

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION
UNDER SECTION 16 OF THE TOWN PLANNING ORDINANCE

APPLICATION NO. A/YL-TT/576

- Applicant** : Hong Kong Youth Affairs Development Foundation Limited (香港青年事務發展基金會有限公司) represented by PlanPlus Consultancy Limited
- Site** : Government Land in D.D. 116, Former Wing On School, Shung Ching San Tsuen, Yuen Long, New Territories
- Site Area** : 3,356 m² (about)
- Land Status** : Government Land (GL)
- Plan** : Approved Tai Tong Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/YL-TT/18
- Zoning** : “Village Type Development” (“V”)
[Restricted to a maximum building height (BH) of 3 storeys (8.23m)]
- Application** : Proposed Temporary Residential Institution (Transitional Housing) with Ancillary Facilities for a Period of 7 Years and Associated Excavation of Land

1. The Proposal

- 1.1 The applicant seeks planning permission for proposed temporary residential institution (transitional housing) with ancillary facilities for a period of seven years and associated excavation of land at the application site (the Site) (**Plan A-1**). According to the Notes of the OZP for the “V” zone, both ‘Residential Institution’, which is a Column 2 use (though the BH restriction is not applicable to development or redevelopment for such use), and excavation of land require planning permission from the Town Planning Board (the Board). The Site is currently occupied by several vacant buildings of the former Wing On School and partly overgrown with vegetation (**Plans A-2 to A-4b**).
- 1.2 The Site is the subject of five previous applications (No. A/YL-TT/125, 218, 237, 469 and 485) (details at paragraph 5 below).
- 1.3 According to the applicant, the proposal aims to provide short-term housing to vulnerable individuals/households, in particular youngsters in need, before transition to long-term housing. The Site is entirely GL and covers the former Wing On School vacant school premises (VSP) (**Plan A-2**). Under the proposal, a single-storey former school building in the eastern part of the Site will be rehabilitated for ancillary amenity uses, providing laundry facilities and communal

spaces for future residents and locals, while the other school buildings will be demolished. Two new blocks of four storeys and one storey will be constructed with Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) method for residential and E&M uses respectively. The proposal will provide about 261 self-contained units equipped with kitchen/pantries for households ranging from one to three persons. About five staff will be arranged for on-site management. Besides, excavation of land is proposed to facilitate site formation, construction of buildings and provision of sewerage, drainage and utility works. Plans showing the proposed site layout, typical floors/units, section, extent of land excavation, landscape proposal, drainage/sewerage proposal and photomontages submitted by the applicant are at **Drawings A-1 to A-9**.

1.4 The proposed development parameters are as follows:

Site Area	About 3,356 m ²
Total Floor Area	About 5,689 m ²
- Domestic	- About 5,626 m ²
- Non-domestic	- About 63 m ² (for office and amenity use)
Extent of Excavation of Land	About 2,399.6 m ² (i.e. with a depth of about 1.6m)
No. of Units	261
Average Flat Size	About 18.3 m ²
No. and Height of Structures	3 for residential, amenity uses and E&M (4 to 13m, 1 to 4 storeys)
Estimated Population	About 522
Communal Open Space	Not less than 522 m ²
No. of Parking Space	Nil
No. of Loading/ Unloading Space(s)	• 1 for heavy goods vehicle (11m x 3.5m) • about 20 for bicycles
Completion Year	2024

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

- (a) Application Form received on 17.10.2022 (Appendix I)
- (b) Supplementary Planning Statement (Appendix Ia)
- (c) Supplementary Information (SI) received on 18.10.2022 (Appendix Ib)
- (d) SI received on 21.10.2022 (Appendix Ic)
- (e) Further Information (FI) received on 24.11.2022* (Appendix Id)
- (f) FI received on 1.12.2022* (Appendix Ie)
- (g) FI received on 2.12.2022* (Appendix If)
- (h) FI received on 5.12.2022* (Appendix Ig)

