



春坎角

Chung Hom Kok

Annex C

Landscape Impact Assessment



Section 16 Planning Application for Proposed Public Utility Installation (Submarine Cable and Landing System) on Government Land near Rural Building Lot No. 1220 and 1221, Chung Hom Kok, Hong Kong Island

**Landscape Impact Assessment
(Final Rev.1)**

Revision 1

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Client

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALC	Asia Link Cable
CPA	Coastal Protection Area
DBH	Diameter at Breast Height
EIAO	Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance
HKSAR	Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
LIA	Landscape Impact Assessment
LR	Landscape Resource
m	Metres
OU	Other Specified Use
OZP	Outline Zoning Plan
PlanD	Planning Department
RBL	Rural Building Lot
s16	Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance
TPB	Town Planning Board
TPO	Town Planning Ordinance

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

- 1.1.1 URBIS Limited has been commissioned to prepare a Landscape Impact Assessment (LIA) in support of a planning application under section 16 (s16) of the Town Planning Ordinance (Cap. 131) (TPO) for a proposed 'Public Utility Installation' use at Chung Hom Kok, Hong Kong Island. The proposed utility installation consists of land-based works comprising a pair of Cable Landing Ducts with associated Draw Pits, a pair of Beach Manholes, and the shore-end part of the feed-in underground Submarine Cable on Government land near Rural Building Lot (RBL) No. 1220 and 1221 ("the Project Site"). The Project Site includes the proposed works area which comprises a 1.5 metre (m) offset from the proposed installation, and has a total area of approximately 1242.58m² in extent.
- 1.1.2 The proposed installation is to serve the landing of the future Asia Link Cable (ALC) at Lot RBL No. 1220, a submarine cable system which will connect the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) China, and Singapore, whilst branching into other regions in Asia where members of the ALC consortium are located; and the landing of a future submarine cable at Lot RBL No. 1221 to be operated by the lessee of this lot (also a mobile network operator).
- 1.1.3 The proposed installation will facilitate the landing of these feed-in telecommunications cables at the Cable Landing Stations at Lots RBL No. 1220 and 1221 which are under development by the Applicant of the subject planning application.
- 1.1.4 The purpose of this LIA is to assess the effects on landscape resources resulting from the proposed installation.
- 1.1.5 In preparing this LIA, reference has been made to the Town Planning Board's (TPB) prevailing guidance notes for application under s16 of the TPO.

1.2 THE APPLICATION SITE AND THE PROPOSED INSTALLATION

Current Site Context

- 1.2.1 A small part of the Project Site falls within an area zoned "Coastal Protection Area" ("CPA") on the Approved Stanley Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/H19/16 within which 'Public Utility Installation' is a Column 2 use which will require planning permission from the TPB. This area is defined as the **Application Site** for which the subject planning application is submitted. The Application Site comprises an area of approximately 266.17m² in extent (see **Figure 2.1**).
- 1.2.2 The Application Site is entirely above the tidal high-water mark. All of the proposed works are land-based works.

The Proposed Installation

- 1.2.3 The proposed installation is to facilitate a future connection between the ALC and future feed-in submarine cable, and the cable landing stations at Lots RBL No. 1220 and 1221 which are under development by the Applicant of the subject planning application.
- 1.2.4 The Application Site encompasses the above-ground part of the proposed Cable Landing Ducts and associated structures which will pass through secondary woodland and scrub on the slope above the southern shore of Chung Hom Kok, together with the proposed semi-buried Beach Manholes and shore-end part of the underground Submarine Cable. The proposed alignment is of a shortest viable length to reach the cable landing stations with a routing designed to avoid conflicts with other existing cable landing infrastructure and with existing trees where and as practically feasible. Supported by

steel racks at approximately 6m intervals, the supports of the proposed cable landing ducts can be adjusted on site section by section to resolve conflicts with existing trees so as to preserve them as far as practically feasible.

1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE LANDSCAPE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1.3.1 This LIA follows the structure set out below:

- Chapter 1 has introduced the purpose of this LIA, the **current site context** and the proposed installation;
- Chapter 2 describes the **methodology** adopted which broadly follows the overall approach to assessment;
- Chapter 3 establishes the **landscape baseline conditions**;
- Chapter 4 describes **sources of landscape impact**, proposes **mitigation measures** and assesses the **landscape impacts** arising from the proposed installation;
- Chapter 5 presents a **summary** of the identified landscape impacts.

