Annex B - Visual Impact Assessment

JOINT-USER COMPLEX AND JOINT-USER GENERAL OFFICE BUILDING
AT AREA 29, KWU TUNG NORTH

Visual Impact Assessment

Section 16 Planning Application for Joint-user Complex and Joint-user General Office Building at Area 29, Kwu Tung North

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1. Introduction

1.1. This study is prepared and submitted on behalf of the Architectural Services Department, ("ArchSD", "the Applicant") to assess the visual impact of the proposed Joint-user Complex ("JUC") and Joint-user General Office Building ("JUB") (collectively known as "the Proposed Scheme") at Area 29, Kwu Tung North. A Visual Impact Assessment ("VIA") is required as part of the Section 16 Planning Application for the relaxation of the Building Height Restriction ("BHR") from 130 mPD to 170 mPD.

1.2. The purpose of this VIA is to assess the potential visual impact of the Proposed Scheme of 170 mPD in comparison to the Baseline Scheme with a Building Height (BH) of 130 mPD within the surrounding context of the Planned Kwu Tung North ("KTN") New Development Area ("NDA") and present sufficient information in a structured manner to facilitate the Town Planning Board ("TPB"). So that the TPB can visualize the three-dimensional relationship of the Project and the approved KTN Outline Zoning Plan ("OZP") No. S/KTN/4 amendments within the surrounding context, and to consider the visual impacts of the Proposed Scheme as compared to the Baseline Scheme in accordance with TPB PG-No. 41 ("TPB Guidelines") on the submission of the VIA for Planning Applications to the TPB.

1.3. The VIA is arranged as follows: Section 2 presents the methodology of the VIA; Section 3 summarizes the baseline visual conditions and development proposal of the Proposed Scheme, which includes the Assessment Area ("AA") and the selected View Points ("VPs"); Section 4 presents the appraisal of the visual impacts, and; Section 5 concludes the VIA with the overall visual impact of the Proposed Scheme.

2. Methodology

2.1. The methodology of this VIA follows the requirement set out in the TPB Guidelines on the submission of the VIA for Planning Applications to the TPB. The VIA aims to systematically evaluate the potential visual impacts of a Proposed Scheme on its surroundings informed by professional judgement and experience. The emphasis of the VIA is to assess the visual impact of the Proposed Scheme in comparison with the Baseline Scheme in terms of overall site layout, development scale, form, massing, disposition, the development character and spatial disposition within the existing and planned development context.

2.2. The VIA begins with the identification of the existing baseline visual conditions of the surrounding area and the planned development context of the KTN NDA in order to clearly identify the visual impacts of the Proposed Scheme. The AA or typically the Visual Envelope ("VE") is established to define the limit of the visibility of the project. The VE is determined by the extent of the view shed formed by natural/man made features such as ridgelines and building blocks based on desktop study and site investigation. The AA is then defined by the extent to which the Proposed Scheme would exert some visual influence on the Visually Sensitive Receivers ("VSRs"). To define the AA, a combination of desktop studies—analysing topographic maps, street maps, and 3D models—is employed alongside site investigation and photographic evidence from site visits to assess the visibility of the proposed scheme from various locations. The final AA typically aligns with the VE, which encompasses areas that are fully visible, partially visible and not visible from the Site.

2.3. The VIA then considers key groups of VSRs and their views from strategic and popular local vantage points, as well as the impacts on adjacent neighbourhoods within the VE. The VSRs are considered as persons whose views from residences, workplaces, and public areas within the VE will be affected by the Proposed Scheme. Important views such as special landmarks, valued landscapes, the harbour, and ridgelines should be preserved whenever possible. According to the TPB Guidelines, protecting private views in Hong Kong's highly developed context is impractical without hindering development opportunities. Therefore, the focus should be on safeguarding public views that are easily accessible and popular among the public and tourists.

2.4. View Points ("VPs") can be either kinetic or static and should be identified based on the project's setting and local significance. These points include key pedestrian nodes and popular areas used for outdoor activities, recreation, and sightseeing, as well as prominent travel routes where the Proposed Scheme may capture travellers' visual attention.

2.5. After the identification of VPs, the appraisal of visual changes evaluates how the Proposed Scheme will alter the visual landscape when compared to the Baseline Scheme. The overall visual impact is assessed through four key aspects:

a) **Visual Composition** refers to the existing visual quality and the overall visual effects created by various elements, including their locations, massing, heights, forms and character relative to the overall visual backdrop. This aspect evaluates whether the visual composition with the Proposed Scheme as compared to the Baseline Scheme achieves visual balance, harmony, or contrast within the broader visual context;

b) **Visual Obstruction** assesses how the Proposed Scheme in comparison with the Baseline Scheme may block or intercept views in its foreground or background. The evaluation focuses on the degree of visual obstruction and loss of views or visual openness from key public viewpoints. The emphasis is on minimising blockage of significant vistas, such as ridgelines, scenic areas and open sea views to avoid substantially reducing the visual permeability;

c) **Effect on Public Viewers** involves evaluating changes in views from key public vantage points that have direct sightlines to the Proposed Scheme. This assessment compares views of the Proposed Scheme with the Baseline Scheme within the surrounding existing and planned development context of KTN NDA. The magnitude of the visual impacts are graded qualitatively as substantial, moderate, slight, or negligible based on public perception and value attached to current views;

d) **Effect on Visual Resources** examines how the Proposed Scheme in comparison with the Baseline Scheme may positively or negatively alter the visual condition and character of the assessment area. This includes assessing impacts on visual amenities, heritage features, and public realms related to the development.

These four aspects collectively provide a comprehensive framework for measuring visual impacts, ensuring that both qualitative and quantitative factors are considered in the assessment process.

2.6. The resultant overall impact is then evaluated and categorised into the following levels:

a) **Enhanced**—where the Proposed Scheme will improve the visual quality for key VPs;

b) **Partly Enhanced/Partly Adverse**—where the Proposed Scheme indicates mixed visual effects across different VPs;

c) **Negligible**—where the visual effects of the Proposed Scheme are insignificant;

d) **Slightly Adverse**—where the Proposed Scheme shows negative effects noted for most VPs;

e) **Moderately Adverse**—where the Proposed Scheme indicates significant negative visual effects for many VPs; and

f) **Significantly Adverse**—where the Proposed Scheme indicates serious detrimental visual effects on most VPs, even with mitigation efforts.

2.7. The sources of impact are identified to assess the possible visual impacts and suitable mitigation measures are proposed as appropriate to reduce the significance of the impacts, if any. Mitigation measures as stated in the TPB Guidelines could relate to the building design itself (e.g. location, design, colour, and façade features) or could involve the overall project design (e.g. landscaping, such as tree planting to screen a development and enhance views).

3. Baseline Visual Condition

3.1. Site and Surrounding Context

3.1.1. The Project Site has an area of about 20,980 m^2 and is zoned for Government, Institution or Community ("G/IC") use at Area 29 in the KTN NDA on the OZP. According to the OZP, maximum BHR of 130 mPD is imposed on the Project Site. On the southern end of the Site, it has a site level of 11 mPD near Castle Peak Road – Chau Tau, and a site level of 17 mPD near to the future Road L1 lining the northern end of the Site.

3.1.2. KTN NDA is surrounded by prominent green hill ranges on three sides: Tai Shek Mo to the north, Lok Ma Chau Range to the west, and Ki Lun Shan and Ki Lun Shan Au to the south. The Ma Tso Lung valley lies between the Lok Ma Chau Range and Tai Shek Mo, while additional lower land containing Pak Shek Au village is located between Lok Ma Chau and Ki Lun Shan, where the variation in elevation creates a visually appealing landscape. To the east, the land transitions into flatter and more open spaces, leading towards the Sheung Shui New Town. The KTN NDA area features grassy and hilly terrain extending from Chau Tau and Ma Tso Lung eastward to Tai Shek Mo, providing a natural backdrop. Notably, Fung Kong Shan serves as a prominent hill within the NDA where a north-south green spine is planned from the hill and extending to the Project Site, acting as a major view corridor across the KTN NDA.

3.1.3. With the rapid transformation taking place in the KTN NDA, the Project Site is currently surrounded by a cluster of planned developments. With reference to **Figure 3.1**, the proposed BHRs are the highest in the Planning Areas surrounding the Kwu Tung MTR Station, with descending BHs towards the edges of the NDA. It is important to note that S16 planning applications such as A/KTN/84 and A/KTN/93 involve BHR relaxations ranging from an approximate 6.25% to 33.3% which have been approved by the TPB to meet acute housing demands and increased development density within the KTN NDA, with highest BHR reaching 180 mPD in the northern part of the KTN NDA.

3.2. Development Proposal

3.2.1. The Proposed Scheme features a lower L shaped Joint-user Complex ("JUC") block with various community uses and facilities, alongside a higher Joint-user General Office Building ("JUB") tower set back towards the northeast of the site. Thoughtful design elements are proposed to ensure that the Proposed Scheme is both aesthetically pleasing and harmonious with the planned KTN NDA's urban landscape. The design merits ("DMs") of the Proposed Scheme in comparison to the Baseline Scheme are demonstrated in **Figures 3.2 to 3.4** and are listed below:

- DM1: The Baseline Scheme previously proposed features a group of bulky buildings with a maximum building height of 130 mPD, which caused poor permeability within the Site and also with the surroundings. The Proposed Scheme instead features a slender landmark JUB tower that reduces the overall bulk and facilitates wind paths and visual permeability for pedestrians. The Proposed Scheme is also compliant with Sustainable Building Design Guidelines in terms of building separation.
- DM2: The Proposed Scheme would be able to provide ~5,570m^2 of open space at ground level for public enjoyment. Most notably, a welcoming landscaped entry adjacent to the north-south green spine would allow users of the Proposed Scheme and other individuals into the Urban Plaza on G/F. The open space design enhances pedestrian connectivity and visual permeability through the creation of multi-level open spaces within JUC.
- DM3: The Proposed Scheme incorporates greenery areas at multiple levels to enhance the visual quality of the Proposed Scheme.
- DM4: The Proposed Scheme emphasises the preservation of three Trees of Particular Interest ("TPI"), with one located at the northwest corner of the Site and two located on the Green Spine on the southeast, further enriching the ecological value of the Proposed Scheme as compared to the Baseline Scheme with no TPIs retained within the Project Site.

3.3. Visual Envelope and Assessment Area

3.3.1. The extent of the AA for VE is determined according to Methodology mentioned in paragraph 2.2. The extent of the AA is mapped in **Figure 3.5**.

3.4. Selection of View Points

3.4.1. Seven VPs have been selected that are representative of views that would potentially be experienced by adjacent VSRs. Description of VPs are provided in **Table 3.1** below. Their locations are shown along with the AA in **Figure 3.5**.