* accepted and exempted from publication requirements

2. Justifications from the Applicant

The justifications put forth by the applicant in support of the application are detailed in the supplementary planning statement, SI and FI (**Appendices Ia to Id**). They can be summarised as follows:

- (a) the proposed development is in line with the Government's policy to increase the provision of transitional housing as promulgated in the 2021 Policy Address so as to relieve the hardship of families yet to be allocated with public rental housing units. MiC method will be adopted to deliver the transitional housing units in a timely and sustainable manner;
- (b) the temporary proposal would not jeopardise the long-term planning intention of the "V" zone. The submitted Visual Appraisal (VA) has demonstrated that only minimal visual impact is anticipated. With the use of natural colour and landscape features, the proposed development will be compatible with the surrounding environment;
- (c) the former Wing On School has been vacant since 2006. Under the Central Clearing House Mechanism (the VSP Review), it is recommended to be retained for Government, institution or community (GIC) uses in the long-term and indicated as 'transitional housing project with advanced work activated' in June 2022. The proposal can optimise the vacant but well-formed site for transitional housing;
- (d) communal open space and multi-function rooms will be provided to foster social cohesion among residents. Amenities/facilities for daily necessities and social services are also proposed to meet the needs of the residents of all age groups. Villagers in the vicinity can use the above facilities and services under prior arrangement of the applicant;
- (e) multiple rounds of public engagement have been conducted and members of the local community have expressed support over the proposal (including a petition with 2,500 signatures signed in August 2022 in support of the proposal);
- (f) iconic relics of the former school including the existing gates, one building block and some furniture will be retained to preserve the sentimental value of the locals; and
- (g) there will be minimal traffic, environmental, drainage and sewerage impacts arising from the proposal. The proposed excavation of land would not generate adverse environmental impact on the surrounding area.

3. Compliance with the "Owner's Consent/Notification" Requirements

As the Site involves GL only, the "owner's consent/notification" 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. 31A) are not applicable to the application.

4. **Background**

The former Wing On School was commissioned at the Site in the 1960's. Prior to its closure in 2006, it was a co-educational aided primary school. The Site has been left largely vacant since the closure of the school. According to the Planning Department's (PlanD) latest VSP Review promulgated in June 2022, the Site is recommended to be retained for GIC uses.

5. **Previous Applications**

The Site involves five previous applications for school and temporary place of recreation, sports or culture uses which are not relevant to the current application. Details of the applications are summarised in **Appendix II** and the location of the site is shown on **Plan A-1**.

6. **Similar Application**

There is no similar application within the subject "V" zone.

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

7.1 The Site is:

- (a) abutting Tai Shu Ha Road West to its east (**Plan A-2**);
- (b) largely paved and fenced off with several one-storey buildings; and
- (c) currently vacant and partly overgrown with vegetation.

7.2 The surrounding areas have the following characteristics (**Plans A-2 and A-3**):

- (a) predominantly rural residential in character intermixed with parking of vehicles, open storage/storage yards, workshops, warehouses, public toilet, refuse collection point, ruins and vacant land;
- (b) there are residential structures in the vicinity of the Site with the nearest one located to its immediate northwest; and
- (c) except for a workshop and open storage yard to its north, the remaining open storage/storage yards, parking of vehicles, warehouses and workshop in the vicinity of the Site are suspected unauthorized developments subject to planning enforcement action.

8. **Planning Intention**

The planning intention of the "V" zone is to designate both existing recognised villages and areas of land considered suitable for village expansion. Land within this zone is primarily intended for development of Small Houses by indigenous villagers. It is also intended to concentrate village type development within this zone for a more orderly development pattern, efficient use of land and provision of infrastructures and services.

Selected commercial and community uses serving the needs of the villagers and in support of the village development are always permitted on the ground floor of a New Territories Exempted House. Other commercial, community and recreational uses may be permitted on application to the Board.