2 METHODOLOGY

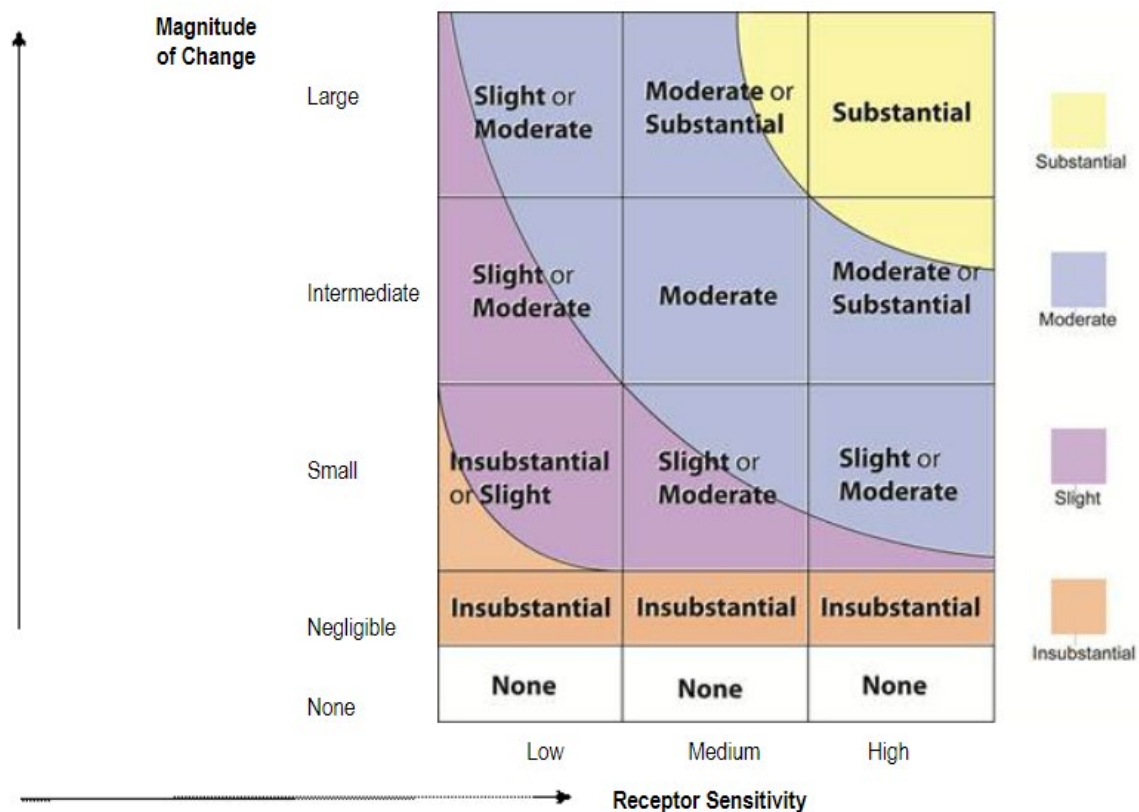
2.1 INTRODUCTION

2.1.1 The methodology to be pursued in this LIA will broadly follow the overall approach to assessment set out in Annex B of the 'Guidance Notes on Application for Permission Under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance (Cap. 131)'. In particular, Annex B requires that:

"On landscape impact, the information may include survey on tree and landscape resources (with site photos showing the existing conditions) and illustrations on proposed changes and mitigation measures such as compensatory planting and/or other landscape treatments as appropriate."

2.1.2 The assessment of landscape impacts mainly involves a process of analysing the function of the sensitivity of a Landscape Resource (LR) (i.e. the receptor) and the magnitude of impact upon it (**Table 2.1** refers).

Table 2.1: Relationship between Receptor Sensitivity and Magnitude of Change in Defining Impact Significance



Remarks:

1. The Magnitude of Change may be Positive or Adverse, it is assumed to be Adverse unless otherwise stated.
2. The colours in the table categorise the total spectrum of impacts rising from the lowest value at the bottom left corner to the highest value at the top right corner. It may be seen that for some combination of classification levels of Magnitude of Change and Receptor Sensitivity, there are two possible impact significance thresholds. When the Magnitude of Change and Receptor Sensitivity are assessed to be towards to higher ends of each classification level the resultant impact significance will be deemed to be the higher of the two impact significance thresholds.