Table 3.1 - List of View Points and Sensitivity of Visually Sensitive Receivers

VPs and Location	**Approximate Elevation (mPD)**	**Description**	**Type and Sensitivity of Identified VSRs**
VP1 – Footbridge Crossing Fanling Highway near Valais & Europa Garden	13	VP1 is located on a footbridge, which provides direct access for pedestrians between Kwu Tung North and South. Its elevated position offers a clear vantage point over the Fanling Highway and surrounding areas. The foreground primarily features the Fanling Highway, with the ongoing construction of the project Site in the background. Trees and greenery near the footbridge and along the highway provide some contrast and visual relief to the urban landscape. Current viewer activities are low at this location mainly involving pedestrians using the footbridge to cross the highway. The number of viewers are likely to increase once the planned KTN NDA is developed and will experience prolonged exposure when stationary on the footbridge, allowing ample time to absorb the surrounding scenery. However, views while moving are more transient, limiting the duration of visual engagement with the area. The visual sensitivity of this viewpoint is high.	Travelling VSR - **High**
VP2 – Proposed Fung Kong Shan Park	20	VP2 is situated in the proposed Open Space Fung Kong Shan Park located in the northern part of the planned KTN NDA. Currently, it is characterized by an unnamed local road leading to temporary open storage facilities. Accessibility is limited due to the roads' condition and dense surrounding vegetation, making it challenging for visitors and vehicles to reach. The scenery is predominantly natural, with thick foliage obstructing views towards any significant landmarks or urban developments. It is expected, however, that the view will be dominated	Recreational VSR – **Medium to High**

		by high-rise residential and commercial developments in the future with a green spine extending to the southern edge of the KTN NDA. Current viewer activities are low and are expected to increase in numbers and will primarily involve local residents and potential visitors, with recreational users like hikers expected to frequent the area once KTN NDA is fully developed. The visual sensitivity of this viewpoint is medium to high.	
VP3 – Service Road along Sheung Yue River near Long Valley Nature Park	0	In the foreground of VP3 is the Sheung Yue River with low water levels and frequent animal activity. The banks are lined with concrete and some vegetation. The surrounding landscape in the vicinity includes Ki Lun Shan in the south, contributing to a sense of openness. Open space is currently seen on the other side of the river with residential development in the distance behind the trees. This scene will be altered by the planned KTN NDA, with high-rise development proposed adjacent to the riverbank. Currently there is minimal pedestrian traffic in the area, however the number of visitors will increase in the future when KTA NDA is completed. Visitors to this Site may engage in activities such as walking or cycling along the service road, providing opportunities to observe the blend of urban and natural landscapes. The visual sensitivity of this viewpoint is medium to high.	Recreational VSR – **Medium to High**
VP4 – Kwu Tung Reservoir Dam	23	The foreground of VP4 is mostly covered by foliage surrounding the Kwu Tung Reservoir Dam. Temporary storage and low-rise developments of Valais II can also be visible within this scene. Crest Hill is in backdrop, while the Proposed Scheme is located behind the small ridge and Kwu Tung South Road that are covered by dense foliage. VSRs expected are recreational users walking	Recreational VSR - **Medium**

		along the dam for hiking activities to Ki Lun Shan. However, current viewer activities are low and are expected to increase in the future and will primarily involve local residents and some potential visitors, with recreational users like hikers expected to frequent the area once KTN NDA is developed. The visual sensitivity of this viewpoint is medium.	
VP5 – Hiking Trail on Ki Lun Shan	210	VP5 from the summit of Ki Lun Shan, has expansive panoramic views revealing a semi-rural landscape interspersed with urban development, notably the high-rise buildings of Shenzhen visible in the distance. Facing north and northeast, with some buildings under construction within the planned KTN NDA and the agricultural fields of Long Valley contrast sharply with the Sheung Shui and Fanling New Towns, which partially obscure the green hills beyond. Man-made structures, such as Valais housing and developments around Hang Tau, are visible at the hill's base. This VP is difficult to access and current viewer activities are low and primarily involve recreational users like hikers expected to frequent the area once KTN NDA is fully developed with proper pedestrian connectivity. This viewpoint is mainly accessed by hikers therefore the visual sensitivity of the area is Low.	Recreational VSR - **Low**
VP6 – Hiking Trail on Tit Hang Shan	125	VP6 is the trail to the ridgeline of Tit Hang Shan which is difficult to access due to overgrown vegetation at lower levels. However, once at the summit, panoramic views can be enjoyed from the high point. To the north and west, the lush natural landscape of Hong Kong contrasts with the urban sprawl of Shenzhen's high-rise buildings across the border. East and south views toward the planned KTN NDA reveal grasslands and nearby hills that partially obstruct the Site. The lowland area appears green,	Recreational VSR - **Low**

		with some buildings, while the low-rise developments of Valais and Europa Gardens are also visible. Prominent high-rise buildings in Sheung Shui and Fanling New Towns form the background to the east. Due to limited accessibility the current viewer activities are low with recreational users like hikers expected to frequent the area once KTN NDA is developed with proper pedestrian connectivity. Due to limited accessibility and infrequent use of the trail, the sensitivity of this area is low.	
VP7 – Hang Tau Road near Casas Domingo	9	VP7 is located along Hang Tau Road, near Casas Domingo, a low-rise residential development. The view is largely open, showcasing a mix of woodland and wetland in the background that provides a natural contrast to the more barren foreground. The well-defined Hang Tau Road allows for easy access, with visible debris and overgrown grass suggesting recent clearing activities. A high-rise structure in the distance indicates ongoing urban development in the KTN NDA. Current viewer activities are low and primarily involve local residents and potential visitors are expected to frequent the area once planned KTN NDA is developed. The visual sensitivity of this viewpoint is medium.	Low-rise Residential VSR - **Medium**

4. Visual Appraisal

4.1. VP1 – Footbridge Crossing Fanling Highway near Valais & Europa Garden (Figure 4.1)

4.1.1. Visual Composition: The view from the footbridge overlooks the Fanling Highway, with trees along the Site periphery and a clear view of the sky. In contrast to the Baseline Scheme, the Proposed Scheme introduces a more slender development with a less imposing JUC, featuring more sky view and improving visual permeability. The visual composition of the accessible view at VP1, which shows the lower portion of the development, is improved in the Proposed Scheme. Since, the full building is not visible from the viewpoint, or anywhere along the footbridge, the effect of the Proposed Scheme in comparison with the Baseline Scheme on visual composition would be **negligible**.

4.1.2. Visual Obstruction: The position of the Proposed Scheme with its slender tower obstructs less views of the planned KTN NDA from the Fanling Highway in comparison with the more bulky Baseline Scheme. In addition, the Proposed Scheme allows for a more dynamic sightline for pedestrians on the footbridge with clear visibility of the JUC & JUB with the planned KTN NDA developments in the backdrop. The Proposed Scheme in comparison with the Baseline Scheme would have a **negligible** effect on visual obstruction.

4.1.3. Effect on Public Viewers: Public viewers, especially pedestrians walking along the footbridge, may experience a shift in visual perception with the Proposed Scheme compared to the Baseline Scheme. VP1 gives a direct, yet partial view to the Proposed Scheme from the footbridge and is often accessed by pedestrians in the area, which is kinetic and transient in nature. It should be noted that the pedestrian volume on the bridge would not increase significantly after full fledge KTN NDA development due to the low population density in Kwu Tung South. Since the upper portion of the building is not visible to public viewers on the footbridge, the change in overall building height of the Proposed Scheme would have a **negligible** effect on public viewers at VP1.

4.1.4. Effect on Visual Resources: The existing visual resources are mainly the sky view, the Fanling Highway, and the trees and planned open spaces bordering the project Site. The bulky Baseline Scheme with its massing and lack of open space limits visual access and contributes to a more enclosed environment. In contrast, the proposed JUB, with its slender landmark tower, and the lower JUC effectively utilise the planned green spine by complementing it with additional landscape elements on LG/F and G/F of the Proposed Scheme, thus enhancing visual resources while allowing visual permeability. The trees on the eastern edge of the project Site are retained and will positively contribute to a

welcoming entry plaza, directly visible from VP1. Therefore, the effect on visual resources would be **partly enhanced**.

4.1.5. Resultant Visual Impact: From VP1, the lower JUC and more slender JUB of the Proposed Scheme reduces potential obstructions and enhances visual permeability, offering a less imposing presence along Fanling Highway in comparison to the bulky, enclosed structures of the Baseline Scheme. Due to limited visibility of the full building at VP1, the resultant visual impact of the Proposed Scheme when compared to the Baseline Scheme would be **negligible**.

4.2. VP2 – Proposed Fung Kong Shan Park (Figure 4.2)

4.2.1. Visual Composition: The existing visual quality of the space is low, consisting of a rural pathway and trees, lacking elements of interest. Both the Baseline Scheme and the Proposed Scheme would introduce a modern architectural building that contrasts with existing rural landscaped view. However, the project Site is located next to the green spine planned as part of the KTN NDA, and similar to the Baseline Scheme the Proposed Scheme is barely visible behind the planned KTN NDA from VP2. The effect of the Proposed Scheme in comparison with the Baseline Scheme on the overall visual composition would be **negligible**.

4.2.2. Visual Obstruction: The planned KTN NDA is positioned in a way that it will obstruct the existing views of rural landscape. Both the Baseline Scheme and Proposed Scheme as viewed at a distance behind the planned KTN NDA from the proposed Fung Kong Shan Park barely obstruct the existing landscape. Pedestrians in the proposed park will have a partial view of the project Site, which is softened with the planned green spine at ground level as it provides visual relief in an otherwise dense urban landscape in contrast to the existing more rural landscape. Therefore, the visual obstruction of the Proposed Scheme in comparison to the Baseline Scheme would be **negligible**.

4.2.3. Effect on Public Viewers: Currently, public viewers are minimal, but their numbers will increase with the completion of the planned KTN NDA. The transition from a rural to an urban landscape will be noticeable due to the Proposed Scheme together with the KTN NDA. Both Schemes culminate the view along the planned green spine adjacent to the NDA. As mentioned in paragraph 4.2.1, public viewers at VP2 will have only a partial view of the Proposed Scheme from Fung Kong Shan Park, which is kinetic and transient in nature. Therefore, the effect of the Proposed Scheme in comparison with the Baseline Scheme on public viewers would be **negligible**.

4.2.4. Effect on Visual Resources: The existing visual resources are mainly the sky view and the trees lining the pathway. The Proposed Scheme will not occupy more sky views compared to Baseline Scheme within the context of the planned KTN NDA. Instead, the Proposed Scheme not only culminates the view along the planned green spine to help soften the density of the planned KTN development, but also would add visual resources by preserving two TPIs adjacent to the development. Therefore, the magnitude of visual change due to the Proposed Scheme adjacent to the planned green spine will be **negligible**.

4.2.5. Resultant Visual Impact: The minimal changes in visual composition, potential obstructions, and alteration of public viewer experiences within the context of the planned KTN NDA indicates that the Proposed Scheme in comparison with the Baseline Schemes only constitutes very little in shaping the urban scenery as it is barely visible. The resultant visual impact of the Proposed Scheme in comparison with the Baseline Scheme would be **negligible** from VP2.

4.3. VP3 – Service Road along Sheung Yue River near Long Valley Nature Park (Figure 4.3)

4.3.1. Visual Composition: The visual quality of the existing view is medium, with a clear view of the sky, trees and mountains, along with buildings and other construction works further in the distance. The Baseline Scheme and Proposed Scheme are both not visible behind the planned KTN NDA. The foreground remains as the Sheung Yue River with a landscaped path on the opposite side, while the planned KTN NDA adjacent to the river would cover the Proposed Scheme. Therefore, the Proposed Scheme would have **negligible** effect in visual composition comprised of the eastern side of the KTN NDA.

4.3.2. Visual Obstruction: The Proposed Scheme within the context of the planned KTN NDA is positioned in a way that it will not impede the existing open landscape, and will not obstruct any planned KTA NDA as seen from VP3. Therefore, the visual obstruction due to the Proposed Scheme in comparison with the Baseline Scheme would also be **negligible**.

4.3.3. Effect on Public Viewers: Public viewers currently including visitors of recreational use visiting the Sheung Yue River is quite low, but this will likely increase once the planned KTN NDA. They will experience a shift in visual perception from rural to urban landscape due to proposed planned KTN NDA. However, the public viewers from VP3 will not be able to view both the Baseline Scheme and Proposed Scheme behind the planned KTN NDA, therefore the visual sensitivity would be **negligible**.

4.3.4. Effect on Visual Resources: The existing visual resources are mainly the channelised Sheung Yue River on the foreground and Ki Lun Shan to the left in the background. Both visual resources will not be affected by both the Baseline Scheme and Proposed Scheme are not visible behind the planned KTN NDA. The Proposed Scheme would not constitute to the modification of visual resources due to other developments of KTN NDA completely blocking the project Site. Therefore, the magnitude of visual change to VP3 will be **negligible**.

4.3.5. Resultant Visual Impact: The changes in visual composition, potential obstructions, and alteration of public viewer experiences within the context of the planned KTN NDA indicates that the Proposed Scheme in comparison with the Baseline Scheme does not have any visual effect due to other significant developments of KTN NDA in the foreground of VP3. The resultant visual impact of the Proposed Scheme in comparison with the Baseline Scheme would be **negligible**.

4.4. VP4 – Kwu Tung Reservoir Dam (Figure 4.4)

4.4.1. Visual Composition: VP4 predominantly features rural scenery with an open storage development surrounded by dense foliage in the foreground, and low-rise residential developments with low mountains also paired with dense foliage in the background. Because of this natural surrounding and clear view of the sky, the existing visual quality can be considered medium to high. However, both the Baseline Scheme and the Proposed Scheme are not visible in the background due to the imposing low mountains and dense foliage on the foreground. Thus, the Proposed Scheme would have **negligible** effect on the overall visual composition.