9. Comments from Relevant Government Bureau/Departments

9.1 Apart from the government bureau as set out in paragraph 9.2 below, other 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 are provided in **Appendices III and IV** respectively.

9.2 The following government bureau supports the application:

9.2.1 Comments of the Secretary for Housing (SH):

Housing Bureau confirms that in-principle policy support has been given to the applicant for the proposed transitional housing project and hence supports this planning application.

10. Public Comments Received During the Statutory Publication Period

10.1 On 25.10.2022, the application was published for public inspection. During the first three weeks of the statutory public inspection period, a total of 16 public comments were received, including 15 comments which raise objections/provide adverse comments and one providing comments on the application. A full set of public comments will be deposited at the meeting for Members' inspection.

Objecting Comments / Adverse Comments (15 comments)

10.2 15 public comments were received from residents in Tai Shu Ha Road West, villagers of Shung Ching San Tsuen and individuals objecting to/providing adverse comments on the application (extract examples at **Appendices V-1 to V-8**). Their major views are summarised as follows:

- (a) the proposal would further aggravate the already overloaded traffic and public transport service in the area and generate adverse traffic impact and safety concerns during construction stage;
- (b) the scale of the proposed development is incompatible with the surrounding area which is predominantly village housing;
- (c) the proposal would cause adverse environmental, visual, drainage and sewage impacts, and create security and hygiene concerns on the existing rural area;
- (d) construction of the proposed development will affect the structural stability of the existing buildings in the vicinity;
- (e) there is a lack of retail and community facilities in the area to support the needs of the future residents; and

- (f) the iconic former Wing On School should be preserved.

Other Comments (one comment)

- 10.3 One individual questions the cost-effectiveness of the temporary proposal and the motive of the applicant. The individual also opines that public money should be spent on permanent housing; and raises concerns on the lack of transport facilities and the rehousing need of the tenants upon expiry of the approval (**Appendix V-9**).

11. Planning Considerations and Assessments

- 11.1 The application is for proposed temporary residential institution (transitional housing) providing 261 units with ancillary facilities for a period of seven years, and associated excavation of land at the Site zoned “V” on the OZP. Although the proposed development is not entirely in line with the planning intention of the “V” zone, it is in line with the government policy to increase supply of transitional housing for meeting the short-term needs of families on the public rental housing waiting list and inadequately housed households. In this regard, SH has given in-principle policy support to the proposed transitional housing project. Besides, there is no Small House application approved or under processing at the Site. As such, approval of the proposed development on a temporary basis would not jeopardise the long-term planning intention of the “V” zone.
- 11.2 Excavation of land within the “V” zone requires planning permission from the Board as it may cause adverse drainage impacts on the adjacent areas and adverse impacts on the environment. According to the applicant, the proposed excavation of land for a depth of about 1.6m is to facilitate site formation, construction of buildings and provision of sewerage, drainage and utility works. In this regards, Chief Engineer/Mainland North, Drainage Services Department (CE/MN, DSD) and Director of Environmental Protection (DEP) have no adverse comment on the application from drainage and environmental perspectives respectively.
- 11.3 The Site is located at a rural area mainly surrounded by low-rise residential developments/village settlements. The temporary nature and low-rise built form (not more than 13m or 4 storeys) of the proposed development, together with the provision of peripheral planting and communal facilities is considered not incompatible with the land uses and character of the surrounding area. Having considered the VA and Landscape Proposal submitted by the applicant, the Chief Town Planner/Urban Design and Landscape of PlanD considered that no significant visual and landscape impacts are anticipated.
- 11.4 Technical assessments submitted by the applicant, including Traffic Review Report, Drainage Proposal and Sewerage Impact Assessment, concluded that no insurmountable traffic, drainage and sewerage impacts are anticipated and there would be negligible impact on the provision of public transport services. Concerned government departments, including Commissioner for Transport (C for T), DEP and CE/MN, DSD have no objection to/no adverse comment on the application. In particular, C for T has no adverse comment on the Traffic Review Report submitted by the applicant. Significant adverse traffic, environmental and drainage impacts arising from the proposal are not expected. Furthermore, relevant approval conditions are recommended in paragraph 12.2 to address the technical requirements of concerned government departments. The applicant will

also be advised to meet the relevant pollution control ordinances and adhere to the latest “Code of Practice on Handling the Environmental Aspects of Temporary Uses and Open Storage Sites”.

