

Planning Application No. A/SK-HC/354 - Review Application

Our Response to Departmental Comments in respect of the Application for a Temporary Private Garden on Lot 429 S. B (Part) in DD244 and the adjoining Government land (House No. 450 Ho Chung New Village, Sai Kung)

I. Revised proposal of a simple private garden with a cultivation plot of Organic Vegetables

The Applicant Ms. LAM Yeuk Yin has now decided to grow organic vegetables in the proposed private garden.

Ms LAM remarked that in view of departmental comments given before plus the fact that there is no public sewer at the present location and in the vicinity, she now desires to grow organic vegetables inside the proposed private garden. The green house would be taken away, part of the lawn immediately in front of the house would be paved and the remainder of the area would be used to grow organic vegetables.

The Plan showing this latest proposal is at Attachment 1.

A compiled Report on growing Organic Vegetables is at Attachment 2 for reference.

II. Comments from Construction Division, WSD as at 13.2.2025

The concerns of WSD are addressed by Mr PAU Wah Lung - a Registered Architect, Fellow Member of HKIA & an Authorized Person – Architect.

Mr PAU has provided a revised and updated Risk Assessment Report. He is of the view that the revised proposal of a simple garden with the growing of organic vegetables, and with the setting up of the sand trap plus the septic tank immediately beneath land at Lot 429 S. B (Part) in DD244 will not

cause any contamination to the Water Gathering Ground (WGG), and will not pose any threat to water quality in and around the area.

The aforesaid Risk Assessment Report (Revised) is attached at Appendix II.

III. Comments from Environmental Protection Department (EPD) as at 24.2.2025

With reference to Paragraph 2 of the comment and enquiry, please note following clarifications:

- (i) In the s.17 application the Applicant proposes the growing of Organic Vegetables in the private garden. Please note the Report on growing Organic Vegetables at Attachment 2 of this Response Reply for reference.
- (ii) As organic farming is a system of agricultural production based on the use of natural processes and resources, only compost tea will be used as fertilizer and no chemicals or genetically modified organisms are being used whatsoever. Therefore, chemicals such as pesticide, herbicides, toxicants, chemical solvents, etc. will not be stored or used within the applicant site under the latest proposal.
- (iii) Our current plan is to let any surplus water arising from the growing of organic vegetables to pass through a proposed sand trap and dispose to a new septic tank to be constructed at Lot 429 S. B (Part) in DD244.

The Applicant will fully comply with the advice of EPD in observing the Water Pollution Control Ordinance (WPCO) 'in handling and discharging the waste water arising from the proposed temporary use'.

IV. Comments from Director of Agriculture Fisheries and Conservation (DAFC) as at 24.2.2025

We are familiar with the area. There are 3 houses in the southwest of House No. 450 Ho Chung New Village, and a cluster of 11 houses across the track. Between the houses and the stream course in the north there is a mud track and wild bushes are grown on both sides of the track. We are of the opinion that it is more suitable for human habitation in and around the area of the

houses rather than normal farming activities as the latter would bring about unsanitary conditions (such as nasty smell, mosquitoes, flies and insects).

We are of the view that open-field cultivation, greenhouses, and plant nurseries, etc. may require chemical fertilizers in vegetable growing and flower plant culture. Such activities would certainly have harmful effect to the WGG in the vicinity if wastewater is directly run into mud and eventually go to the stream course.

The latest proposal of a simple garden for growing organic vegetables is hygienic and environment-friendly, and the set up of the septic tank plus a sand trap for treating wastewater if any thus created would have very little effect, if not none at all on the WGG.

A compiled Report on growing Organic Vegetables is at Attachment 2 for reference.

We are of the view that the growing of organic vegetables in the proposed private garden should satisfy the 'agricultural perspective' as advocated by DAFC.

V. Comments from DLO/SK as at 24.2.2025

DLO/SK's comments from Items 1 to 10 are noted.

As a result of DLO/SK's comment and advice, Applicant now decides to have a simple private garden for growing Organic Vegetables.

The green house would be taken away. All other unauthorized structures within the garden area would be cleared. Details of the latest proposal are described at Paragraph I of this Response Reply.

