

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

**APPLICATION NO. A/H15/280**

<b><u>Applicant</u></b>	Singapore International School (SIS) represented by Llewelyn Davies HK Limited
<b><u>Site</u></b>	23 Nam Long Shan Road, Wong Chuk Hang, Hong Kong
<b><u>Site Area</u></b>	About 4,306m <sup>2</sup>
<b><u>Land Status</u></b>	Aberdeen Inland Lot No. 428
<b><u>Plan</u></b>	Approved Aberdeen & Ap Lei Chau Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/H15/33
<b><u>Zoning</u></b>	“Government, Institution or Community” (“G/IC”) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- maximum building height (BH) restriction of 80mPD or the height of the existing building, whichever is the greater</li><li>- provision for application for minor relaxation of the BH restriction</li></ul>
<b><u>Application</u></b>	Proposed Minor Relaxation of Building Height (BH) Restriction from 80mPD to 91mPD

**1. The Proposal**

- 1.1 The applicant seeks planning permission for minor relaxation of BH restriction from 80mPD to 91mPD (main roof) at the application site (the Site) which is zoned “G/IC” on the approved Aberdeen & Ap Lei Chau OZP No. S/H15/33 (**Plan A-1**). According to the Notes of the OZP, development within the “G/IC” zone is restricted to a BH of 80mPD or the height of the existing building, whichever is the greater. As the proposed development with a BH of 91mPD exceeds the BH restriction of 80mPD stipulated under the OZP, planning permission for minor relaxation of BH restriction is required from the Town Planning Board (TPB).
- 1.2 The proposed scheme involves the addition of one storey for staff office use with an area of about 261m<sup>2</sup> at the main roof of the existing Preparatory Years and Primary Section campus building, which has an existing BH of 86mPD. The proposed additional floor would increase the existing BH of the school from 86mPD to 91mPD. The block layouts, sections and photomontage of the proposed scheme submitted by the applicant are at **Drawings A-1 to A-8**.

- 1.3 In support of the application, the applicant has submitted the following documents:
- (a) Application form received on 19.3.2019 (Appendix I)
  - (b) Planning Statement (Appendix Ia)
  - (c) Further information (FI) dated 29.4.2019 involving response to departmental comments (Appendix Ib)  
*(exempted from publication and recounting requirements)*
  - (d) FI dated 3.5.2019 involving response to departmental and public comments (Appendix Ic)  
*(exempted from publication and recounting requirements)*
  - (e) FI dated 15.5.2019 involving response to departmental and public comments (Appendix Id)  
*(exempted from publication and recounting requirements)*

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

The justifications put forth by the applicant in support of the application are detailed in the Planning Statement and FIs (**Appendices Ia to Id**) which are summarized as follows:

### In line with government policy on international school places

- (a) There is a keen demand for international school places for children and the proposed extension is to enhance SIS' capacity in educational provision with an aim to increase floor space for educational purpose.
- (b) The proposed staff office would not induce any increase of student intake. The proposed development is to promote operational efficiency of the administration arm of the school by restructuring the various facilities in the school. The office would only allow consolidation of existing supporting staff currently being placed into different hands of management offices scattered around the campuses.

### Proposed Increase in Building Height is Minor

- (c) Comparing against the permitted BH of 86mPD (i.e. height of the existing building), the current proposal only involve a slight increase in BH by 5m to 91mPD which is about 5.81% for an ancillary staff office.
- (d) The visual appraisal and photomontage prepared by the applicant has demonstrated that there would be no adverse visual impacts to the surrounding. The effects of visual changes resulting from the proposed relaxation of BH restriction are considered to be negligible.

### Design Considerations to Enhance Feasibility and Compatibility

- (e) Although the school has two campuses adjoining each other, the Secondary Section of SIS is a former government school premises which SIS took up tenancy and no permission is granted to the application for carrying out extensive modification and reinforcement works to the building structure.

Minimization of Possible Nuisance to the Surroundings

- (f) The proposed staff office with an area of 261m<sup>2</sup> covers a small portion of the roof level. The overall alteration and additional works will be kept within the building profile as far as practical.
- (g) The minimization of building bulk and development footprint will enhance the efficiency of construction and demolition works will also be minimized to lessen any possible environmental nuisances to the surrounding buildings during construction phase.
- (h) The slight alteration and additional (A&A) works of the existing campus building for a newly proposed staff office would not induce any increase of student intake nor any change in traffic generation. No change of existing traffic flow by the application is envisaged.