- 11.5 There are 16 public comments objecting to/providing comments on the application received during the statutory publication period as summarised in paragraph 10 above. The planning considerations and assessments in paragraphs 11.1 to 11.4 above are relevant. Regarding the residents/villagers’ concerns, should the application be approved, the applicant is also advised to liaise with the locals on the details of the proposed development.
- 11.6 Taking into account the scale and implementation timeframe (i.e. completion by 2024) for the proposed development, a longer compliance period (i.e. 9 and 12 months for submission and implementation aspects as compared with the normal practice of 6/9 months) is suggested to allow more time to fulfil the approval conditions, should the Committee decide to approve the application.

12. Planning Department’s Views

- 12.1 Based on the assessments made in paragraph 11 and having taken into account the public comments mentioned in paragraph 10 above, 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 on a temporary basis for a period of seven years until 9.12.2029. The following conditions of approval and advisory clauses are also suggested for Members’ reference:

Approval conditions

- (a) the submission of an updated Noise Impact Assessment and implementation of mitigation measures identified therein to the satisfaction of the Director of Environmental Protection or of the Town Planning Board;
- (b) the submission of water supplies for fire fighting and fire service installations proposals within **9** months from the date of planning approval to the satisfaction of the Director of Fire Services or of the Town Planning Board by 9.9.2023;
- (c) in relation to (b) above, the implementation of water supplies for fire fighting and fire service installations proposals within **12** months from the date of planning approval to the satisfaction of the Director of Fire Services or of the Town Planning Board by 9.12.2023;
- (d) the implementation of the accepted drainage proposal within **12** months from the date of planning approval to the satisfaction of the Director of Drainage Services or of the Town Planning Board by 9.12.2023;
- (e) in relation to (d) above, the implemented drainage facilities shall be maintained at all time during the planning approval period;

- (f) if the above planning condition (e) 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; and
- (g) if any of the above planning condition (b), (c) or (d) is not complied with by the specified date, the approval hereby given shall cease to have effect and shall on the same date be revoked without further notice.

Advisory clauses

The recommended advisory clauses are at **Appendix IV**.

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

the proposed use is not in line with the planning intention of the "V" zone, which is primarily for development of Small Houses by indigenous villagers. No strong planning justification has been given in the submission for a departure from the planning intention, even on a temporary basis.

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 17.10.2022
Appendix Ia	Supplementary Planning Statement
Appendix Ib	SI received on 18.10.2022
Appendix Ic	SI received on 21.10.2022
Appendix Id	FI received on 24.11.2022
Appendix Ie	FI received on 1.12.2022
Appendix If	FI received on 2.12.2022
Appendix Ig	FI received on 5.12.2022
Appendix II	Previous Applications
Appendix III	Government Departments' General Comments
Appendix IV	Recommended Advisory Clauses
Appendices V-1 to V-9	Public Comments
Drawing A-1	Site Layout Plan
Drawings A-2 to A-3	Typical Floor/Unit Plans
Drawing A-4	Sections

Drawing A-5	Land Excavation Plan
Drawing A-6	Landscape Master Plan
Drawing A-7	Drainage and Sewerage Proposal
Drawings A-8 to A-9	Photomontages
Plan A-1	Location Plan
Plan A-2	Site Plan
Plan A-3	Aerial Photo
Plans A-4a and A-4b	Site Photos

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT
DECEMBER 2022**