2.1.3 The following sections of this chapter describe each of the steps to be undertaken under the proposed methodology.

2.2 DEFINITION OF ASSESSMENT AREA

2.2.1 The assessment area of the LIA for landscape resources (LRs) encompasses areas within the Application Site boundary (**Figure 2.1** refers).

2.3 IDENTIFICATION AND EXAMINATION OF BASELINE LANDSCAPE RESOURCES

2.3.1 Taking into account relevant studies, literature, topographical maps and aerial photographs, LRs available within the assessment area are identified and mapped.

2.3.2 LRs may include natural components of the landscape, such as vegetation, waterbodies, geological and topographical features, etc., and man-made features, for example, road infrastructure, buildings, etc.

2.3.3 Supplementary field survey is conducted by walking along accessible paths and/or access roads within the assessment area to verify the extent and conditions of the identified LRs.

2.3.4 High-level vegetation surveys are also be undertaken to survey the key vegetation types of the identified LRs.

2.3.5 A separate tree survey is carried out to identify and survey existing trees within the assessment area.

2.4 ASSESSMENT OF SENSITIVITY OF LANDSCAPE RESOURCES

2.4.1 Sensitivity of the identified LRs are assessed as 'high', 'medium' or 'low, taking in account the following factors:

- Rarity;
 - Importance (as recognised by statutory or regulatory assessment);
 - Maturity;
 - Replaceability; and
 - The ability of the identified LRs to accommodate change without prejudice to its existing qualities.
-

2.5 IDENTIFICATION OF SOURCES AND MAGNITUDE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS

2.5.1 Potential landscape impacts could arise from various sources during the construction and operation of the proposed installation.

2.5.2 The magnitude of change which the assessment of potential landscape impacts will take into account is generally influenced by the following factors:

- Scale of development;
 - Reversibility of change;
 - Compatibility of the proposed installation with the environs; and
 - Duration of impacts at the construction and operational phases.
-

- 2.5.3 The magnitude of change will be assessed using the classification below:
- **Large:** the identified LR's will suffer a major change
 - **Intermediate:** the identified LR's will suffer a moderate change
 - **Small:** the identified LR's will suffer slight or barely perceptible changes
 - **Negligible:** the identified LR's will suffer no discernible change

2.6 RECOMMENDATION OF LANDSCAPE MITIGATION MEASURES

- 2.6.1 The approach listed below, in the order of priority, will be pursued to identify landscape mitigation measures where and as necessary, appropriate and practically feasible:
- **Avoidance:** direct impacts will be avoided as far as possible;
 - **Minimisation:** impacts will be minimised if avoidance is not possible; and / or
 - **Compensation:** any significant residual impacts will be adequately compensated for or offset.
- 2.6.2 Examples of landscape mitigation measures include the minimisation of extent and duration of construction works, the adoption of alternative design, and compensatory measures (e.g. re-provision or compensation of landscape planting or vegetation).

2.7 PREDICTION AND ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS

- 2.7.1 Landscape impacts are assessed during construction and at 10 Years after Implementation, assuming the implementation of mitigation measures. Landscape impacts may be positive or negative.
- 2.7.2 The significance of landscape impacts prior to and after the implementation of mitigation measures, where appropriate, will be assessed using the following criteria:
- **Substantial:** Beneficial or Adverse impact where the proposed installation will give rise to significant improvement to or deterioration of the identified existing LR's;
 - **Moderate:** Beneficial or Adverse impact where the proposed installation will give rise to noticeable improvement to or deterioration of the identified existing LR's;
 - **Slight:** Beneficial or Adverse impact where the proposed installation will give rise to a barely perceptible improvement to or deterioration of the identified existing LR's; or
 - **Insubstantial:** No discernible change in the identified existing LR's.
- 2.7.3 The degree of significance of landscape impacts will be determined on the basis of a combination of factors, including the magnitude of change and the sensitivity or tolerance of the identified receivers to change (**Table 2.1** refers).

2.8 CONCLUSION

- 2.8.1 This chapter of the LIA has set out the proposed landscape impact assessment methodology. The assessment area for evaluating LR's has been defined, followed by an exposition of the approach to identifying the baseline conditions, assessing sensitivity to change, evaluating the magnitude of impact, the recommendation of mitigation measures and the prediction and assessment of impacts.

2.8.2 The next chapter will outline the landscape baseline conditions of the assessment area.

3 LANDSCAPE BASELINE CONDITIONS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1.1 This chapter of the LIA presents the landscape baseline conditions by setting out an overview of the identified LRs within the assessment area.