4.4.2. Visual Obstruction: As mentioned in paragraph 4.4.1., both the Baseline Scheme and Proposed Scheme will be behind the existing landscape elements, making the obstruction of Proposed Scheme **negligible**.

4.4.3. Effect on Public Viewers: Public viewers would include visitors of recreational use visiting the Kwu Tung Reservoir Dam and potentially Ki Lun Shan. Although currently low, the number of visitors can be expected to increase with the planned KTN NDA. However, such public viewers from VP4 will not be able to view the Proposed Scheme as detailed in paragraph 4.4.1 and therefore would have **negligible** visual sensitivity.

4.4.4. Effect on Visual Resources: As outlined in paragraph 4.4.1, the KTN NDA, and both the Baseline and Proposed Scheme will not be visible as visual resources as they would be behind foliage and other landscape elements. Therefore, the magnitude of visual change to VP4 due to the Proposed Scheme will be **negligible**.

4.4.5. Resultant Visual Impact: Since the project Site is not visible due to the intense rural landscape illustrated in VP4, the resultant visual impact of the Proposed Scheme would be **negligible** in comparison with the Baseline Scheme.

4.5. VP5 – Hiking Trail on Ki Lun Shan (Figure 4.5)

4.5.1. Visual Composition: The existing visual composition consists of the Ki Lun Shan with mid-rise development and a range of mountains at a distance, and existing development further in the backdrop. The panoramic views of the Kwu Tung Area and beyond create a medium to high existing visual quality. The Baseline Scheme features a group of bulky buildings, creating a dense urban environment resulting in poor permeability within its surroundings. The planned KTN NDA contributes to a denser urban environment with the Proposed Scheme being more visible in the middle than the bulky Baseline Scheme. Therefore, the Proposed Scheme would be visually compatible with the development density of the planned KTN NDA as seen from VP5, and would have a **slight** effect on the visual composition when compared with the Baseline Scheme.

4.5.2. Visual Obstruction: Within the context of the planned KTN NDA, both the Baseline and Proposed Scheme does not further obstruct views of natural landscape. However, the Proposed Scheme with its slender tower in the middle will be more distinctive than the bulky Baseline Scheme, with the Ki Lun Shan in the foreground and the mountain ranges at a distance forming the backdrop. Within this context, the Proposed Scheme in comparison with the Baseline Scheme will be more visible within the planned KTN development as viewed by hikers from VP5. Thus, the Proposed Scheme constitutes a **slight** obstruction to the overall landscape when compared the effects of the bulkier Baseline Scheme.

4.5.3. Effect on Public Viewers: The number of public viewers is low and less frequent currently but may increase after the planned KTN NDA is in place. Hikers and visitors are likely to be sensitive to changes in the overall landscape due to the planned KTN NDA, but the distance from the trail make this less significant. The Proposed Scheme contributes lesser mass in comparison to the bulky Baseline Scheme, however this is significantly less within the context of the planned KTN NDA, and thus the visual sensitivity of public viewers at VP5 would be **negligible**.

4.5.4. Effect on Visual Resources: Although the Proposed Scheme will block a small mountain range northwest when compared to the Baseline Scheme. However, the overall visual resources affected are **negligible** within the context of the planned KTN NDA and the visual composition at VP5.

4.5.5. Resultant Visual Impact: The alteration to the visual quality and composition of the area from rural to an urban landscape due to the planned KTN NDA will affect the experience of public viewers who come to enjoy the natural vistas and the serene environment that the area once provided. However, within the context of the KTN NDA the Proposed Scheme would act as a new landmark at a distance. Considering the distance of the VP from the planned developments, the visual impact of the Proposed Scheme as viewed by potential hikers at VP5 would be **negligible** in comparison to the bulky Baseline Scheme.

4.6. VP6 – Hiking Trail on Tit Hang Shan (Figure 4.6)

4.6.1. Visual Composition: The existing visual composition consists of the Tit Hang Shan with low-rise open storage type developments on the valleys under Tit Hang Shan, a range of mountains at a distance, and new developments in the KTN NDA further forming a backdrop. The vast panoramic view and abundance of natural elements makes the existing visual quality from this VP6 medium to high. The planned KTN NDA contributes to a denser urban environment with the Proposed Scheme visible on the southern end of the NDA. The Proposed Scheme introduces a slender tower and enhances the visual composition in contrast with the bulky Baseline Scheme. Therefore, the overall visual effect of the Proposed Scheme is **negligible** when compared with the Baseline Scheme within the context of the existing visual composition and the planned KTN NDA.

4.6.2. Visual Obstruction: Although the Proposed Scheme will partially block the urban landscape of the Fanling / Sheung Shui New Towns and Wu Tip Shan, these elements are only visible much further in the background. However, the Proposed Scheme would only be a part of the urban landscape towards the southern end of the planned KTN NDA, with the mountain ranges in the foreground and the Fanling / Sheung Shui New Town at a distance forming the backdrop. Within this context the Proposed Scheme will be visible more visible than the Baseline Scheme but blends in well with the planned KTN NDA as viewed by hikers from VP6. Thus the Proposed Scheme will only constitute a **slight** visual obstruction to the overall planned urban and existing landscape in comparison to the Baseline Scheme.

4.6.3. Effect on Public Viewers: The number of public viewers is very low and infrequent currently, and its accessibility will likely not increase for some time even after the KTN NDA is in place. Hikers and visitors are likely to be sensitive to changes in the overall landscape due to the planned KTN NDA, but the visual distance from the trail to the Baseline Scheme and Proposed Scheme would make this insignificant. The visual

sensitivity of public viewers at VP6 due to the Proposed Scheme in comparison with the Baseline Scheme would be **negligible**.

4.6.4. Effect on Visual Resources: The loss of green and urban visual resources in the background due to the planned KTN NDA would have a proportionally larger impact on the visual resources in comparison to the impact of the Proposed Scheme alone. Therefore, the overall visual resources affected by the Proposed Scheme in comparison with the Baseline Scheme are **negligible** within the context of the planned KTN NDA and the overall landscape of VP6.

4.6.5. Resultant Visual Impact: The insignificant alteration of the visual quality and composition due to the Proposed Scheme in comparison with the Baseline Scheme within the context of the planned KTN NDA will not affect the experience of public viewers who come to enjoy the natural vistas and the serene environment that the area once provided and the transformed urban landscape within the planned KTN NDA. Therefore the resultant visual impact would be **negligible** due to the Proposed Scheme in comparison with the Baseline Scheme.

4.7. VP7 – Hang Tau Road near Casas Domingo (Figure 4.7)

4.7.1. Visual Composition: The existing visual quality from VP7 is low to medium, with clear of the sky paired with small clusters of landscaping and a private road in the foreground. The Proposed Scheme introduces a slender building that forms a landmark on the southern end of the KTN NDA. This modern architectural style significantly contrasts with the bulky Baseline Scheme, enhancing the overall visual composition within the context of the planned KTN NDA. The unchanged foreground of extensive treelines and barren land results in a **slight** effect on visual composition at VP7 for the Proposed Scheme in comparison with the Baseline Scheme.

4.7.2. Visual Obstruction: Within the planned context of the KTN NDA, the bulky buildings of the Baseline Scheme obstruct views and open-air exposure, negatively impacting the visual experience. The Proposed Scheme, with its slender design, minimises obstruction horizontally and creates a more of a landmark building with its slender tower. Although it contributes to the urban background, the Proposed Scheme is expected to result in a **slight** obstruction compared to the Baseline Scheme.

4.7.3. Effect on Public Viewers: Public viewers from VP7 can enjoy the retained rural landscape in the foreground, though they would be slightly affected by the urban landscape introduced by the Proposed Scheme, featuring a slender building, is less intrusive and enhances the existing rural setting compared to the Baseline Scheme. The

Proposed Scheme would have a **slight** visual effect on public viewers when compared to the Baseline Scheme.

4.7.4. Effect on Visual Resources: The Proposed Scheme will introduce a more refined urban landscape when compared to the Baseline Scheme in the background of VP7. The Baseline Scheme's bulky buildings diminish the significance of the urban visual resources. Conversely, the Proposed Scheme, with its thoughtful design, enhances the visual resources and contributes positively to the overall visual experience within the context of the planned KTN NDA. Thus, there would be a **slight** effect on visual resources for the Proposed Scheme when compared to the Baseline Scheme.

4.7.5. Resultant Visual Impact: The transition from the bulky buildings of the Baseline Scheme to a slender landmark structure not only improves visual composition but also mitigates the negative effects on permeability and public viewer experiences. The Proposed Scheme offers a significant visual relief compared to the existing rural scenery, providing a more harmonious integration with the landscape as viewed from VP7 and Kwu Tung South. Within the context of the planned KTN NDA the resultant visual impact of the Proposed Scheme would be **negligible** when compared to the Baseline Scheme.

4.8. Overall Visual Impact

4.8.1. The VIA for the Proposed Scheme when compared to the Baseline Scheme within the context of the planned KTN NDA was conducted with seven VPs that are publicly accessible within the surrounding area. The resultant visual impact of the Proposed Scheme is "**Negligible**" from all VPs. Overall, the Proposed Scheme has no negative visual impact. The visual impact of the Proposed Scheme as compared to the Baseline Scheme within the context of the planned NDA is summarised in **Table 4.1** below.

4.8.2. Given that the VIA is to determine the visual impact of the minor BHR relaxation from 130 mPD to 170 mPD, the Proposed Scheme with a slender tower has negligible impact when compared to the bulky Baseline Scheme. Moreover, the effect of increasing BHR would help create a landmark at the southern gateway along Fanling Highway, while still being compatible within the planned KTN NDA as detailed above.

Table 4.1 – Summary of Visual Impacts of the Proposed Scheme

VPs and Location	Effect on Visual Composition	Effect on Visual Obstruction	Effect on Public Viewers	Effect on Visual Resources	Resultant Visual Impact
VP1 – Footbridge Crossing Fanling Highway near Valais & Europa Garden	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Partly Enhanced	Negligible
VP2 – Proposed Fung Kong Shan Park	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
VP3 – Service Road along Sheung Yue River near Long Valley Nature Park	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
VP4 – Kwu Tung Reservoir Dam	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
VP5 – Hiking Trail on Ki Lun Shan	Slight	Slight	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
VP6 – Hiking Trail on Tit Hang Shan	Negligible	Slight	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
VP7 – Hang Tau Road near Casas Domingo	Slight	Slight	Slight	Slight	Negligible

5. Conclusion

5.1. The VIA for the Proposed Scheme was conducted with seven VPs that are publicly accessible within the surrounding area. The Proposed Scheme overall has no negative visual impact and is an improvement in multiple aspects compared to the bulky Baseline Scheme. The slender tower of the Proposed Scheme at the southern gateway would be visually compatible within the context of the planned KTN NDA. With the design merits detailed in section 3, namely enhanced permeability, pedestrian connectivity, multi-level green open space, and preservation of TPIs, the Proposed Scheme results in an overall negligible visual impact despite the increased overall building height. As a result, no mitigation measure is required.

5.2. The Proposed Scheme achieves a much better layout design with scope for the provision of design features to enhance air ventilation and has a less imposing JUC compared to the Baseline Scheme. The building mass was also broken up to create more separation between the tower and the lower block to enhance legibility, visual and physical permeability.

5.3. The Proposed Scheme will contribute to the much-needed community and healthcare facilities for the planned KTN NDA and Kwu Tung South population. The Proposed Scheme will become a catalyst to stimulate the development and economic growth of the Northern Metropolis by introducing government offices within the KTN NDA.

5.4. The Proposed Scheme is located on a well-connected Site with a welcoming landscaped entry plaza adjacent to the green spine that will provide a pleasant experience for users entering and exiting the building as well as pedestrians and bikers passing by.

5.5. In consideration with the surrounding planning context of the planned KTN NDA and the Design Merits (DMs) of the Proposed Scheme outlined in section 3, the Proposed Scheme is much more enhanced when compared with the Baseline Scheme.

5.6. It should also be noted that previous planning applications (e.g. A/KTN/84, A/KTN/93) for minor relaxation of BHR within the KTN NDA have been approved. In this regard, the Planning Application to relax the BHR from 130 mPD to 170 mPD for the Project Site should be considered favourable by the TPB.

