
Attachment 4

Applicant's Letter - Purpose of Submission

Great Prosper Development Limited

Our Ref: 128W/L/19258

Date: 25 October 2024

By Hand

The Secretary
Town Planning Board
c/o Planning Department
15/F North Point Government Offices
333 Java Road, Hong Kong

Dear Sirs / Madam,

**Section 16 Planning Application for Proposed Shop and Services in “Residential (Group B)”
Zone at 128 Waterloo Road, Kowloon (G/F (Part) of a Residential Development)
(S16 Planning Application No. A/K7/122)**

We refer to the captioned application submitted to Town Planning Board (the Board). As the Applicant of the captioned planning application and being the joint venture partner of the operator of a reputable kindergarten and day nursery group, we write to request your kind consideration and support for our application to change the use of Tutorial School to Proposed Shop and Services (Convenience Store) in view of the considerations given below.

1. Unforeseeable Economic Recovery: This application is prompted by the shadow of recession we have witnessed in the current unstable pandemic situation in Hong Kong. The recent economic slowdown and rising cost of living in Hong Kong have put financial pressures on families, leading them to cut back on discretionary expenses such as tutorial services, which lowers the demand for tutorial business in Hong Kong. Over the past few years, we have observed substantial decline in enrolment and demand for tutorial services in our local community. This trend mirrors the broader gloomy situation in the Hong Kong tutorial industry.

2. Declining Birth Rates: Hong Kong has experienced a significant decline in birth rates in recent years, with the number of births falling from around 62,000 in 2014 to just 33,000 in 2023. Based on the current statistics, the students’ numbers will continue to fall. This has led to a corresponding decrease in school enrolment, with an estimated 40 kindergarten having shut down over the past 5 year due to under-enrollment.

...../2

Great Prosper Development Limited
A Subsidiary Company of Top Spring International Holdings Limited

Great Prosper Development Limited

Our Ref: 128W/L/19258

3. Shifting Educational Landscape: The education system in Hong Kong has been undergoing reforms, with a greater emphasis on balanced learning and reduced reliance on supplementary tutorial services. This shift in the educational philosophy inevitably induces drastic impacts and challenges on the tutorial school business.

The most obvious change is the proliferation of online learning platforms and digital educational resources. Since the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, the learning preference and experience of students have been shifted to online courses across all levels of education. The COVID-19 pandemic taught Hong Kong a valuable lessons about the future of virtual learning. It has provided alternative and more cost-effective options for students, and thus reducing the demand for traditional brick-and-mortar tutorial schools. This directives has been re-affirmed in the latest Policy Address 2024 (Para. 113), which states that the *“Education Bureau will establish Steering Committee on Strategic Development of Digital Education to promote **digital education**, renew the Junior Secondary Science Curriculum and provide support for teachers in using AI in teaching”*.

Acting under the Hong Kong’s policy directives in developing our education ecosystem, the society (including Government departments, the teachers, the families and the Project Proponent) should reasonably expect that students are more inclined and disciplined into online courses. We may also be aware of the news on the closure of different tutoring centre chains recently¹. As a large number of tutoring centres have also resigned to cease operations due to the changing market conditions, we sincerely request Planning Department to re-visit if the retaining the subject premises as the previous approved tutorial school (i.e. Application No. A/K7/119) is being the best optimal use of the subject premises.

In fact, since the physical completion in Year 2022, the subject premises has been left idle and there has been no ask for rent for operating as a tutorial school. In this connection, we truly believe that the subject proposed “Shop and Services (Convenience Store)” would be a more viable use of the space, and better aligns with the daily needs and preferences of the local community.

...../3

¹ Brilliant Education in Year 2023 and Little Frong Learning Centre in Year 2024

Great Prosper Development Limited

Our Ref: 128W/L/19258

We recognize the importance of maintaining a balanced and thriving community, and we believe that our application aligns with the Government's policy directives to help enterprises to address challenges commonly encountered during economic restructuring. We also commits to work closely with all stakeholders to ensure the smooth operation of the proposed convenience store.

We look forward to discussing this application further if appropriate.

Thank you for your consideration.

For and on behalf of

Great Prosper Development Limited (Applicant)

(i.e. Subsidiary of Top Spring Property Company Limited, which is the joint venture partner of the operator of a reputable kindergarten and day nursery group)



Chan Wai Fung
Director

ZL/KF/lcy

Great Prosper Development Limited

A Subsidiary Company of Top Spring International Holdings Limited

Room 04-08, 26/F, Shui On Centre, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.
T. +852 3106 2350 F. +852 2151 0991 W. www.topspring.com

Stock Code: 03688.HK
A Hong Kong Main Board Listed Company