3.2 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- 3.2.1 The Application Site is broadly characterised by wooded hillsides which extend to the north, east and west. This is a large-scale landscape comprising coastal hillsides falling to the sea, where the hillsides assume a covering of low scrub and grassland.
- 3.2.2 To the south of the Application Site lies the shore of southern Hong Kong Island. This is also a large-scale landscape characterised by rocky beaches covered with shingle and sporadic boulders.

3.3 LANDSCAPE RESOURCES

- 3.3.1 The LRs identified within the assessment area together with photos taken on site which show the typical conditions of the identified LRs, are shown on **Figure 2.1**.

LR1 Rocky Shore

- 3.3.2 **LR1 Rocky Shore** primarily comprises rocky coastal topography along with numerous boulders and shingle along the southern and eastern coast of Chung Hom Kok above the tidal high-water mark. Rocky shores are natural resources which are considered to have a **High** sensitivity to change.

- 3.3.3 **Relationship with the Project Works:** A very limited extent of the proposed installation, including the proposed semi-buried Beach Manholes with associated Cable Landing Ducts and the shore-end part of the underground Submarine Cable, together with the associated 1.5m works area around these components will fall within approximately 73.28m² of LR1, representing a **Negligible** magnitude of change to this resource.

LR2 Secondary Woodland

- 3.3.4 **LR2 Secondary Woodland** mainly consists of secondary scrub / woodland established on natural hillsides with loose, sandy and occasionally rocky soil extending along the southern and eastern shore of Chung Hom Kok. The woodland has established in the last 20 years and is characterised by weedy vegetation and invasive tree species such as *Leucaena leucocephala*, along with some common native tree species (e.g. *Macaranga tanarius var. tomentosa*). The understory of the woodland is sparsely vegetated.

- 3.3.5 Findings of the tree survey show that there are **12** nos. existing trees located within the assessment area (**Figure 3.1** refers), of which **4** nos. are of invasive weedy species namely *Leucaena leucocephala*.

- 3.3.6 The overall maturity of the LR2 resource within the Application Site is low, and the vegetation structure is not well-developed. Given the preponderance of non-native invasive species, the sensitivity of this resource to change is **Low / Medium**.

- 3.3.7 **Relationship with the Project Works:** A part of the proposed Cable Landing Ducts and associated structures, inclusive of the associated 1.5m works area, will affect approximately 192.89m² of LR2, representing a **Small** magnitude of change to this resource.

3.4 CONCLUSION

- 3.4.1 This chapter of the LIA has presented and described the LRs identified in the assessment area, together with an evaluation of their sensitivity to change based on findings from desk-based study and on-site survey. An assessment of the landscape impacts arising from the proposed installation will be discussed in the following chapter.

4 ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 This chapter will assess the landscape impacts arising from the proposed installation by first identifying any sources of landscape impact, followed by the proposal for landscape mitigation and assessment of impacts on the identified LRs during construction and operation after the implementation of the proposed measures.

4.2 SOURCES OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS

4.2.1 The following sources of landscape impacts will arise during the **construction phase**:

- erection of temporary works hoardings, barriers and/or enclosures;
- minor site clearance works (e.g. minimal trimming of existing herbaceous ground vegetation) for the installation of the proposed beach manholes and cable landing ducts;
- removal of 4 nos. trees of undesirable weed species i.e., *Leucaena leucocephala* and 8 nos. trees of other species (**Figure 4.1** refers);
- installation of approximately 26.6 linear metres of proposed surface mounted cable landing ducts within the Application Site, including excavations of footings for supporting racks;
- construction of 1 no. draw pit (partly within the Application Site);
- construction of 2 nos. beach manholes; and
- excavation of approximately 5.9 linear metres trenches for underground cable ducts.

4.2.2 At the **operational phase**, the following permanent works components of the proposed installation may give rise to landscape impacts as follows:

- presence of approximately 26.6 linear metres of surface mounted cable landing ducts;
 - presence of 2 nos. beach manholes; and
 - presence of 1 no. draw pit (partly within the Application Site).
-

4.3 PROPOSED LANDSCAPE MITIGATION MEASURES

4.3.1 The landscape mitigation measures set out in **Table 4.1** are proposed to reduce or eliminate the landscape impacts of the proposed installation.

