

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE
APPROVED CENTRAL DISTRICT OUTLINE ZONING PLAN NO. S/H4/16**

1. Introduction

This paper is to seek Members' agreement that:

- (a) the proposed amendments to the approved Central District Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/H4/16 (**Attachment IIa** or **Attachment IIb** or a variation reflecting the amendment as agreed at the meeting) and its Notes (**Attachment III**) are suitable for exhibition for public inspection under section 5 of the Town Planning Ordinance (the Ordinance); and
- (b) the Explanatory Statement (ES) of the OZP (**Attachment IV**) is an expression of the planning intentions and objectives of the Town Planning Board (the Board) for various land use zonings of the OZP, and is suitable for exhibition together with the OZP and its Notes.

2. Status of the Current OZP

- 2.1 On 1.11.2016, the Chief Executive in Council (CE in C), under section 9(1)(a) of the Ordinance, approved the draft Central District OZP. On 11.11.2016, the approved Central District OZP No. S/H4/16 (**Attachment I**) was exhibited for public inspection under section 9(5) of the Ordinance.
- 2.2 On 30.4.2019, the CE in C agreed to refer the approved Central District OZP to the Board for amendment under section 12(1)(b)(ii) of the Ordinance. The reference back of the OZP is notified in the Gazette on 10.5.2019 under section 12(2) of the Ordinance.

3. Proposed Amendments to the OZP

The proposed amendments are mainly related to:

- (a) the rezoning of the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui (HKSKH) Compound at 1 Lower Albert Road in Central (the Site) from "Government, Institution or Community" ("G/IC") to "G/IC(1)" with building height restrictions (BHR); and
- (b) technical amendments to the Notes of the OZP.

4. Proposed Building Height Restrictions for the HKSKH Compound

Background

- 4.1 On 10.8.2018, the Board considered a s.12A application (No. Y/H4/12) submitted by the Government Hill Concern Group proposing to rezone the Site and a number of other sites occupied by Government House, Former Central Government Offices, Former French Mission Building, St. John's Cathedral and Battery Path in Central, from "G/IC" to "Other Specified Uses" annotated "Heritage Precinct" or "G/IC(1)" and to stipulate BHRs for the zone in terms of mPD or number of storeys, or restrict any development to the height of the existing building¹.
- 4.2 After deliberation, the Board decided not to agree to the application for the reasons that the existing "G/IC" zoning was appropriate to reflect the existing and planned uses of the application sites, there was insufficient justification/basis for the proposed BHRs, and the rezoning would lead to unnecessary delays in the carrying out of necessary maintenance and repair works to existing historic buildings, and would not be conducive to the preservation-cum-development of privately-owned historic buildings under the Government's heritage conservation policy. Nevertheless, the Board also decided to request the Planning Department (PlanD) to consider suitable amendment to the OZP to ensure that the urban design aspect of any redevelopment proposal on the Site would be given due consideration under the planning regime.

The Site and its Surroundings

- 4.3 The Site (about 8,714m²) falls within an area zoned "G/IC" on the approved Central District OZP No. S/H4/16 (**Plan 1**) and is currently not subject to any plot ratio, BH or site coverage restrictions on the OZP. The Site is bounded by Lower Albert Road and Ice House Street to the north/northeast, the Government House to the southeast, Upper Albert Road and Albany Road to the south and Glenealy to the west. It is also a sloping site with the lowest site level at 30.5mPD near Lower Albert Road and the highest site level at 62.5mPD near Upper Albert Road.
- 4.4 The Site is held by the HKSKH Foundation under Government Lease (Inland Lot No. 7360) for a term of 999 years commencing from 19.4.1850. The lease contains several requirements including, among others, a user restriction clause; a design of exterior elevations, disposition and height clause; restriction on alteration, addition, demolition or redevelopment clause and a tree preservation clause. The lease provides that any use other than those specified for individual buildings in the lease and any alteration/addition/ demolition/ redevelopment of any building or buildings would be allowed subject to prior written consent of the Governor (now the Chief Executive).
- 4.5 The BHs of the existing buildings within the Site (**Plan 2**) are as follows:
- (a) Bishop's House (Grade 1) (51.6mPD);
 - (b) St. Paul's Church (Grade 1) (54.9mPD);
 - (c) Church Guest House (also known as Martin House) (Grade 1) (71.3mPD);

¹ For "Other Specified Uses" annotated "Heritage Precinct", the proposed BHR is the height of existing building. For "G/IC(1)", it was proposed to stipulate BHR in terms of mPD or number of storeys, or restrict any development to the height of the existing building.