Compliance with Local Planning Context

- (i) The proposed staff office is directly related to the permitted school use of the site.
- (j) The proposed BH of 91mPD is compatible to the development profiles of the “Comprehensive Development Area” site at MTR Wong Chuk Hang Depot (150mPD) to the north, the residential developments of Grandview Garden and South Wave Court (both zoned “Residential (Group A)” with a maximum of 130mPD) and the proposed residential residence of University of Hong Kong (90mPD) to the northeast.

**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. Previous Application**

There is no previous application covering the Site.

**5. Similar Application**

There are four similar applications (A/H15/252, A/H15/266, A/H15/268 and A/H15/276) within the “G/IC” zones for minor relaxation of BH restriction within the Aberdeen & Ap Lei Chau planning scheme area. Application No. A/H15/252 was for a proposed minor relaxation of BH restriction from 6 storeys to 7 storeys for the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals’ Jockey Club Rehabilitation Complex at 4 Welfare Road, Wong Chuk Hang which was approved with conditions by the Committee on 15.6.2012. Application No. A/H15/266 was for proposed flat (Government staff quarters) use and minor relaxation of BH restriction from 70mPD to 76.67mPD for the Correctional Services Department’s staff quarters at Tin Wan Street which was approved with conditions by the Committee on 8.1.2016. Application No. A/H15/268 for proposed residential institution (student residence) use by the University of Hong Kong with minor relaxation of BH restriction from 80mPD to 87mPD which was

approved with conditions by the Committee on 18.3.2016. Application No. A/H15/276 was for minor relaxation from 80mPD to 90mPD (as amendments to the approved residential institution under application No. A/H15/268) which was approved with conditions by the Committee on 16.11.2018. Details of these applications are at **Appendix II**.

**6. The Site and Its Surrounding Areas (Plans A-1, A-2 and A-3, aerial photo on Plan A-4 and site photos on Plan A-5)**

6.1 The Site is:

- (a) a 13 storeys school with an existing BH of 86mPD at the main roof; and
- (b) accessible via Nam Long Shan Road.

6.2 The surrounding area has the following characteristics:

- (a) to its immediate south are natural slopes zoned “Green Belt” (“GB”);
- (b) to its immediate east is the Secondary Section of SIS which is also zoned “G/IC” and subject to a maximum BH restriction of 80mPD;
- (c) to its further northeast along Police School Road is a site zoned “G/IC” and also subject to a BH restriction of 80mPD. The site is to be developed for student residence by the University of Hong Kong (which is the subject of two planning applications as mentioned in paragraph 5 above). Further to the east along Police School Road is the Police College (Aberdeen) R&F Married Quarters which is zoned “G/IC” and subject to a maximum BH restriction of 11 storeys;
- (d) to its immediate north across Nam Long Shan Road are two residential developments, namely Grandview Garden and South Wave Court, which are zoned “Residential (Group A)” and subject to a maximum BH restriction of 130mPD; and
- (e) to the further north are the MTR Wong Chuk Hang Station including the MTR Wong Chuk Hang Depot and its top-side commercial cum residential development, currently under construction. The site is zoned “CDA” with a maximum BH restriction of 150mPD and a cluster of “G/IC” developments including San Wui Commercial Society Chan Pak Shan School, Pao Yue Kong Swimming Pool, the Little Sisters of the Poor St. Mary’s Home for the Aged, and the Jockey Club Yee Yeung Care and Attention Home.

**7. Planning Intention**

7.1 The planning intention of the “G/IC” zone is primarily for the provision of Government, institution or community facilities serving the needs of the local residents and/or a wider district, region or the territory. It is also intended to provide land for uses directly related to or in support of the work of the

Government, organizations providing social services to meet community needs, and other institutional establishments.