PROJECT

S.16 APPLICATION FOR BUILDING HEIGH RELAXATION FOR JOINT-USER COMPLEX AND JOINT-USER GENERAL OFFICE BUILDING, AT AREA 29, KWU TUNG NORTH

FIGURE NO.

FIGURE 3.1

DRAWING TITLE

SITE AND SURROUNDING BUILDING HEIGHT RESTRICTIONS

SCALE

1:7500

LEGEND

- 14 Planning Area Number
- Application Site
- Approved BHR Relaxation under A/KTN/84
- Approved BHR Relaxation under A/KTN/93
- BHR Stipulated by OZP

Maximum Building Height of Planned Developments in KTN NDA
(approved BHR relaxation reflected)

- 151-180 mPD
- 121-150 mPD
- 91-120 mPD
- 61-90 mPD
- 30-60 mPD

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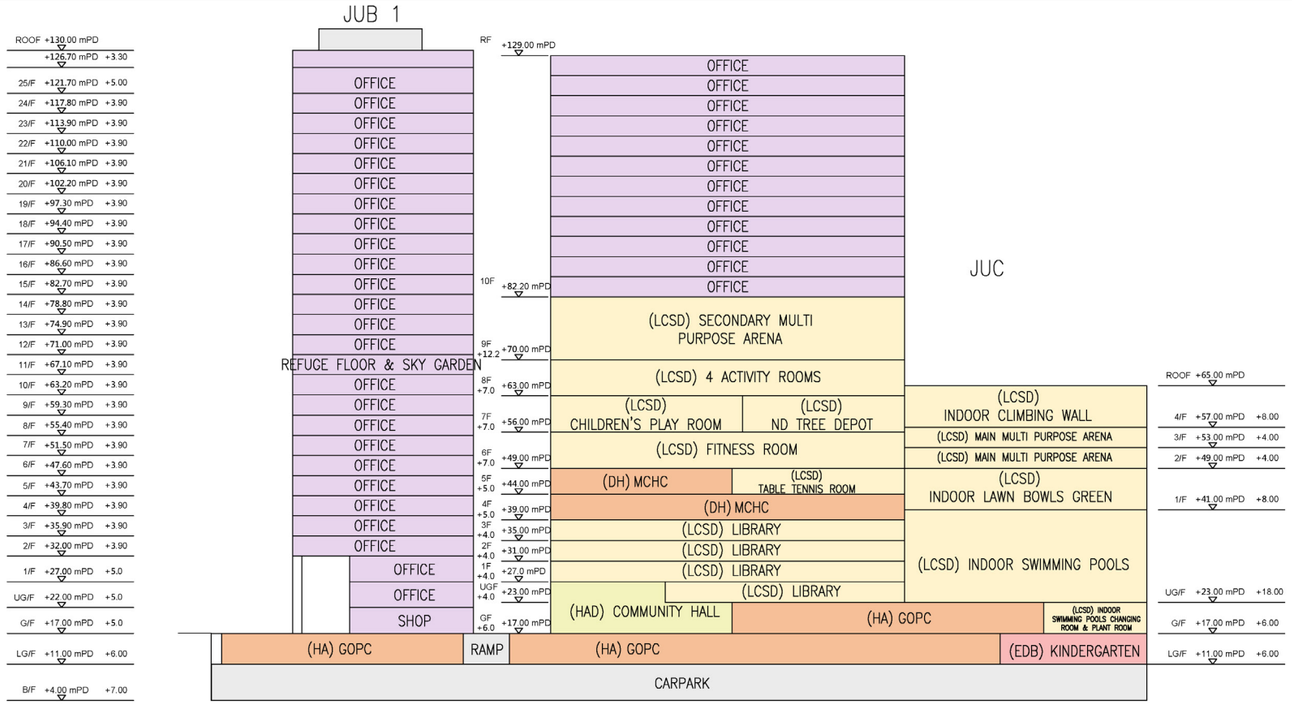
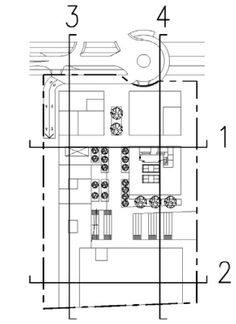
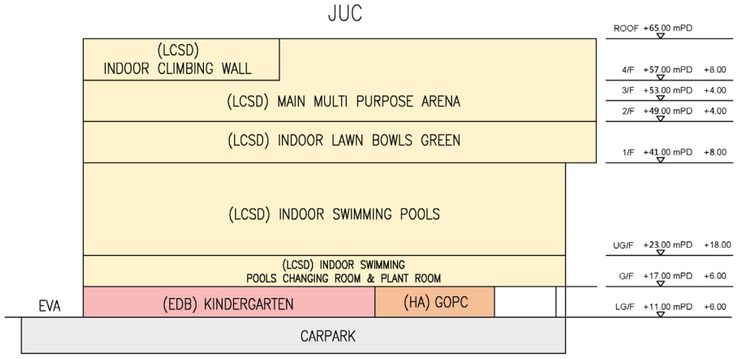
BASELINE SCHEME

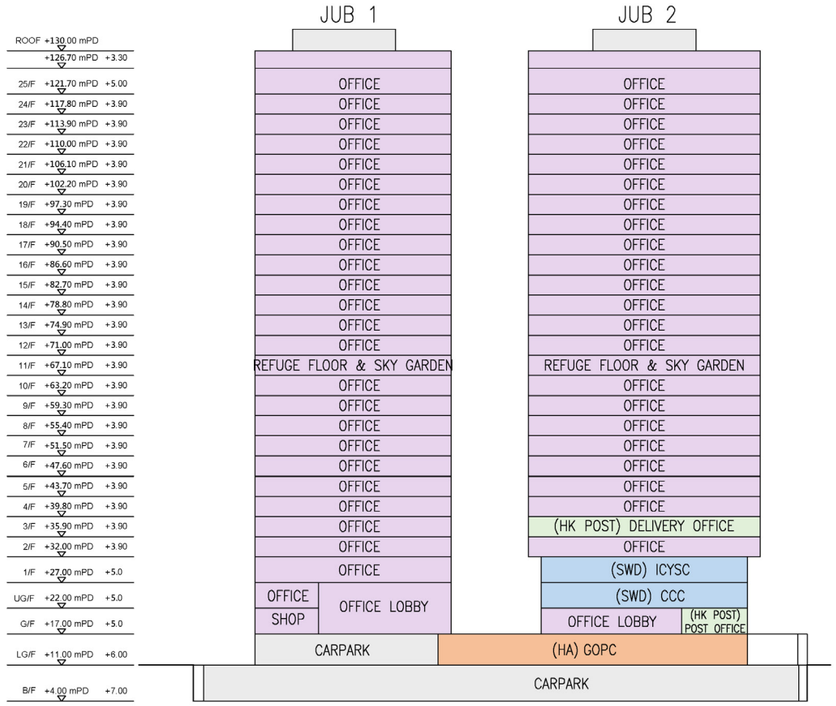


SECTION 3

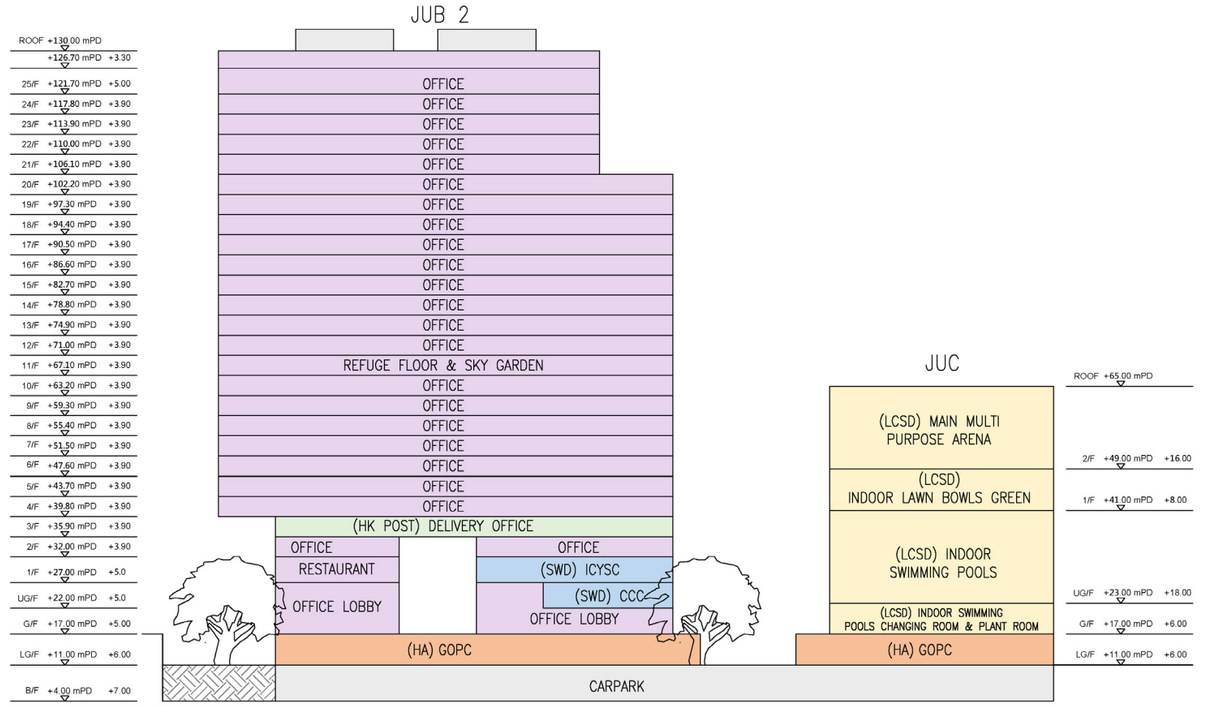




SECTION 2



SECTION 1



SECTION 4

PROJECT

S.16 APPLICATION FOR BUILDING HEIGH RELAXATION FOR JOINT-USER COMPLEX AND JOINT-USER GENERAL OFFICE BUILDING, AT AREA 29, KWU TUNG NORTH

FIGURE NO.