- (d) Old Sheng Kung Hui Kei Yan Primary School (Grade 2) (51mPD);
- (e) Hong Kong Central Hospital (60.3mPD);
- (f) HKSKH Welfare Council (52.3mPD);
- (g) HKSKH Ming Hua Theological College (60.2mPD);
- (h) SKH Kindergarten (59.6mPD);
- (i) Vicarage (52.7mPD);
- (j) Alford House (71.9mPD); and
- (k) Ridley House (78.2mPD).

4.6 The area to the west of the Site across Glenealy is covered by the draft Sai Ying Pun and Sheung Wan OZP No. S/H3/32 where BHRs are imposed. As shown on **Plan 2**, the northern part of the street block along Glenealy adjoining the Site is zoned “Commercial” (“C”) with a BHR of 120mPD, while the southern part of the street block is zoned “Residential (Group A)” (“R(A)”) with a BHR of 150mPD. The area to the north of the Site is mainly zoned “C” on the Central District OZP comprising largely of high rise commercial developments, with no BHR on the OZP.

Preservation-cum-development Proposal of HKSKH

- 4.7 Announced by the Chief Executive in the 2009-10 Policy Address, a preservation-cum-development project, which is one of the eight projects under the “Conserving Central” initiative, is proposed for the Site. The CE in C approved the land lease modification of the Site in 2011 to facilitate the implementation of the said project. According to the proposal, the HKSKH would preserve all four historic buildings within the Site, namely the Bishop’s House (Grade 1), St. Paul’s Church (Grade 1), the Church Guest House (Grade 1) and the Old Sheng Kung Hui Kei Yan Primary School (Grade 2) while other existing buildings would be replaced by new ones (with BH of 103mPD and 108mPD) to provide the needed space for HKSKH’s religious and community services as well as a medical centre.
- 4.8 In recent years, having taken into account the relocation of a public hospital (i.e. Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital) to another district and the growing population arising from developments in the Central & Western District, HKSKH revisited the project and decided to build a non-profit-making private hospital within the Site. The aim is to provide the community, particularly residents in the Central & Western District, with alternative healthcare services other than the public ones. The proposed hospital will be of 25 storeys high (including three levels of basement) up to 134.8mPD, with a total gross floor area (GFA) of 46,659m². Under the “G/IC” zoning, hospital development is always permitted and no planning permission from the Board is required.
- 4.9 HKSKH has been exchanging views with the Central & Western District Council (C&WDC) since 2013 on the latest proposal. Members of C&WDC generally supported the proposal of developing a non-profit-making private hospital at the Site whilst some individual members raised comments on the design of the new buildings and traffic arrangements. HKSKH also consulted the Antiquities Advisory Board (AAB) on its proposal in June 2018 and obtained AAB’s general support for the proposal, with individual members offering comments on the design of the hospital and the conservation proposal of the four historic buildings. Separately, the Food and Health Bureau (FHB) has confirmed its policy support for the proposed hospital upon HKSKH’s acceptance of the minimum requirements, which include, inter alia, a

minimum number of hospital beds (which in turn has implications on the necessary GFA), set out by FHB. Already at a very advanced stage of development and in view of the great demand for healthcare services from the community, HKSKH is in the process of finalising the detailed design and the necessary technical assessments of the proposed hospital with a view to commencing the development upon completion of the land lease modification.