Table 4.1: Proposed Landscape Mitigation Measures

ID No.	Landscape Mitigation Measures
Design Stage Mitigation Measures	
DM1	Optimal / Sensitive Alignment of Cable Landing Ducts
DM2	Optimal / Sensitive Location of Beach Manhole
Construction Stage Mitigation Measures	
CM1	Minimal Extent of Working Areas
CM2	Minimal Duration of Construction Works
CM3	Removal and Replacement / Making Good of Boulders / Shingle
Operational Stage Mitigation Measures	
OM1	Minimal Sizing of All Built Structures
OM2	[NOT USED]
OM3	Compensatory Planting for Felled Trees

4.3.2 These mitigation measures are described below.

Design Stage Mitigation Measures

DM1 - Optimal / Sensitive Alignment of Cable Landing Ducts

4.3.3 The alignment of the proposed cable landing ducts has been optimised to facilitate the landing of the ALC at the Applicant's cable landing stations at Lots RBL No. 1220 and 1221 within the shortest possible distance from the high-water mark, thereby minimising its footprint within the "CPA" zone. It has also been designed to avoid trees as far as practicable, with the possibility of supporting racks being further adjusted section by section to account for on-site conditions, so as to minimise impact to trees and boulders.

DM2 - Optimal / Sensitive Location of Beach Manhole

4.3.4 The location of the proposed beach manhole has been selected to minimise disturbance to existing boulders on the rocky shore, thereby preserving the character of the shore as far as possible, whilst avoiding conflict with other existing and planned cable landing facilities in the same beach area.

Construction Stage Mitigation Measures

CM1 - Minimal Extent of Working Areas

4.3.5 The extent of the construction works area has been limited to a maximum 1.5m from the proposed cable duct alignment and associated structures. This will minimise disturbance to surrounding landscape and trees.

CM2 - Minimal Duration of Construction Works

4.3.6 The duration of the proposed construction works has been limited to the shortest possible time required to undertake the works whilst putting in place the necessary safety and environmental mitigation measures. This will ensure that the impacts on LRs from the proposed works is minimised whilst ensuring safety and environmental acceptability of the works.

CM3- Removal and Replacement / Making Good of Boulders / Shingle Disturbed by Works

4.3.7 Boulders and shingle disturbed by the proposed construction works will be removed or lifted, stored and placed back at their original locations after the completion of works. This will ensure that the

proposed works does not substantially alter the resources or character of the rocky shore on which a very limited portion of the proposed works lie.

Operational Stage Mitigation Measures

OM1 - Minimal Sizing of All Built Structures

- 4.3.8 All built structures are designed to be compact and of minimal sizing consistent with operational requirements so as to minimise the overall footprint of the proposed installation. This will contribute to minimising ground vegetation clearance and visual prominence of the installation.

OM3 - Compensatory Planting for Felled Trees

- 4.3.9 Compensatory planting will be provided for any felled trees arising from the proposed construction works, apart from invasive, exotic species that are unfavourable to the local ecosystem (e.g. *Leucaena leucocephala*).
- 4.3.10 The feasibility of undertaking compensatory planting within the Application Site has been thoroughly and repeatedly examined. However, given the hillside terrain, thin soils and existing vegetation cover, planting opportunities are very limited within and around the Application Site.
- 4.3.11 Government regulation (Page C2 of Appendix C of DEVB TC(W) No. 4/2020) states that seedling trees should be planted on slopes, as their root balls are better adapted to sloping terrain than larger Light Standard or Standard trees. Inside and around the Application Site, the thin, rocky soils and competition and shading from existing vegetation make planting and successful establishment of seedlings in these areas impracticable. In addition, space within the Application Site is extremely limited and seedling trees planted close to the cable ducts are likely to be shaded out by the shadows cast by the twin ducts themselves.
- 4.3.12 For this reason, compensatory tree planting is proposed to take place in the eastern part of Lot RBL No. 1220 to the north-east of the Application Site. This Lot forms part of the same project but is outside the scope of this Application. The topography of this site is mainly flat with some slopes. However, in addition to this proposed compensatory planting, Lot RBL No. 1220 is also proposed to accommodate a number of retained trees and compensatory planting trees related to another project (refer to **Figure 4.2**). This means that additional planting opportunities are relatively limited.
- 4.3.13 8 nos. compensatory trees for this project will be planted at Light Standard size at a compensation ratio of 1:1 by number, as there is insufficient space within the Lot to allow for a ratio of 1:1 by diameter at breast height (DBH).
- 4.3.14 Planting will be carried out in accordance with the prevailing standards of the Civil Engineering and Development Department's General Specification for Civil Engineering Works. The trees will be subject to a one-year Establishment Period and maintained by the Applicant thereafter.
- 4.3.15 Tree species native to the area, which have been surveyed in this study or listed in Appendix A of the Ecological Survey Report in **Annex D**, are being considered for compensatory planting. These shortlisted species will undergo an evaluation process based on their ability to adapt to coastal and hillside environments, their ecological significance, and their availability in the market (**Table 4.1** refers).