FIGURE 3.2

DRAWING TITLE

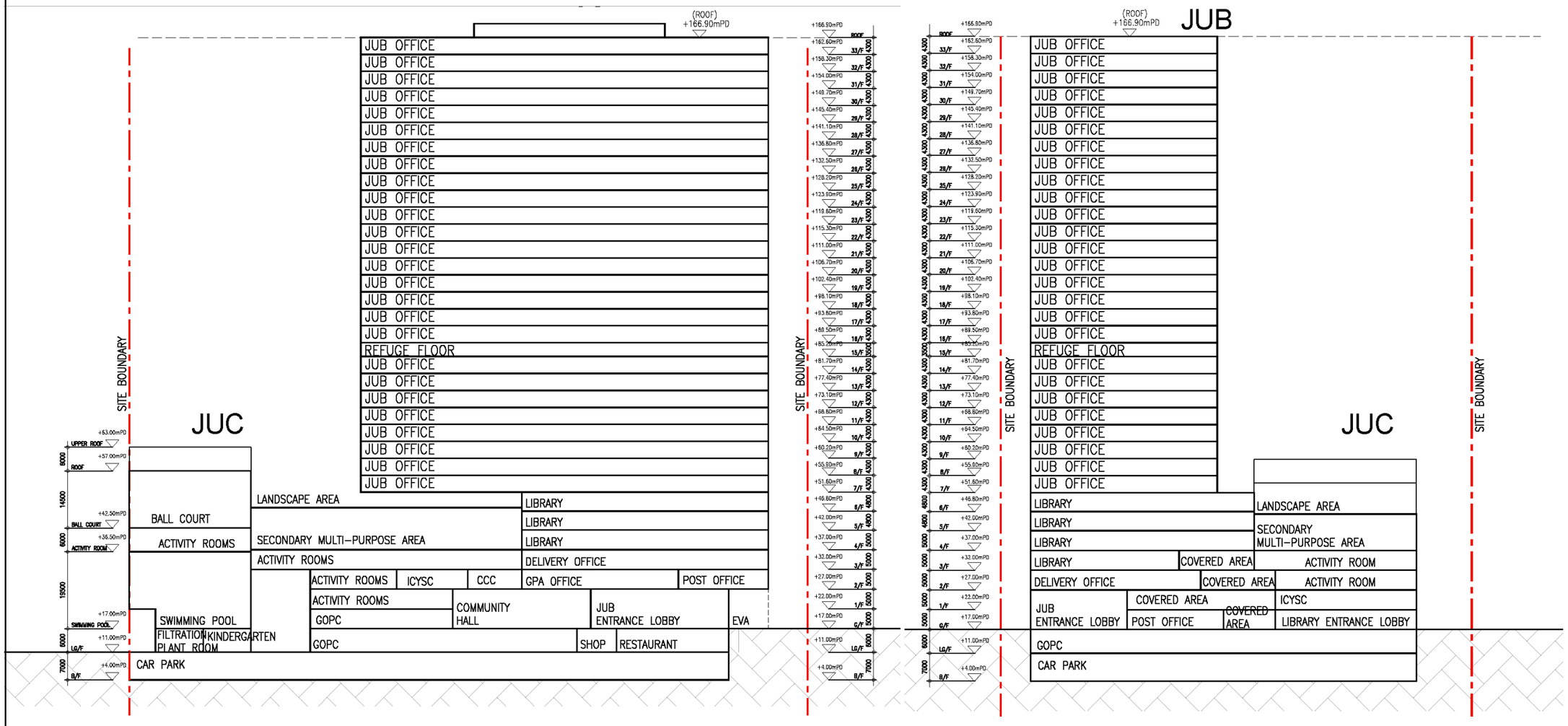
BUILDING SECTIONS

SOURCE:
ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

URBAN DESIGN & PLANNING CONSULTANTS

31 MARCH 2025

PROPOSED SCHEME



SECTION A–A

SECTION B–B

PROJECT

S.16 APPLICATION FOR BUILDING HEIGH RELAXATION FOR JOINT-USER COMPLEX AND JOINT-USER GENERAL OFFICE BUILDING, AT AREA 29, KWU TUNG NORTH

FIGURE NO.

FIGURE 3.2

DRAWING TITLE

BUILDING SECTIONS

SOURCE:
AGC DESIGN LTD.

URBAN DESIGN & PLANNING CONSULTANTS

31 MARCH 2025

BASELINE SCHEME

PROPOSED SCHEME

PROJECT

S.16 APPLICATION FOR BUILDING HEIGH RELAXATION FOR JOINT-USER COMPLEX AND JOINT-USER GENERAL OFFICE BUILDING, AT AREA 29, KWU TUNG NORTH

FIGURE NO.

FIGURE 3.3

DRAWING TITLE

BUILDING RENDERINGS

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PROJECT

S.16 APPLICATION FOR BUILDING HEIGH RELAXATION FOR JOINT-USER COMPLEX AND JOINT-USER GENERAL OFFICE BUILDING, AT AREA 29, KWU TUNG NORTH

FIGURE NO.

FIGURE 3.4

DRAWING TITLE

DESIGN MERITS OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

LEGEND

DESIGN MERITS (DM)

DM1: REDUCED BUILDING MASS BULK NEAR GROUND LEVEL

DM2: ENHANCED PROVISION OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

DM3: ENHANCED PROVISION OF GREENERY AREAS

DM4: PRESERVED TREES OF PARTICULAR INTERESTS (TPI)

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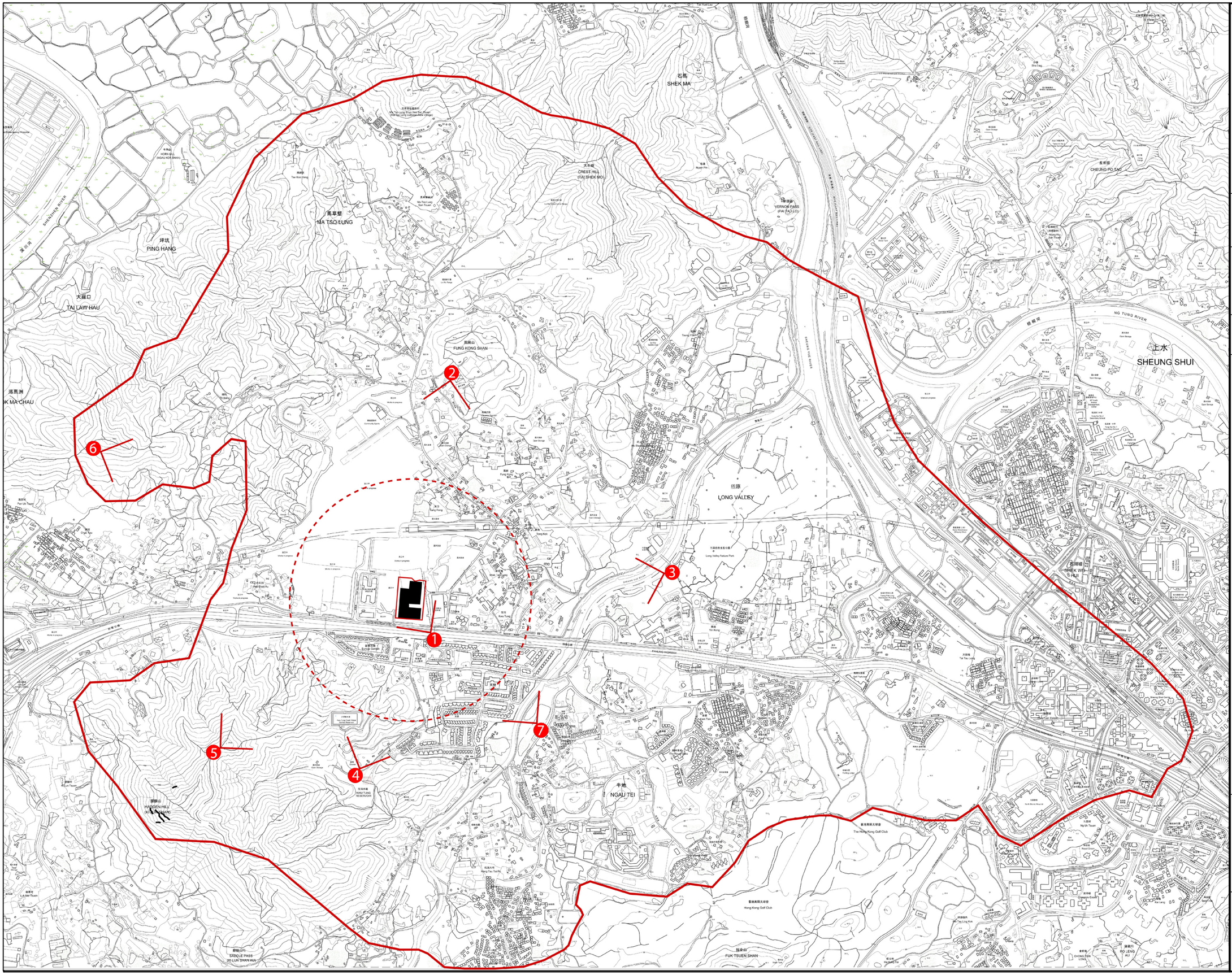

PROJECT

S.16 APPLICATION FOR BUILDING HEIGH RELAXATION FOR JOINT-USER COMPLEX AND JOINT-USER GENERAL OFFICE BUILDING, AT AREA 29, KWU TUNG NORTH

FIGURE NO.

FIGURE 3.5

DRAWING TITLE

ASSESSMENT AREA AND LOCATION OF VIEW POINTS

SCALE

1:15000

LEGEND

- VISUAL ENVELOPE
- INITIAL ASSESSMENT AREA

LOCATION OF VIEW POINTS (VP)

VP1: FOOTBRIDGE CROSSING FANLING HIGHWAY NEAR VALAIS & EUROPA GARDEN

VP2: PROPOSED FUNG KONG SHAN PARK

VP3: SERVICE ROAD ALONG SHEUNG YUE RIVER NEAR LONG VALLEY NATURE PARK

VP4: KWU TUNG RESERVOIR DAM

VP5: HIKING TRAIL ON KI LUN SHAN

VP6: HIKING TRAIL ON TIT HANG SHAN

VP7: HANG TAU ROAD NEAR CASAS DOMINGO

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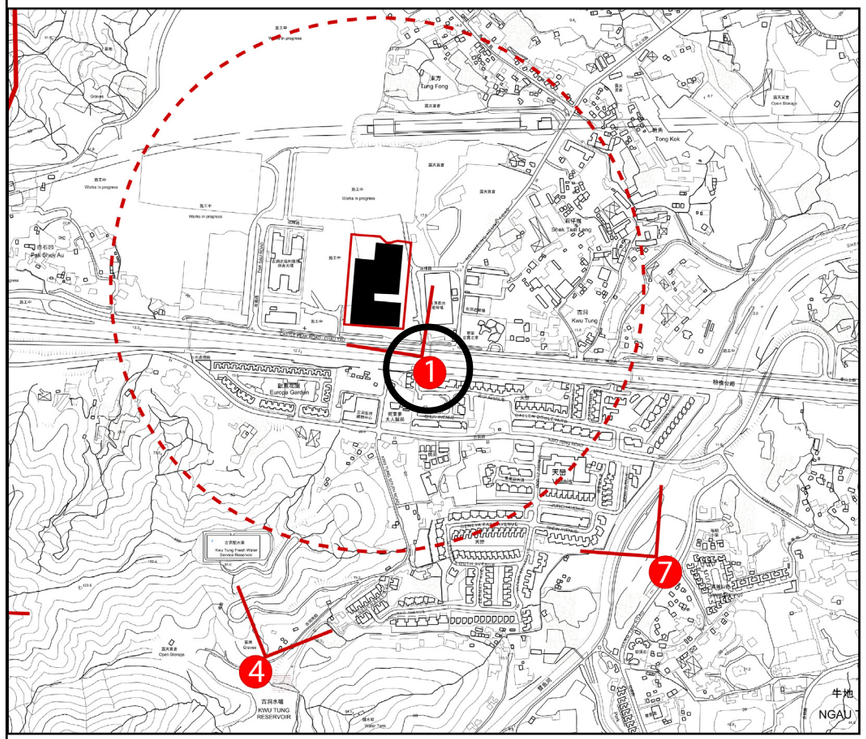
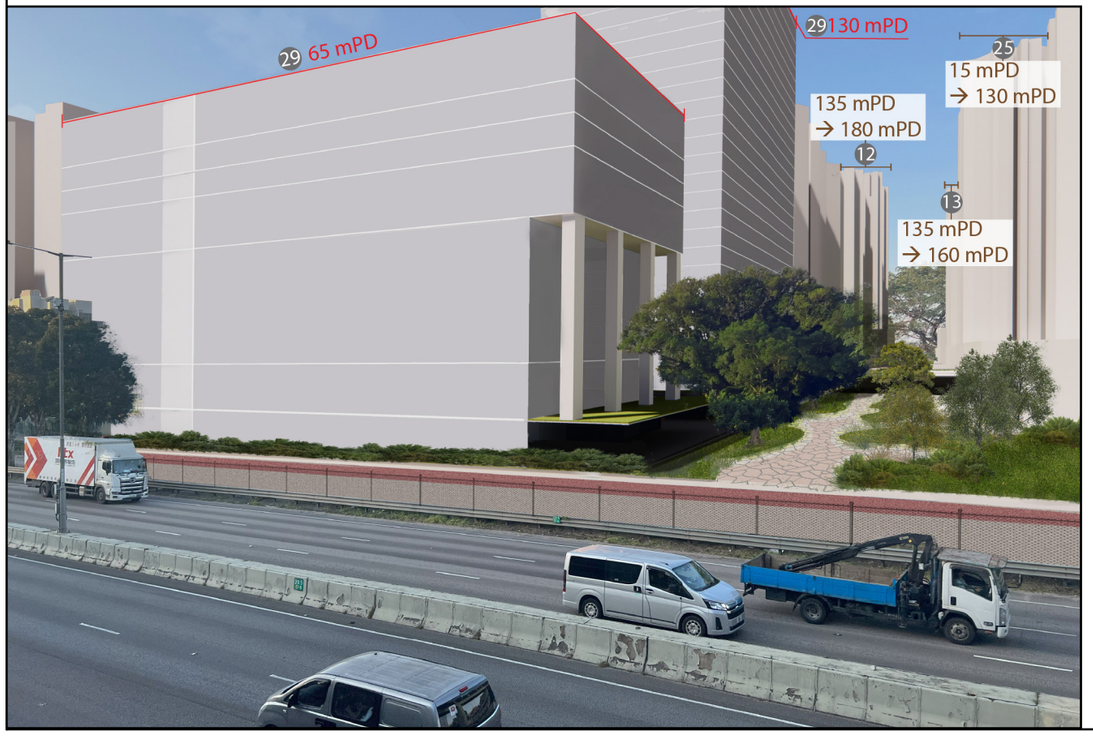
VIEW POINT 1 LOCATION



EXISTING VIEW

BASELINE SCHEME PHOTOMONTAGE



PROPOSED SCHEME PHOTOMONTAGE

PROJECT

S.16 APPLICATION FOR BUILDING HEIGH RELAXATION FOR JOINT-USER COMPLEX AND JOINT-USER GENERAL OFFICE BUILDING, AT AREA 29, KWU TUNG NORTH

FIGURE NO.