The Rezoning Proposal

- 4.10 Taking into account the existing height profile of the Site, the surrounding site context and the BHRs that are currently in effect in the surrounding area and given Members' concern on the urban design aspect of the redevelopment proposal in the Site, two BHR options have been devised for the HKSKH Compound to facilitate the Board's consideration.

Option 1 – Stipulating BHRs of 135mPD and 80mPD (Plan 4A)

- 4.10.1 The Site could be rezoned to “G/IC(1)” with BHRs of 135mPD and 80mPD in its northern and southern portions respectively. The proposed BHR of 135mPD for the northern portion of the Site for the proposed hospital development is comparable with the BHRs of the surrounding areas, ranging from 120mPD to 150mPD. The BHR of 80mPD for the southern portion of the Site is to reflect the maximum BH of the existing buildings therein (i.e. Ridley House at 78.2mPD) and to maintain the current BH profile along this section of Upper Albert Road having regard to the surrounding site context and open public views from the Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens across the road.
- 4.10.2 This option would enable HKSKH's non-profit-making private hospital development proposal, which is already at a very advanced stage, to proceed as planned, while giving the planning regime the locus to gatekeep based on the prescribed BHRs. It would facilitate early implementation of the proposed development to provide the much-needed healthcare services to the community.

Option 2 – Stipulating BHRs of 120mPD and 80mPD (Plan 4B)

- 4.10.3 Alternatively, the Site could be rezoned to “G/IC(1)” with a BHR of 120mPD and 80mPD in its northern and southern portions respectively. The proposed BHR of 120mPD is an extension of the existing BHR covering the area along Wyndham Street to the west of Glenealy on the draft Sai Ying Pun and Sheung Wan OZP No. S/H3/32. It is also compatible with the existing building heights along Ice House Street to the north and northeast of the site. Same as Option 1 above, the BHR of 80mPD is to reflect the maximum BH of the existing buildings therein and to maintain the current BH profile along this section of Upper Albert Road.
- 4.10.4 This option would not meet the BH requirement of HKSKH's preservation-cum-development proposal. To comply with the BHR of 120mPD stipulated for the northern portion of the site, HKSKH would have to go back to the drawing board to revise the design and assess the viability

of the proposed hospital project under the revised design. This will no doubt delay the implementation of the project which seeks to provide much needed healthcare services for the community.

- 4.10.5 For both options, a minor relaxation clause in respect of the BHR would be incorporated into the Notes of the OZP to allow flexibility for the Board to consider planning application under section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance based on individual merits.
- 4.11 An assessment of the two options from the visual, heritage conservation, traffic and air ventilation aspects are set out in the paragraphs below.

Visual Aspect

- 4.12 The Site is located in close proximity to an area of transition in which the major land use changes from predominantly commercial to predominantly residential with a mix of government, institution and community (GIC) uses and open space. The area to the north of the Site is the core central business district characterised by dense and high-rise commercial buildings, while the area to the southwest of the Site comprises a mixture of high-rise residential buildings and medium-rise institutional buildings including the Caritas House, and the area to the south and east are characterised by GIC uses and open space including the Government House and Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens (**Plan 3**).
- 4.13 A visual appraisal of the two options has been conducted from eight viewing points (**Plans 8 to 15**). Two are strategic viewing points (i.e. the Peak and Kai Tak Cruise Terminal Park), while the remaining viewing points are locally accessible to the public. The photomontages from the two strategic viewing points (**Plans 14 and 15**) show that the proposed developments under both options would be shielded by the dense and high-rise building clusters in the central business district of Central District and would not be visible. From the local viewing points at Queen’s Road Central, Cotton Tree Drive, Caine Road and Duddell Street, the photomontages for both options show that the proposed development would be located amidst and largely blended in with a cluster of high-rise commercial buildings (**Plans 8 and 9**) or blocked by existing vegetation in the immediate surroundings of the Site (**Plans 12 and 13**). The resultant visual impact would be minimal to moderate for Option 1 while minimal for Option 2. For viewing points from the Hong Kong Zoological and Botanical Gardens from the southwest of the Site (**Plans 10 and 11**), the proposed developments under both options would become more prominent and the visual impact would be moderate to significant for Option 1 and moderate for Option 2 as these viewing points are closer to the Site. In sum, the impact of Option 2 would be less pronounced than Option 1 and Option 2 is in general visually more compatible with the surrounding developments.

