspects of Temporary Uses and Open Storage Sites” and “Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance” issued by the Environmental Protection Department to minimise any potential environmental nuisance caused by the applied use on the surrounding areas.
- 12.4 The application is considered generally in line with TPB PG-No. 34D in that there has been no material change in the planning circumstances since the previous approval was granted; no adverse planning implication arising from the renewal application is anticipated; all the approval conditions under the last application (No. A/YL-SK/325) had been complied with; and the three-year approval period sought which is same as the previous planning application is reasonable.
- 12.5 The Site is the subject of eight previously approved applications for same use of the current application as detailed in paragraph 6 above. As there has been no major change in planning circumstances, approval of the current application is in line with the Committee’s previous decisions.
- 12.6 Regarding the public comments mentioned in paragraphs 10.2 and 11, the planning considerations and departmental comments above are relevant.

### **13. Planning Department’s Views**

- 13.1 Based on the assessments made in paragraph 12 and having taken into account the public comments conveyed by DO/YL, HAD in paragraph 10.2 and mentioned in paragraph 11, PlanD has no objection to the application.

- 13.2 Should the Committee decide to approve the application, it is suggested that the permission shall be valid on a temporary basis for a period of three years and be renewed from 23.4.2025 to 22.4.2028. The following conditions of approval and advisory clauses are also suggested for Members' reference:

Approval condition

upon expiry of the planning permission, the reinstatement and grassing of the site to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning or of the Town Planning Board.

Advisory clauses

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

- 13.3 Alternatively, should the Committee decide to reject the application, the following reason for rejection is suggested for Members' reference:

the applied use is not in line with the planning intention of the "Conservation Area" zone, which is to protect and retain the existing natural landscape, ecological or topographical features of the area for conservation, educational and research purposes and to separate sensitive natural environment such as Country Park from the adverse effects of development. No strong planning justification has been given in the submission for a departure from the planning intention, even on a temporary basis.

**14. Decision Sought**

- 14.1 The Committee is invited to consider the application and decide whether to grant or refuse to grant permission.
- 14.2 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.
- 14.3 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.

**15. Attachments**

<b>Appendix I</b>	Application Form received on 19.2.2025
<b>Appendix II</b>	Relevant Extract of TPB PG-No. 34D
<b>Appendix III</b>	Previous Applications
<b>Appendix IV</b>	Government Departments' General Comments
<b>Appendix V</b>	Recommended Advisory Clauses
<b>Appendix VI</b>	Public Comments
<b>Drawing A-1</b>	Layout Plan
<b>Drawing A-2</b>	Access to the Site
<b>Plan A-1</b>	Location Plan with Previous Applications
<b>Plan A-2</b>	Site Plan
<b>Plan A-3</b>	Aerial Photo
<b>Plan A-4</b>	Site Photos

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
APRIL 2025**