7.2 According to the Explanatory Statement of the Aberdeen & Ap Lei Chau OZP, BH restrictions are imposed on “G/IC” zones in terms of mPD or number of storeys, which mainly reflect the existing BHs of developments and provide visual and spatial relief to the densely built-up environment. A minor relaxation clause in respect of the BH restrictions is incorporated into the Notes of the OZP to provide incentive for developments/redevelopments with planning and design merits and to cater for circumstances with specific site constraints. Each application for minor relaxation of BH restrictions will be considered on its own merits and the relevant criteria for consideration of such relaxation are as follows:

- (a) amalgamating smaller sites for achieving better urban design and local area improvements;
- (b) accommodating the bonus plot ratio granted under the Buildings Ordinance in relation to surrender/dedication of land/area for use as a public passage/street widening;
- (c) providing better streetscape/good quality street level public urban space;
- (d) providing separation between buildings to enhance air and visual permeability;
- (e) accommodating building design to address specific site constraints in achieving the permissible plot ratio under the OZP, and
- (f) other factors such as need for tree preservation, innovative building design and planning merits that would bring about improvements to the townscape and amenity of the locality and would not cause adverse landscape and visual impacts.

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

8.1 The following government departments have been consulted and their views on the application and the public comments received are summarized as follows:

### **Policy Support**

8.1.1 The Secretary for Education (SED) has no comment on the application.

### **Land Administration**

8.1.2 Comments of the District Lands Officer/Hong Kong West & South, Lands Department (DLO/HKW&S, LandsD):

- (a) The Site i.e. AIL 428, is held under the Conditions of Grant No. 12238 for a term up to 30.6.2047 at nominal premium, and subject to the user restriction of a non-profit making

co-educational primary school of not less than 24 classrooms, residential quarters for headmaster/supervisor of the school and caretaker's quarters. By the Waiver Letter date 12.6.2007, the lot is permitted to be used for the purpose of a non-profit making co-educational school with primary and secondary sections. There is no BH restriction under the said Conditions of Grant and the Waiver Letter; and

- (b) subject to no adverse comment from SED, he has no objection to the planning application.

### **Traffic**

#### 8.1.3 Comments of the Commissioner for Transport (C for T):

- (a) he noted that the proposed development will not cause additional traffic flow and hence no adverse comment on the planning application;
- (b) it is noted that Southern District Council (SDC) members are highly concerned about the existing traffic conditions due to students taking private cars and the applicant will advocate a "School Bus Only Policy" as an effort to reduce the number of the school related private cars. His department will further liaise with SIS for the implementation of the "school bus only" policy and closely monitor its effect.

### **Environmental**

#### 8.1.4 Comments of the Director of Environmental Protection (DEP):

- (a) he has no objection to the application and no approval condition is required;
- (b) as a result of the application, the height of the existing building is expected to increase from 86mPD to 91mPD. He also understands that the proposed new staff office will be equipped with central air-conditioning system and will not rely on opened window for ventilation;
- (c) in view of the small scale of the proposed development, and the proposed use is not incompatible with the surrounding environment, no adverse environmental impact as a result of the application is anticipated; and
- (d) an advisory clause is recommended to remind the applicant to observe the air quality buffer distance requirements as stipulated in Chapter 9 of HKPSG when designing the air intake location of the central air conditioning system of the proposed new staff office to address the potential vehicular emission impact from the nearby road i.e. Police School Road.

### **Urban Design, Visual and Air Ventilation Aspects**

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

#### **Urban Design and Visual**

- (a) judging from the visual assessment submitted, the proposed minor relaxation of BH would bring about slight loss of sky view to the public viewers on Nam Long Shan Road, but is not expected to cause significant adverse impact to the visual context. An approval condition on visual aspect is considered not required. Besides, the proposed BH of 91mPD is considered not incompatible with the adjacent developments and is not expected to change the general character of the area; and

#### **Air Ventilation**

- (b) according to the Air Ventilation Assessment Expert Evaluation (AVA EE) Report for the Aberdeen and Ap Lei Chau (April 2010), the Site does not fall within any wind corridors and the proposal does not fall within the categories for air ventilation assessment ('AVA') in accordance with the Joint HPLB-ETWB Technical Circular No. 1-06 on AVAs. From air ventilation perspective, no AVA is required for the proposed development. As the Site does not fall within any identified breezeway and the proposal is for increase in BH of 5m, no significant air ventilation impact is anticipated.

8.1.6 Comments of the Chief Architect/Central Management Division 2, Architectural Services Department (CA/CMD2, ArchSD):

- (a) he has no comment from visual impact point of view;
- (b) it is noted that the proposed modification and alteration involves minor increase in BH of 5.81% from 86mPD to 91mPD which may not be incompatible with adjacent developments with BH restriction ranging from 80mPD to 150mPD.