Heritage Conservation Aspect

- 4.14 According to the Government’s heritage conservation policy promulgated since 2007, the Government seeks “to protect, conserve and revitalise as appropriate historical and heritage sites and buildings through relevant and sustainable approaches for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. In implementing this policy, due regard should be given to development needs in the public interest, respect for private property rights, budgetary considerations, cross-sector collaboration and active

engagement of stakeholders and the general public”.

- 4.15 The Commissioner for Heritage’s Office (CHO) and the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) encourage private owners to conserve their historic buildings through a preservation-cum-development approach. The policy objective in striking a proper balance between preservation of historic buildings and respect for private property rights should be emphasised. To this end, allowing certain flexibility for development is necessary to support the preservation of historic buildings. As far as HKSKH’s latest proposal is concerned, all four historic buildings will be properly preserved at HKSKH’s own cost and will be re-used while the rest of the Site will be utilised by HKSKH for its religious and ancillary uses and for providing non-profit-making medical services to the community. HKSKH has also agreed to open up part of the Site, which does not currently provide general public access.
- 4.16 Given all four historic buildings within the Site will be properly preserved and the religious use of the Site will be maintained in the preservation-cum-development proposal, the historical connection of the Site and its surrounding areas in a wider context has been kept. The proposed treatments for the four graded buildings within the Site are commensurate with their respective heritage value. From the heritage conservation perspective, CHO and AMO consider that HKSKH’s proposal has struck a balance between the need for heritage conservation and respect for private property rights, as well as between preservation and development. As mentioned in paragraph 4.9 above, HKSKH has also obtained general support from the AAB, the statutory body advising the Government on matters of heritage conservation, for the present non-profit-making private hospital proposal. Besides, HKSKH is required to submit a Conservation Management Plan for properly preserving the historic buildings and their ambience. CHO envisages that Option 1 would allow HKSKH to proceed with its non-profit-making private hospital proposal, which is already at a very advanced stage after years of planning and consultation, while Option 2 would necessitate HKSKH to go back to the drawing board and substantially revise its design, with possible knock on impact on achievable GFA and financial viability. Given the limited footprint at the Site that could be used for hospital development as a result of preserving the four historic buildings, it is also uncertain whether the revised design would be able to meet the minimum requirements of hospital beds set out by FHB.

Traffic Aspect

- 4.17 On the traffic aspect, no traffic impact assessment (TIA) has been conducted as there is no change in the land use zoning but only with BHRs imposed. Both hospital and religious institution uses are currently always permitted under the “G/IC” zone. In any case, HKSKH is required to submit various technical assessments, including a TIA with necessary mitigation measures, if any, to the satisfaction of the Transport Department before it could proceed with lease modification and take forward its preservation-cum-development proposal at the Site. In this regard, adequate measures are in place to ensure that the proposed development would not cause adverse traffic impact on its surroundings irrespective of whether Option 1 or Option 2 is adopted.

Air Ventilation Aspect

- 4.18 The BHR proposal involving only one site with a site area of less than 1ha does not fall within the criteria that require an air ventilation assessment (AVA) under the relevant

Technical Circular on AVA. No significant air ventilation impact from the BHR proposal is envisaged irrespective of whether Option 1 or Option 2 is adopted. However, as mentioned in paragraph 4.17 above, HKSKH is required to submit various technical assessments at the lease modification stage, including an AVA to demonstrate that the preservation-cum-development at the Site would not cause any adverse air ventilation impact on its surroundings.