FIGURE 4.1

DRAWING TITLE

VIEW POINT 1
- FOOTBRIDGE CROSSING FANLING HIGHWAY NEAR VALAIS & EUROPA GARDEN

LEGEND

29 Planning Area No.

Baseline/Proposed BHR of Application Site

Approved BHR Relaxation under Planning Application A/KTN/93

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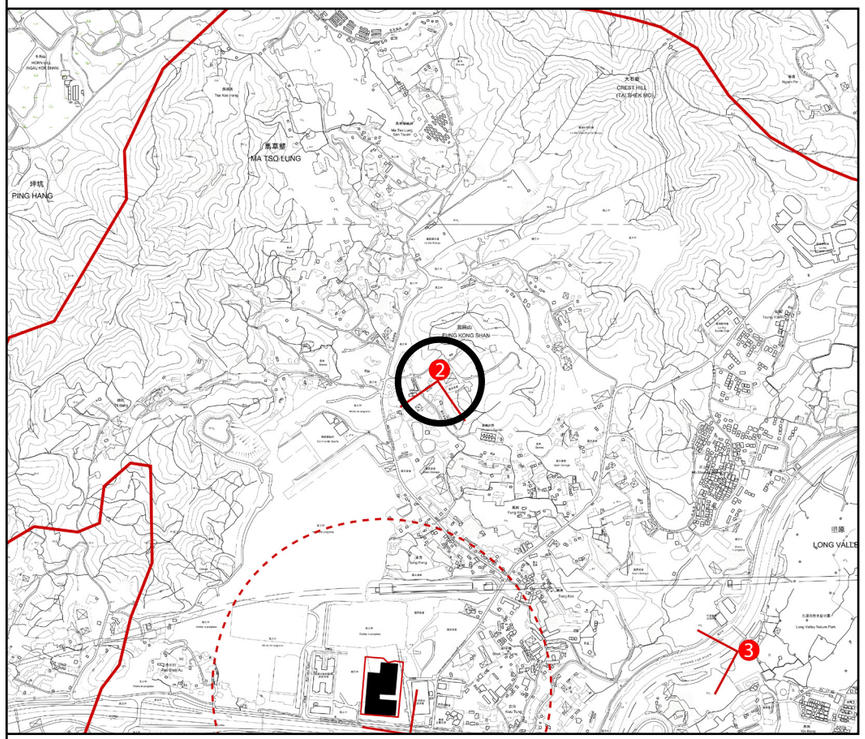
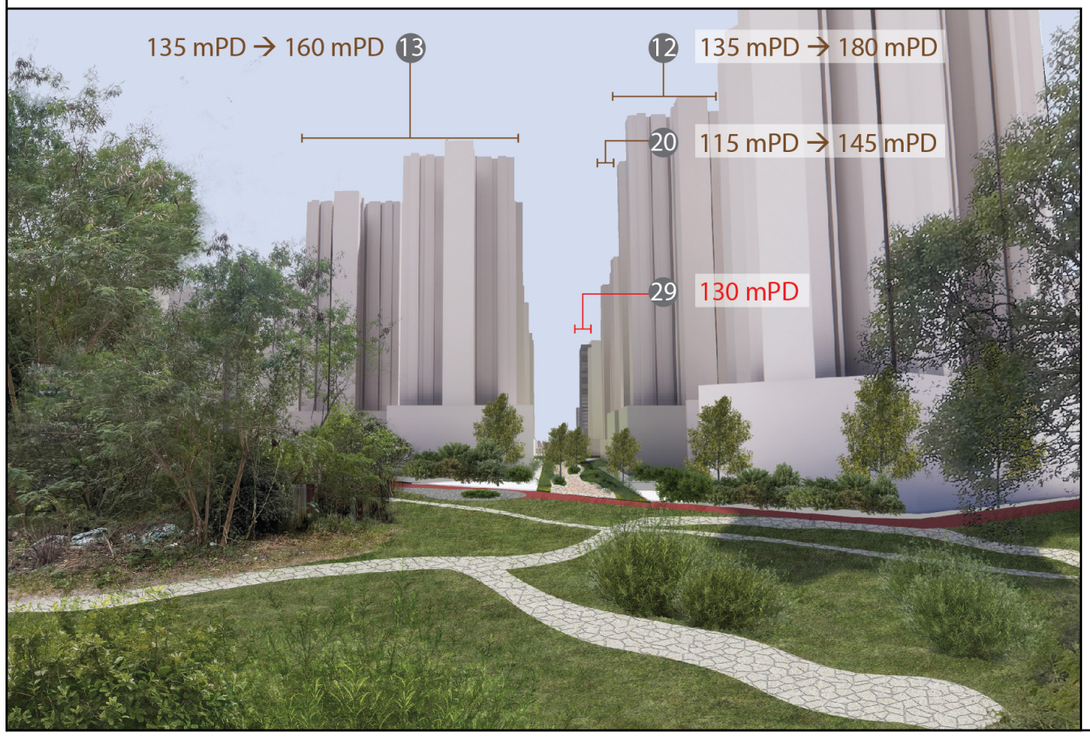
VIEW POINT 2 LOCATION

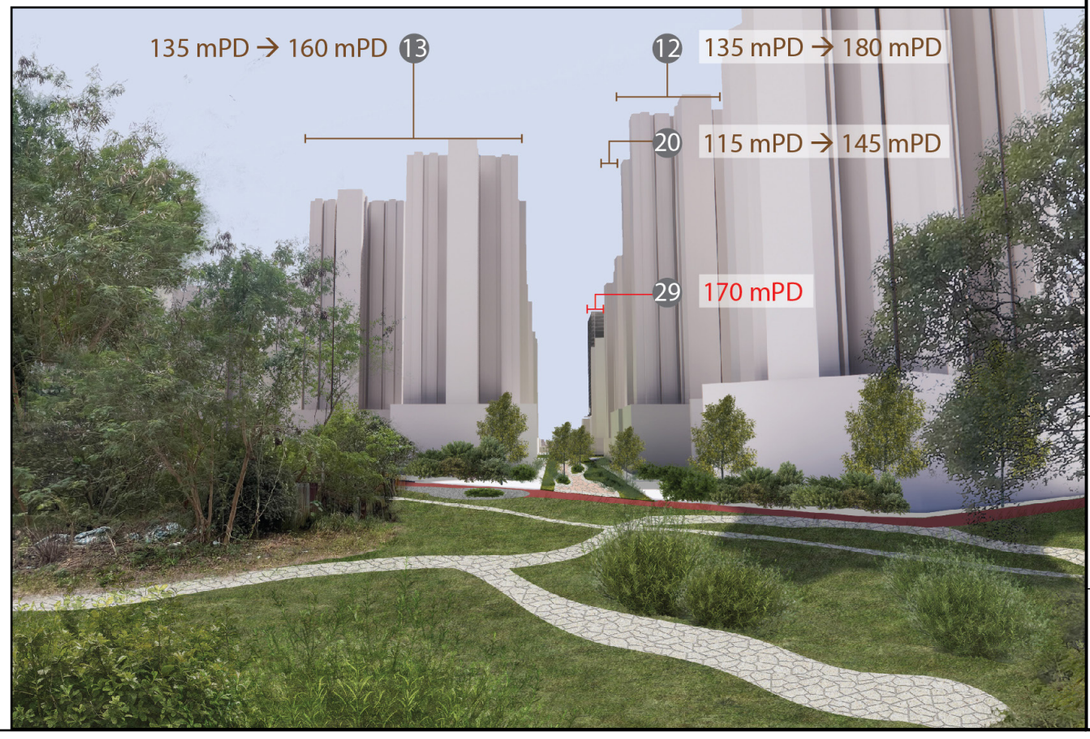


EXISTING VIEW

BASELINE SCHEME PHOTOMONTAGE



PROPOSED SCHEME PHOTOMONTAGE



PROJECT

S.16 APPLICATION FOR BUILDING HEIGH RELAXATION FOR JOINT-USER COMPLEX AND JOINT-USER GENERAL OFFICE BUILDING, AT AREA 29, KWU TUNG NORTH

FIGURE NO.

FIGURE 4.2

DRAWING TITLE

VIEW POINT 2 - PROPOSED FUNG KONG SHAN PARK

LEGEND

29 Planning Area No.

Baseline/Proposed BHR of Application Site

Approved BHR Relaxation under Planning Application A/KTN/93

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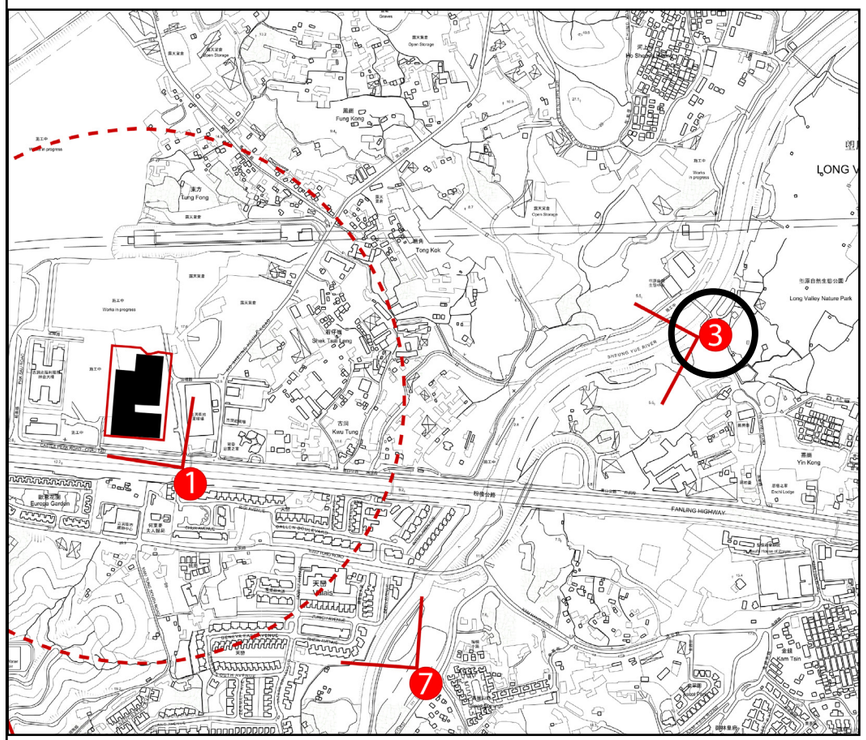
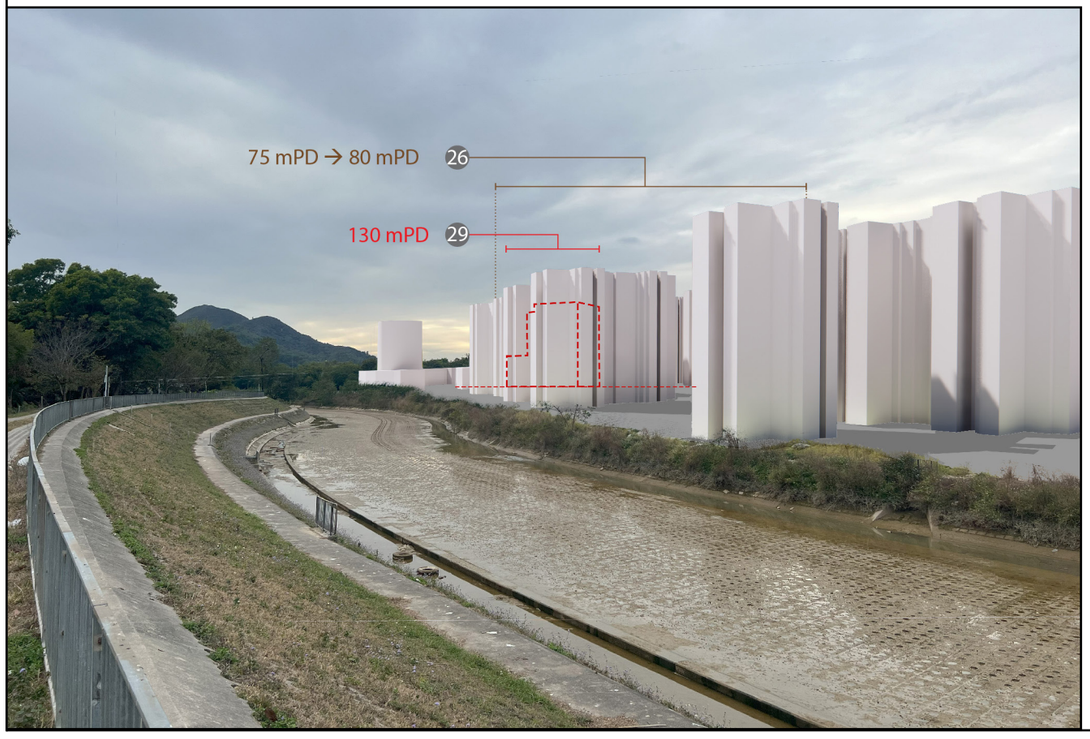
VIEW POINT 3 LOCATION