### **Landscape Aspect**

8.1.7 Comments of CTP/UD&L, PlanD:

- (a) she has no objection to the application from the landscape planning perspective;
- (b) according to the aerial photo of 10.3.2018 and the submitted documents, the Site is currently occupied by the existing building namely the Preparatory Years and Primary Section of Singapore International School. No vegetation within the Site will be affected and adverse landscape impact from the development is not anticipated. Low to medium rise residential buildings and

institutes dominate the vicinity and the proposed development is not incompatible with the existing landscape character; and

- (c) should the application be approved, a landscape condition is not recommended given that there is inadequate space for quality landscaping within the Site.

### **Building**

8.1.8 Comments of the Chief Building Surveyor/Hong Kong West, Buildings Department (CBS/HKW, BD):

- (a) no objection in principle under the Buildings Ordinance;
- (b) applicant's attention is drawn to the provision of site coverage under the First Schedule of Building (Planning) Regulations; and
- (c) detailed comments on the proposal could only be made at formal building plans submission stage.

### **Fire Safety**

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

- (a) no objection in principle to the application subject to fire service installations and water supplies for firefighting being provided to the satisfaction of his department; and
- (b) detailed fire services requirements will be formulated upon receipt of formal submission of general building plans.

### **District Officer's View**

8.1.10 Comments of the District Officer (Southern), Home Affairs Department (DO(S), HAD):

He has no comment on the application and no comment was received by his office from the public during the public inspection period.

8.2 The following Government departments have no comment on the application:

- (a) Chief Engineer/Construction, Water Supplies Department;
- (b) Chief Highway Engineer/Hong Kong, Highways Department;
- (c) Commissioner of Police;
- (d) Director of Drainage Services;
- (e) Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services; and
- (f) Project Manager/South, Civil Engineering and Development Department.



## 9. **Public Comments Received During Statutory Publication Period**

On 26.3.2019, the application was published for public inspection. During the first three weeks of the statutory public inspection period, which ended on 16.4.2019, 171 public comments, including comments from SDC Member Mr. TSUI Yuen-wa and the Incorporated Owners of South Wave Court (I/O), were received (**Appendix III**). Of all the comments received, 67 (about 39%) submitted by individuals are supportive, 44 (about 26%) submitted by SDC Member, I/O and individuals object to the application with 17 not providing any reason for their objections, 60 (about 35%) submitted by individuals provide comments (most of them are similar to those supportive views). The major views of the public comments are summarised below:

### Supportive

- (i) the proposed extension will enhance the school environment by providing more school facilities to the students;
- (ii) the extension will provide more international school places to meet the social demand;
- (iii) the increased provision of internal school places will enhance the competitiveness of Hong Kong in attracting overseas talents to live and work in the city;
- (iv) the expansion of the school will enhance the overall image of the community of Wong Chuk Hang;
- (v) instead of finding new sites for schools, the proposed extension makes good use of the available land resource;
- (vi) the proposed extension is minor in nature which would not cause major impact to the neighbourhood.

### Objecting

- (i) the proposed increase in BH is excessive and will create a wall effect blocking off natural light and adversely affect the air ventilation to the neighbouring residential towers;
- (ii) the proposed relaxation of BH will set a bad precedent for others to follow;
- (iii) the surrounding roads already very congested during school-runs. Traffic conditions will get worsen with the new hotel and water park to be opened later at Ocean Park nearby;
- (iv) SIS has failed to enforce loading/unloading policy for setting down and picking up of students, the proposed extension of school will worsen the traffic conditions in the area;
- (v) the proposed extension of school facilities will lead to an increase of students causing noise nuisance;
- (vi) construction works for the building extension will cause disruptions to the existing environment conditions;

### Comments

- (i) the school should open its facilities, such as playground and study rooms, to the nearby residents after school hours;
- (ii) all students of the school should use school bus or public transport instead of private cars;
- (iii) the proposed extension of school will enhance Hong Kong's position as an international hub;
- (iv) students deserve a better school environment;

- (v) there is a keen demand in international school places and the proposed school expansion would help to address the demand.