Table 4.1: Proposed Compensatory Tree Species

Scientific Name	Chinese Name
<i>Bischofia javanica</i>	秋楓
<i>Bridelia tomentosa</i>	土蜜樹
<i>Hibiscus tiliaceus</i>	黃瑾
<i>Litsea glutinosa</i>	潺槁樹
<i>Sterculia lanceolata</i>	假蘋婆

4.4 CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS ON LANDSCAPE RESOURCES

- 4.4.1 With the design and construction stage mitigation measures implemented, the part of the temporary works within **LR2 Secondary Woodland** will represent a Small magnitude of change on an LR with a Low / Medium sensitivity to change. As such, at the construction phase, the temporary works will give rise to **Insubstantial** impact on this LR.
- 4.4.2 Following the implementation of the mitigation measures proposed a very limited extent of the temporary works within **LR1 Rocky Shore** will represent a Negligible magnitude of change on an LR with a High sensitivity to change. The works will therefore result in **Insubstantial** landscape impact.

4.5 OPERATIONAL IMPACTS ON LANDSCAPE RESOURCES AFTER IMPLEMENTATION OF MITIGATION MEASURES

- 4.5.1 Following the implementation and maturation of the proposed mitigation planting, a small part of the proposed installation will impact **LR2 Secondary Woodland** and will represent a Small magnitude of change on an LR with a Low / Medium sensitivity to change. Following the implementation of the mitigation measures proposed and the colonisation and re-establishment of adventitious vegetation, it is therefore anticipated that this part of the proposed installation will give rise to **Insubstantial** landscape impact on this LR when seen as a whole.
- 4.5.2 With the proposed mitigation measures implemented and matured (including replacement of boulders and shingle), there will be a very limited extent of the proposed installation situated within **LR1 Rocky Shore** which will represent a Negligible magnitude of change on an LR with a High sensitivity to change. This proposed installation will therefore result in **Insubstantial** impacts on this LR.

4.6 CONCLUSION

- 4.6.1 This chapter of the LIA has assessed the impacts of the proposed installation on LRs identified within the assessment area, as well as proposed appropriate mitigation measures aimed at avoiding and minimising landscape impacts. The following chapter will provide a conclusion on the acceptability of the overall landscape impacts of the proposed installation.

5 SUMMARY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

5.1.1 This chapter of the LIA will summarise the impacts arising from the proposed installation on LRs and provide the conclusion of the LIA.

5.2 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS ON LANDSCAPE RESOURCES

5.2.1 Taking into account the above assessment of landscape impacts on the identified LRs, with the implementation of the landscape mitigation measures proposed, it is considered that the proposed installation will result in overall **Insubstantial** landscape impacts (**Table 4.2** refers).

Table 4.2: Significance of Residual Operational Landscape Impacts

Landscape Impact Receptor	Sensitivity to Change (Low, Medium, High)	Magnitude of Change (Large, Intermediate, Small, Negligible, None)	Significance of Residual Impact During Construction Phase (Substantial, Moderate, Slight, Insubstantial, None)	Significance of Residual Impact During Operational Phase (Substantial, Moderate, Slight, Insubstantial, None)
LR1	High	Negligible	Insubstantial	Insubstantial
LR2	Low / Medium	Small	Insubstantial	Insubstantial

5.3 CONCLUSION

5.3.1 The assessment of landscape impacts of the proposed installation on the identified LRs has been summarised in this chapter. It is found that, with the implementation of the proposed landscape mitigation measures, impacts on landscape resources during the construction and operational stages will be no greater than **Insubstantial**.

An aerial photograph of Chung Hom Kok village, showing several large, modern-looking buildings with flat roofs situated on a hillside. The surrounding area is densely forested. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter.