Choice of Option

- 4.19 Having regard to the assessments above and depending on the weighting that would be given to each of the factors, the Board may decide on whether Option 1 or Option 2, or an option being a variation between the two options (see paragraph 4.20 below), would strike a right balance amongst those factors including the existing height profile of the Site, the surrounding site context, the BHRs currently in effect in the surrounding area and the advanced stage of the HKSKH's preservation-cum-development proposal to provide the much needed medical services.
- 4.20 When testing Option 1 and Option 2, it is considered that there is a strong case for setting a BHR of 80mPD for the southern portion, to maintain the current BH profile along the section of Upper Albert Road. The choice of BHR for the northern portion is less straightforward when the arguments for the high end of 135mPD under Option 1 and the low end of 120mPD under Option 2 are quite finely balanced, as set out in the assessment. While noting the impact of the high end and low end under the two options, the Board may also consider an alternative BHR falling between 120mPD and 135mPD for this northern portion.

5. Provision of Open Space and GIC Facilities

- 5.1 For background information, a table on the provision of major community facilities and open space in the Central District planning scheme area is at **Attachment V**. Based on a planned population of about 2,904, there is no shortfall in major GIC facilities in the area², except primary school classrooms and hospital beds.
- 5.2 The existing shortfall of primary school classrooms in the area can be catered for by the surplus provision of primary school classrooms in the Central and Western District, in particular in the Sai Ying Pun & Sheung Wan area which is within the same school net. The existing shortfall of hospital beds in the area can be catered for by the surplus provision of hospital beds in the Southern District which is within the same hospital cluster. The provision of hospital beds will also be improved if HKSKH's proposed non-profit-making private hospital project is materialized. Regarding open space provision in the area, there is an overall surplus of 14.55 ha open space (including both district and local open space). Since the proposed amendment items do not involve changes in land uses, they will not have any material impact on major GIC and open space provisions in the area.

² The population-based planning standards for elderly services and facilities were reinstated in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines on 28.12.2018. The revised standards reflect the long-term target towards which the provision of elderly services and facilities would be adjusted progressively. It may not be appropriate to compare the standards with the provision of elderly services and facilities for the existing population.

6. Proposed Amendments to Matters shown on the Plan

Subject to the Board’s decision on adopting Option 1 or Option 2 or a variation of the two (paragraph 4.20 above), the proposed amendments as shown on the draft Central District OZP No. S/H4/16A (**Attachment IIa** for Option 1 and **Attachment IIb** for Option 2) are as follows (with consequential modifications in case the Board decide to adopt a variation of the two options):

Amendment Items A1 and A2 (about 8,714m²)

Option 1 (Plans 4A, 5 to 6B)

To rezone the Site from “G/IC” to “G/IC(1)” with a BHR of 135mPD and 80mPD for its northern and southern portions respectively as stipulated on the OZP.

Option 2 (Plans 4B, 5 to 6B)

To rezone the Site from “G/IC” to “G/IC(1)” with a BHR of 120mPD and 80mPD for its northern and southern portions respectively as stipulated on the OZP.

7. Proposed Amendments to the Notes of the OZP

7.1 Amendments to the Notes of the OZP are proposed as follows:

- (a) in relation to the proposed amendments mentioned above, Remarks are added to the Notes of the “G/IC” zone setting out the restrictions applicable to the “G/IC(1)” zone together with a minor relaxation clause; and
- (b) the Board has promulgated a revised set of Master Schedule of Notes to Statutory Plans on 11.1.2019 with ‘Market’ use being subsumed under ‘Shop and Services’ use. To effectuate such changes, updates have been made to the Notes of the “C”, “G/IC”, “R(A)” and “Residential (Group B)” zones.

7.2 The proposed amendments to the Notes of the OZP (with additions in ***bold and italics*** and deletions in ‘~~erossed-out~~’) are at **Attachment III** for Members’ consideration.

8. Revision to the Explanatory Statement of the OZP

The ES of the OZP has been revised to take into account the proposed amendments as mentioned in the above paragraphs. A new paragraph will be added in the ES to set out the restrictions and the purpose of the “G/IC(1)” zone. Opportunity has also been taken to update the general information for various land use zones to reflect the latest status and planning circumstances of the OZP. The proposed amendments to the ES of the OZP (with additions in ***bold and italics*** and deletions in ‘~~erossed-out~~’) are at **Attachment IV** for Members’ consideration.