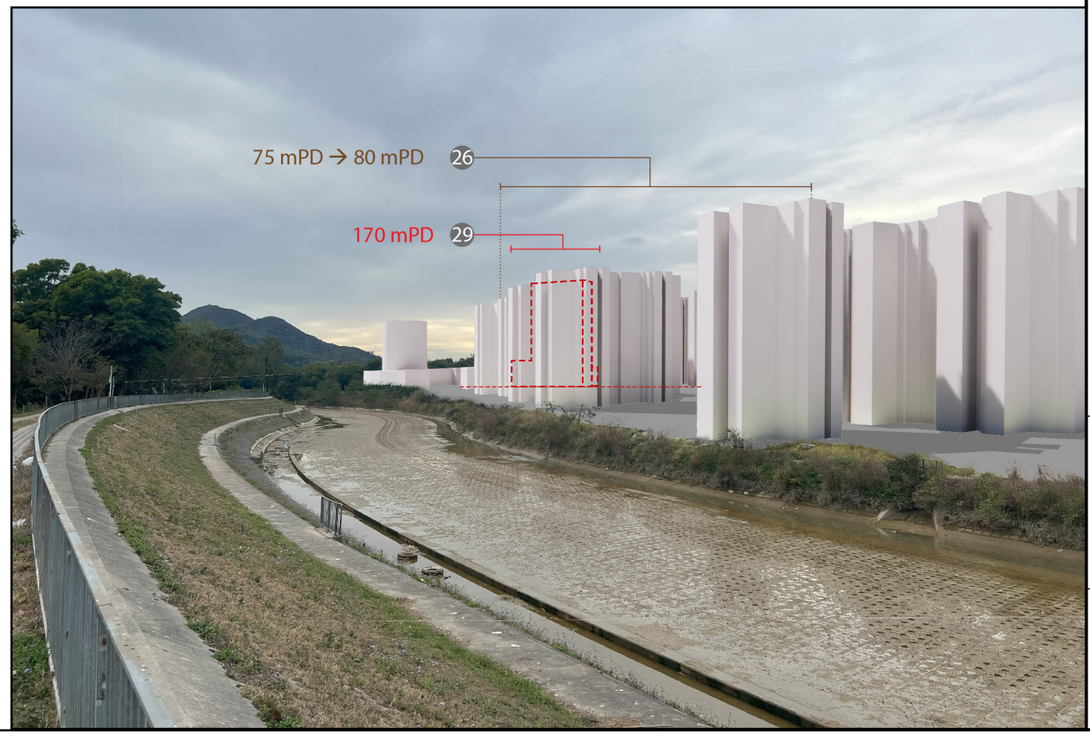


EXISTING VIEW

BASELINE SCHEME PHOTOMONTAGE



PROPOSED SCHEME PHOTOMONTAGE



PROJECT

S.16 APPLICATION FOR BUILDING HEIGH RELAXATION FOR JOINT-USER COMPLEX AND JOINT-USER GENERAL OFFICE BUILDING, AT AREA 29, KWU TUNG NORTH

FIGURE NO.

FIGURE 4.3

DRAWING TITLE

VIEW POINT 3 - SERVICE ROAD ALONG SHEUNG YUE RIVER NEAR LONG VALLEY NATURE PARK

LEGEND

29 Planning Area No.

Baseline/Proposed BHR of Application Site

Approved BHR Relaxation under Planning Application A/KTN/93

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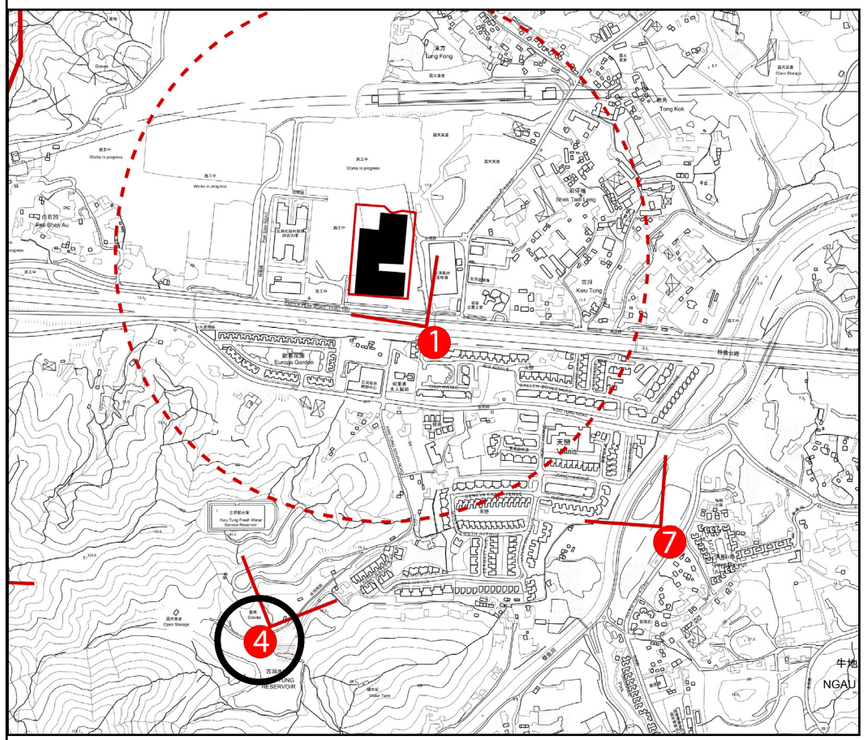
VIEW POINT 4 LOCATION



EXISTING VIEW

BASELINE SCHEME PHOTOMONTAGE

PROPOSED SCHEME PHOTOMONTAGE

PROJECT

S.16 APPLICATION FOR BUILDING HEIGH RELAXATION FOR JOINT-USER COMPLEX AND JOINT-USER GENERAL OFFICE BUILDING, AT AREA 29, KWU TUNG NORTH

FIGURE NO.

FIGURE 4.4

DRAWING TITLE

VIEW POINT 4 - KWU TUNG RESERVOIR DAM

LEGEND

29 Planning Area No.

Baseline/Proposed BHR of Application Site

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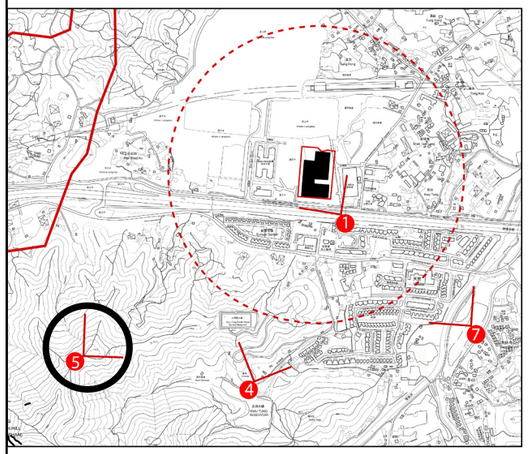
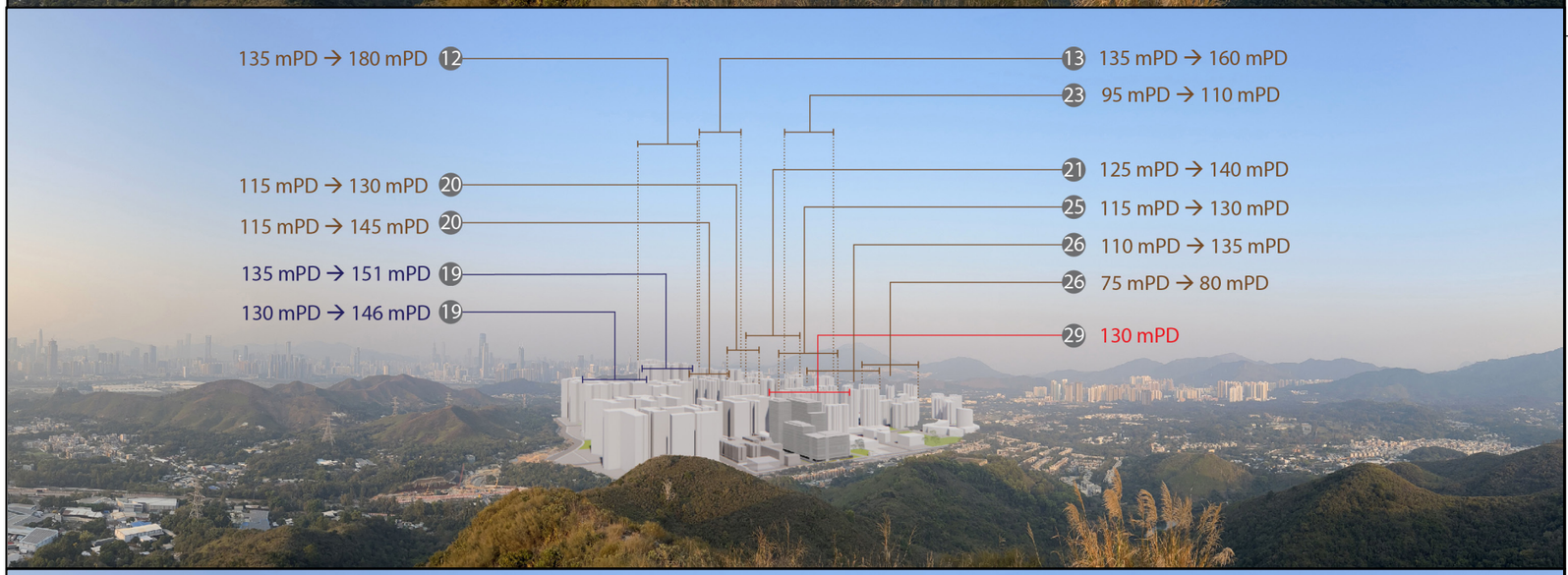
VIEW POINT 5 LOCATION