春坎角

Chung Hom Kok

Figures





LR1 - Rocky Shore



LR2 - Secondary Woodland



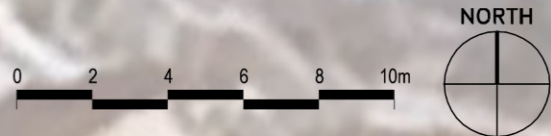
LEGEND

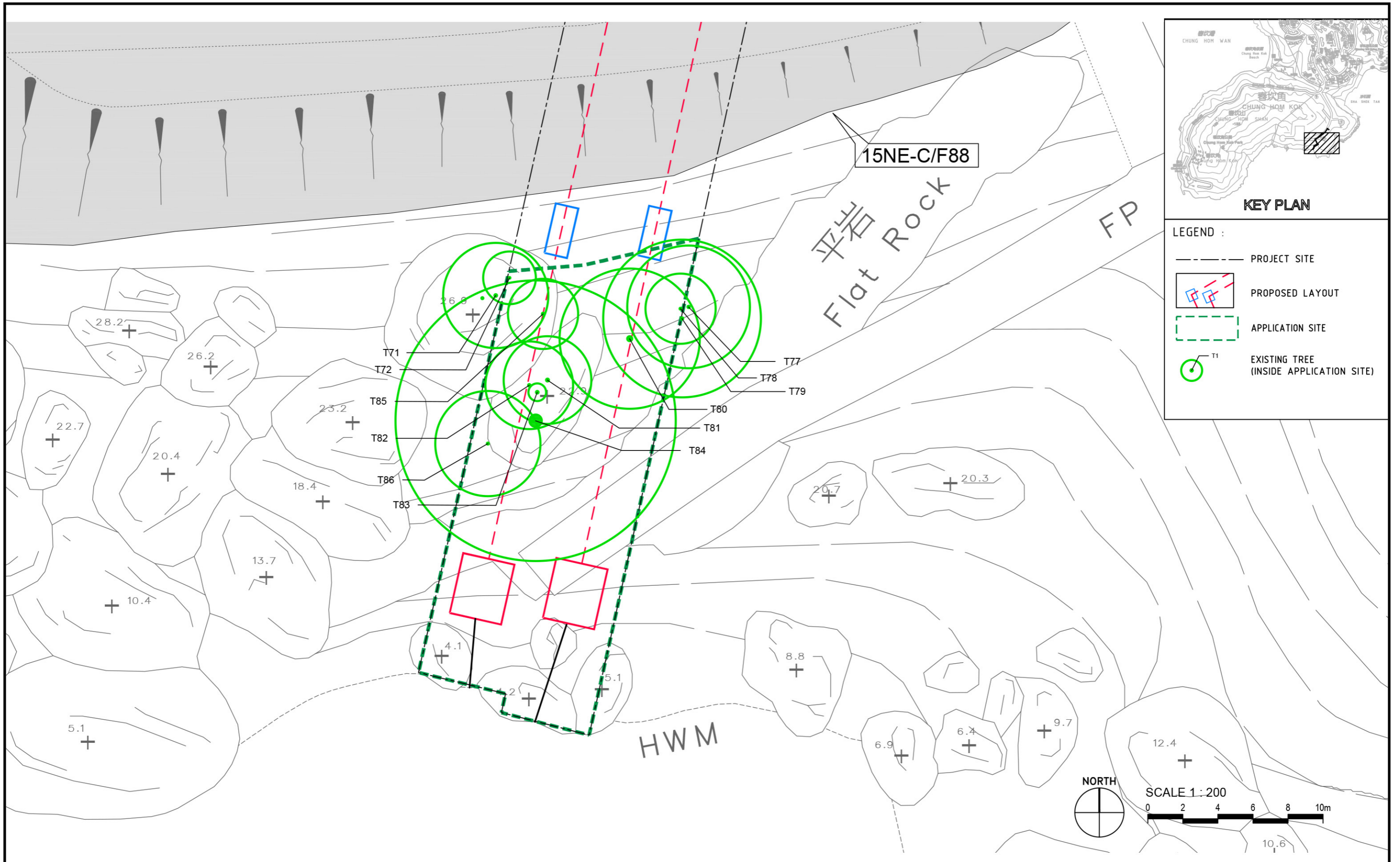
Application Site (Assessment Area)