9. Plan Number

Upon exhibition for public inspection, the Plan will be renumbered as S/H4/17.

10. Consultation

Consultation with the C&WDC

- 10.1 As mentioned in paragraph 4.9 above, HKSKH has been exchanging views with C&WDC since 2013 on the latest preservation-cum-development proposal. Members of the C&WDC generally supported the proposal of developing a non-profit-making private hospital at the Site whilst some individual members raised comments on the design of the new buildings and traffic arrangements.
- 10.2 The C&WDC will be consulted on the proposed OZP amendments upon and during the gazetting of the OZP.

Public Consultation

- 10.3 If the proposed amendments are agreed by the Board, the draft OZP (to be renumbered to S/H4/17 upon exhibition) and its Notes will be exhibited under section 5 of the Ordinance. Members of the public can submit representations on the OZP amendments to the Board during the two-month statutory public inspection period.

Departmental Circulation

- 10.4 The proposed amendments have been circulated to the relevant government departments for comments. The following bureaux/departments have no objection to/no adverse comment on the proposed amendments:
- Secretary for Development;
 - Commissioner for Heritage;
 - Secretary for Food and Health;
 - District Officer (Central and Western), Home Affairs Department;
 - District Lands Officer/Hong Kong West & South, Lands Department;
 - Chief Building Surveyor/Hong Kong East & Heritage, Buildings Department;
 - Commissioner for Transport;
 - Chief Highway Engineer/Hong Kong, Highways Department;
 - Chief Engineer/Railway Development 2-2, Highways Department;
 - Head of Geotechnical Engineering Office, Civil Engineering and Development Department;
 - Chief Engineer/Hong Kong & Islands, Drainage Services Department;
 - Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services;
 - Director of Leisure and Cultural Services;
 - Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene;
 - Chief Architect/Central Management Division 2, Architectural Services Department;
 - Government Property Administrator;
 - Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation;
 - Director of Environmental Protection;
 - Director of Social Welfare;

- Director of Health; and
- Chief Town Planner/Urban Design & Landscape, PlanD.

11. **Decision Sought**

Members are invited to:

- (a) decide on whether Option 1 or Option 2 or a variation of the two (paragraph 4.20 above) should be adopted as the basis for amending the Central District OZP;
- (b) agree that the proposed amendments to the approved Central District OZP No. S/H4/16 and that the draft Central District OZP No. S/H4/16A at **Attachment IIa** (Option 1) or **Attachment IIb** (Option 2) or a variation reflecting the amendment as agreed at the meeting (to be renumbered to S/H4/17 upon exhibition) and its Notes at **Attachment III** are suitable for exhibition under section 5 of the Ordinance; and
- (c) adopt the revised ES for the draft Central District OZP No. S/H4/16A at **Attachment IV** as an expression of the planning intentions and objectives of the Board for various land use zonings of the OZP and agree that the revised ES is suitable for publication together with the OZP.

12. **Attachments**

Attachment I	Approved Central District Outline Zoning Plan No. S/H4/16 (Reduced Size)
Attachments IIa and IIb	Draft Central District Outline Zoning Plan No. S/H4/16A
Attachment III	Notes of draft Central District Outline Zoning Plan No. S/H4/16A
Attachment IV	Explanatory Statement of draft Central District Outline Zoning Plan No. S/H4/16A
Attachment V	Provision of Major Community Facilities & Open Space in Central District
Plans 1A and 1B	Comparison of the proposed and existing zonings for Amendment Items
Plan 2	Site plan of HKSKH Compound
Plan 3	Site plan of HKSKH Compound and its surroundings
Plans 4A and 4B	Site plans of Amendment Items
Plan 5	Aerial photo of Amendment Items
Plans 6A and 6B	Site photos of Amendment Items
Plans 7 to 15	Viewing points and photomontages of Amendment Items