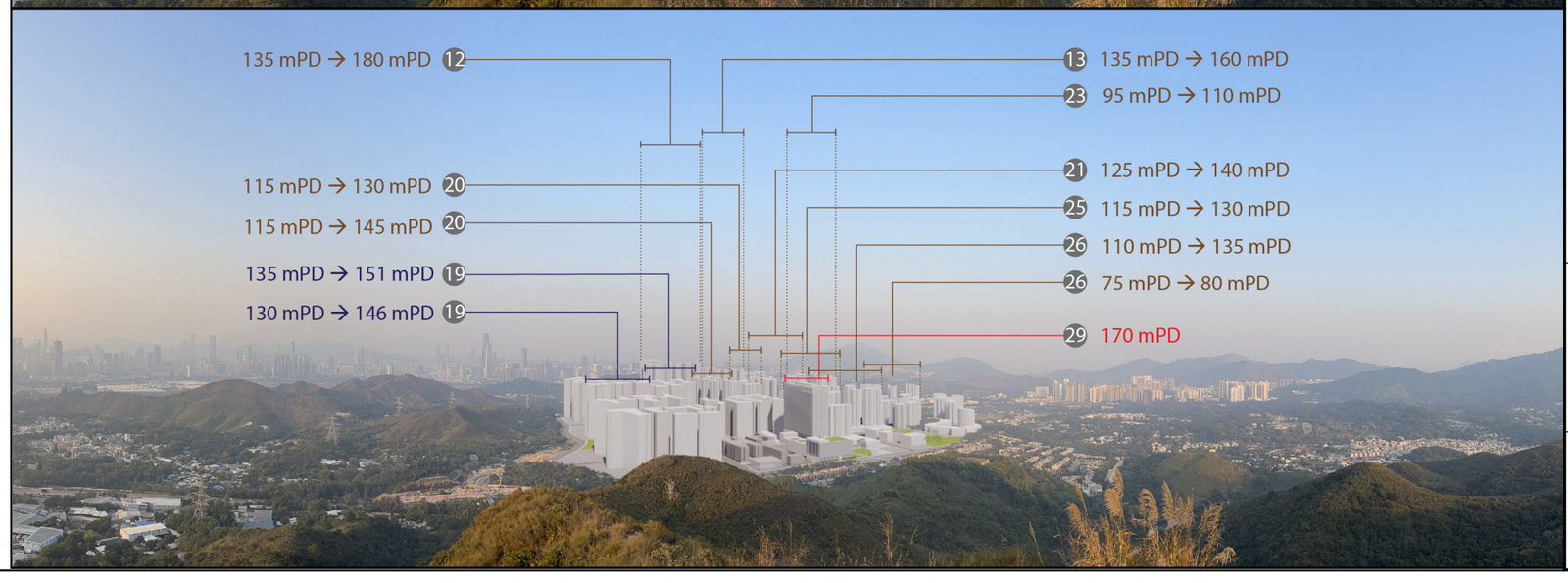


BASELINE SCHEME PHOTOMONTAGE

PROPOSED SCHEME PHOTOMONTAGE

EXISTING VIEW





PROJECT

S.16 APPLICATION FOR BUILDING HEIGH RELAXATION FOR JOINT-USER COMPLEX AND JOINT-USER GENERAL OFFICE BUILDING, AT AREA 29, KWU TUNG NORTH

FIGURE NO.

FIGURE 4.5

DRAWING TITLE

VIEW POINT 5 - HIKING TRAIL ON KI LUN SHAN

LEGEND

29 Planning Area No.

Baseline/Proposed BHR of Application Site

Approved BHR Relaxation under Planning Application A/KTN/93

Approved BHR Relaxation under Planning Application A/KTN/84

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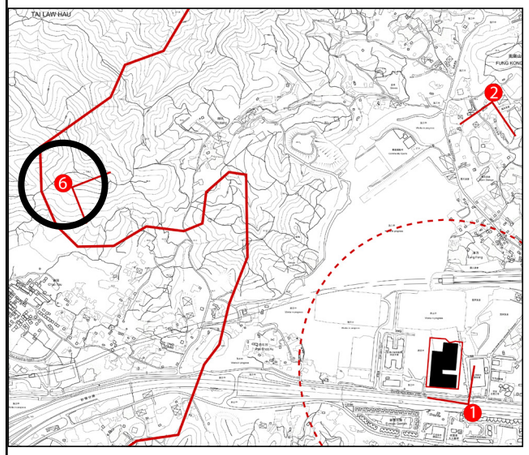
31 MARCH 2025

VIEW POINT 6 LOCATION



EXISTING VIEW

BASELINE SCHEME PHOTOMONTAGE

PROPOSED SCHEME PHOTOMONTAGE

PROJECT

S.16 APPLICATION FOR BUILDING HEIGH RELAXATION FOR JOINT-USER COMPLEX AND JOINT-USER GENERAL OFFICE BUILDING, AT AREA 29, KWU TUNG NORTH

FIGURE NO.

FIGURE 4.6

DRAWING TITLE

VIEW POINT 6 - HIKING TRAIL ON TIT HANG SHAN

LEGEND

29 Planning Area No.

Baseline/Proposed BHR of Application Site

Approved BHR Relaxation under Planning Application A/KTN/93

Approved BHR Relaxation under Planning Application A/KTN/84

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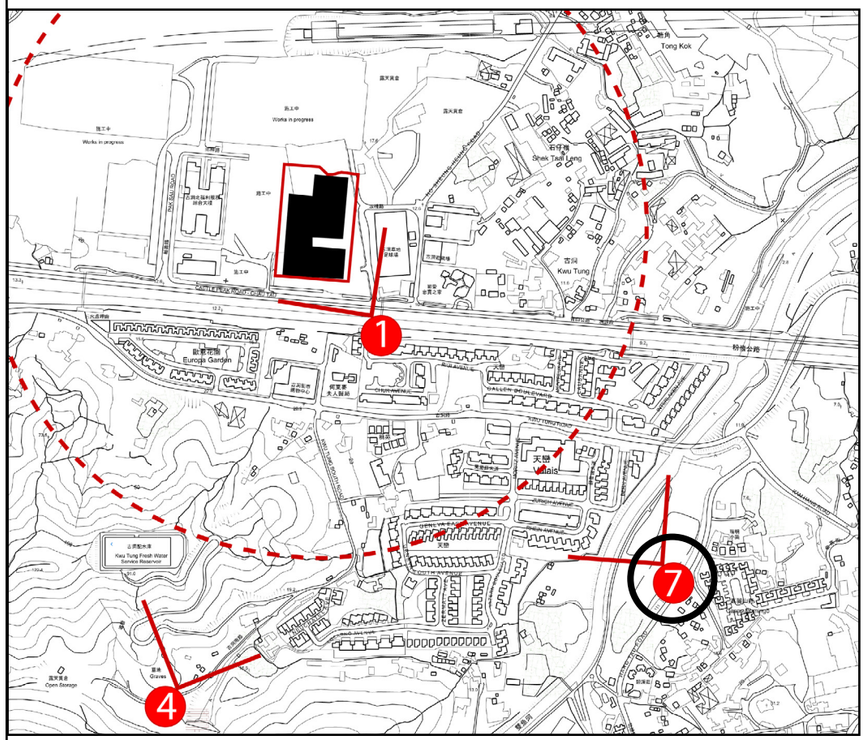
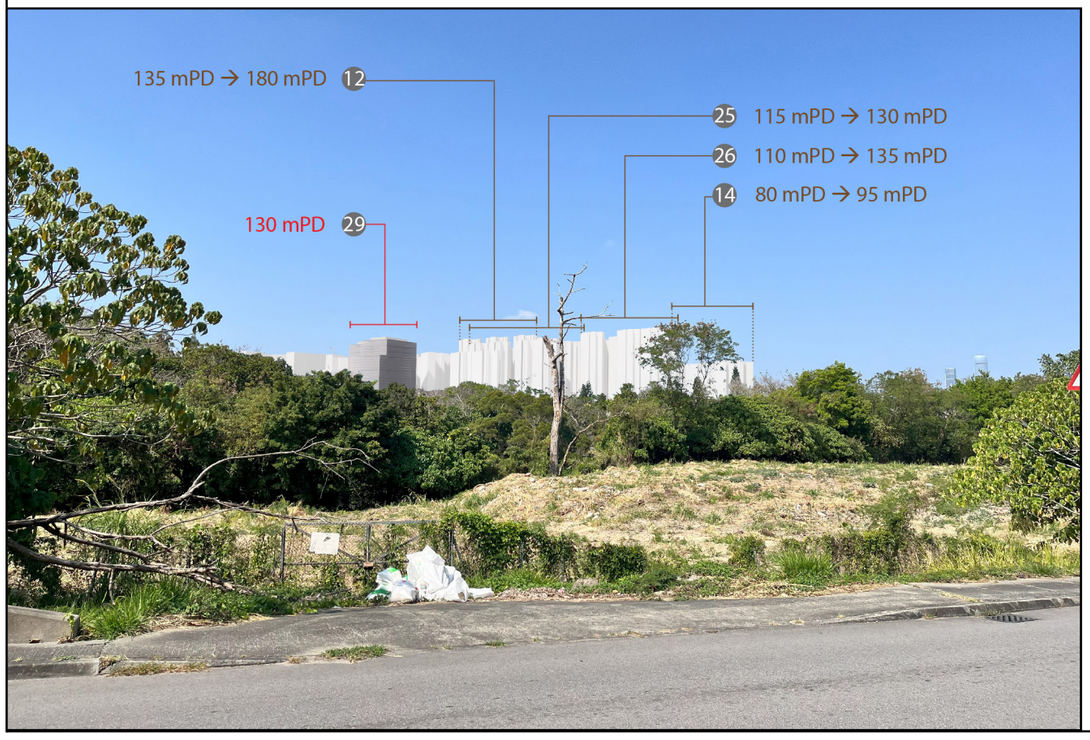
VIEW POINT 7 LOCATION

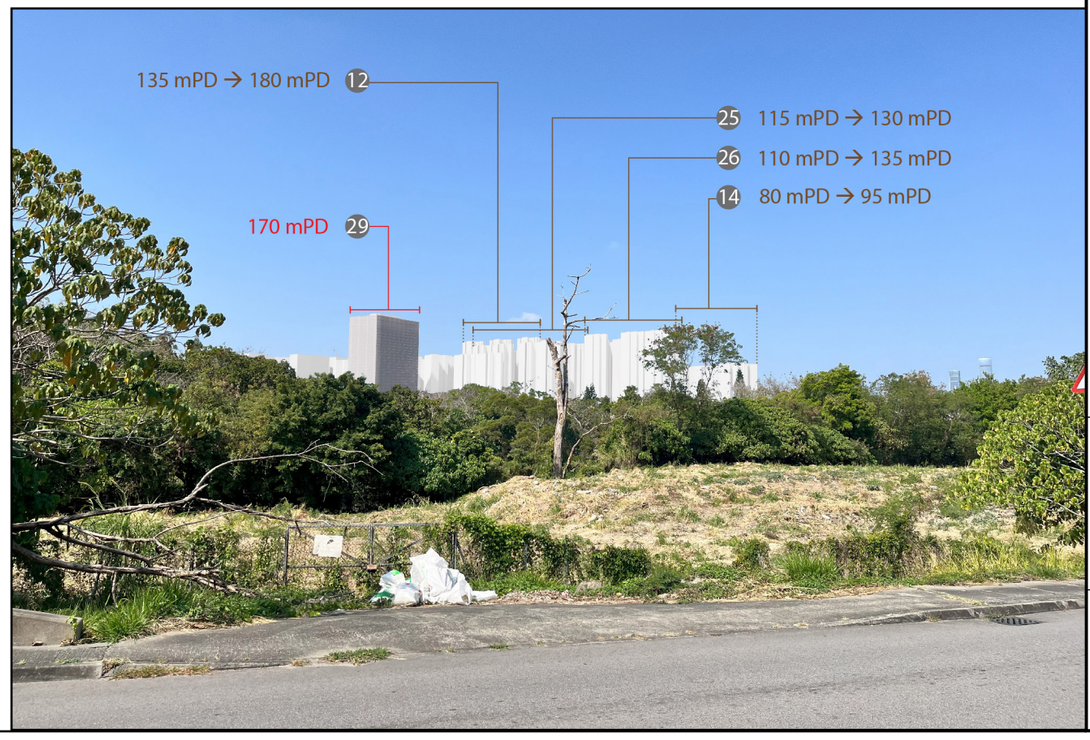


EXISTING VIEW

BASELINE SCHEME PHOTOMONTAGE



PROPOSED SCHEME PHOTOMONTAGE



PROJECT

S.16 APPLICATION FOR BUILDING HEIGH RELAXATION FOR JOINT-USER COMPLEX AND JOINT-USER GENERAL OFFICE BUILDING, AT AREA 29, KWU TUNG NORTH

FIGURE NO.

FIGURE 4.7

DRAWING TITLE

VIEW POINT 7 - HANG TAU ROAD NEAR CASAS DOMINGO

LEGEND

29 Planning Area No.

Baseline/Proposed BHR of Application Site

Approved BHR Relaxation under Planning Application A/KTN/93

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