Landscape Resources

LR1 Rocky Shore

LR2 Secondary Woodland

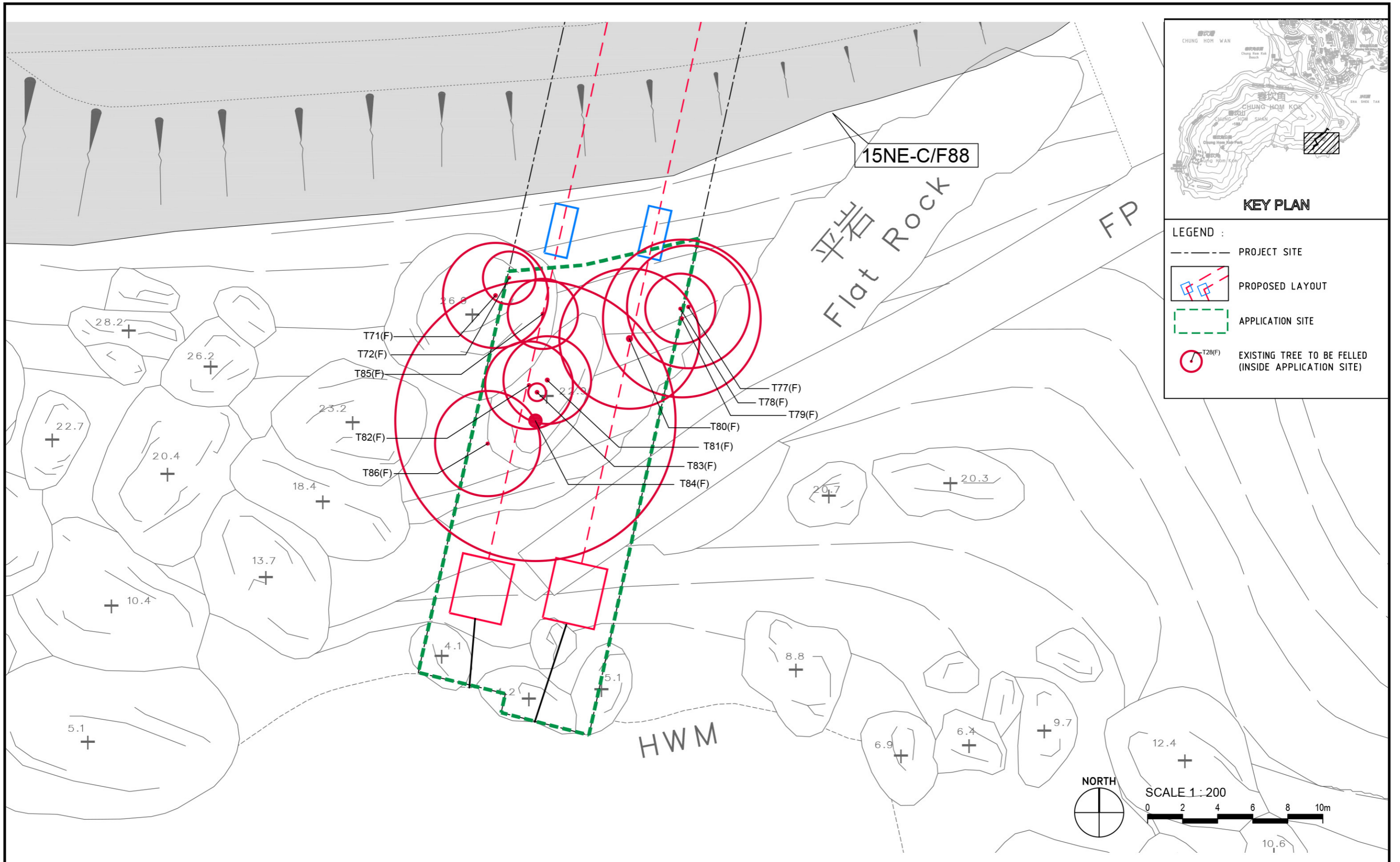




Section 16 Planning Application for Proposed Public Utility Installation (Submarine Cable and Landing System) at Chung Hom Kok, Hong Kong Island



Title		Tree Survey Plan	
Scale	1:200 @ A3	Date	September 2024
Figure No.			3.1



Section 16 Planning Application for Proposed Public Utility Installation (Submarine Cable and Landing System) at Chung Hom Kok, Hong Kong Island



Title		Tree Treatment Plan	
Scale	1:200 @ A3	Date	September 2024
		Figure No.	4.1



Section 16 Planning Application for Proposed Public Utility Installation (Submarine Cable and Landing System) at Chung Hom Kok, Hong Kong Island



Title		Tree Compensation Planting	
Scale	1:400 @ A3	Date	October 2024
		Figure No.	4.2