## **10. Planning Considerations and Assessment**

- 10.1 The application is to seek planning permission for minor relaxation of the BH restriction to facilitate the school expansion project. The proposal is to relax the BH restriction on the OZP from 80mPD to 91mPD by 11m (i.e. 13.75%). However, given the existing BH of the school is at 86mPD, the applicant claims that the proposed increase of BH to 91mPD would only involve increase in BH of about 5m (i.e. 5.81%).
- 10.2 The Site is zoned “G/IC” which is intended primarily for the provision of Government, institution or community facilities serving the needs of the local residents and/or a wider district, region or territory. It is also intended to provide land for use directly related to or in support of the work of the Government, organizations providing social services to meet community needs, and other institutional establishments. The proposed relaxation of BH is mainly to provide floor space for a new staff office by amalgamating the existing offices which are scattered around the campuses for better site design and to release space for development of teaching facilities for the students. The proposed staff office and the teaching facilities are considered as uses directly related and ancillary to SIS within the “G/IC” zone, which are always permitted. As such, the proposed development is generally in line with the planning intention of the “G/IC” zone.
- 10.3 Given the BHs of the surrounding developments range from 90mPD and 150mPD, the proposed BH of 91mPD at the Site is not considered to be visually incompatible as the scale, design and intensity are compatible with the surrounding areas and the development would not cause adverse environmental impacts, directly or indirectly, to the surrounding areas. As the proposed staff office is located at the roof of the building, which is within the confine of the Site, there is no site extension which may impact on the streetscape or tree preservation. In this respect, CTP/UD&L has no adverse comment from urban design, visual impact and landscape aspects and the proposed relaxation of the BH restriction is considered acceptable.
- 10.4 The applicant also states that the proposed staff office would not induce any increase of student intake or change in traffic generation. The proposed relaxation of BH would have no significant impact on the capacities of the existing and planned infrastructure. In order to address the concerns of SDC members on traffic conditions in the area, the applicant will advocate a “School Bus Only Policy” as an effort to reduce the number of the school related private cars. TD will further liaise with SIS for the implementation of the “school bus only” policy and closely monitor its effect. In this regard, an advisory clause is recommended. Other concerned departments including BD and ArchSD have no adverse comments on the proposal.
- 10.5 Regarding the adverse public comments, the assessment in paragraphs ~~10.2~~ to ~~10.4~~ above and the departmental comments in paragraph ~~98~~ above are relevant. Regarding the suggestion for opening the school facilities after school hours,

the school has made available its campuses and facilities to support the local community to hold education-related public and charitable events, as well as its carpark for the usage of a neighbourhood school.

## **11. Planning Department's Views**

11.1 Based on the assessments made in paragraph 10 and having taken into account the public comment mentioned in paragraph 9, PlanD has no objection to the application.

11.2 Should the Committee decide to approve the application, it is suggested that the permission shall be valid until 17.5.2023, 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 condition of approval and advisory clauses are also suggested for Members' reference:

### **Approval condition**

the provision of fire service installations and water supply for fire fighting to the satisfaction of the Director of Fire Services or of the Town Planning Board.

### **Advisory clause(s)**

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

11.4 Alternatively, should the Committee decide to reject the application, the following reasons for rejection are suggested for Members' reference:

- (a) there is no strong justification nor planning and design merit in support of the proposed relaxation of BH restriction; and
- (b) approval of the application would set an undesirable precedent for similar applications for relaxation of BH restriction without sufficient justifications or planning and design merits in the area.

## **12. Decision Sought**

12.1 The Committee is invited to consider the application and decide whether to grant or refuse to grant permission.

12.2 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.

12.3 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.

**Attachments**

<b>Appendix I</b>	Application form received on 19.3.2019
<b>Appendix Ia</b>	Supplementary planning statement received on 19.3.2019
<b>Appendix Ib</b>	Further information dated 29.4.2019
<b>Appendix Ic</b>	Further information dated 3.5.2019
<b>Appendix Id</b>	Further information dated 15.5.2019
<b>Appendix II</b>	Details of similar applications
<b>Appendix III</b>	Public comments
<b>Appendix IV</b>	Advisory clauses
<b>Drawings A-1 to A-2</b>	Block layouts and sections submitted by the applicant
<b>Drawings A-3 to A-8</b>	Photomontages submitted by the applicant
<b>Plan A-1</b>	Location plan
<b>Plans A-2 &amp; A-3</b>	Site plan
<b>Plan A-4</b>	Aerial photo
<b>Plan A-5</b>	Site Photos

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
MAY 2019**