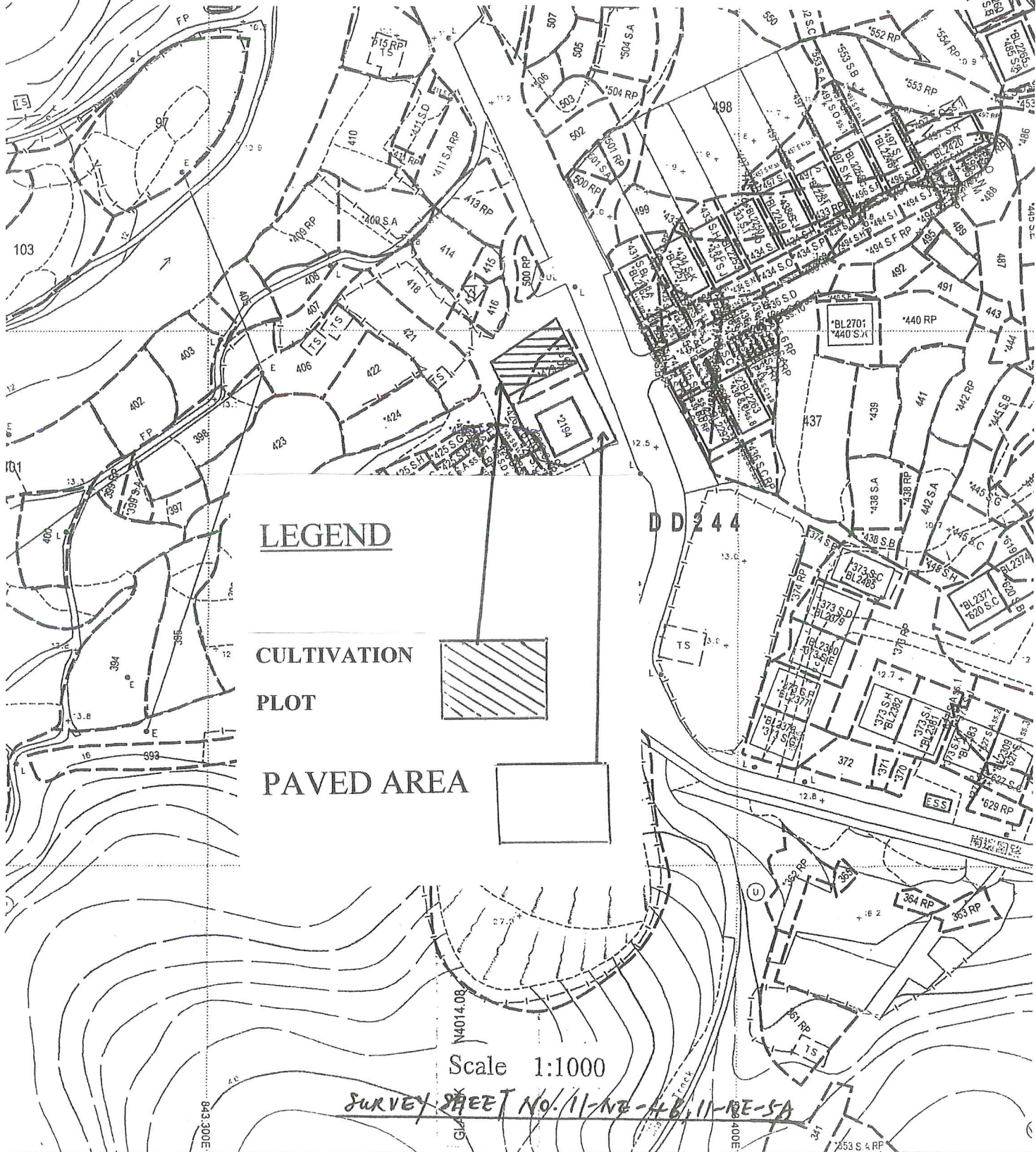
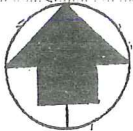
Moreover, Applicant is willing to pay any outstanding Short Term Tenancy and Waiver fees as required according to DLO/SK's practice.

As part of the wall stands on Lots Nos. 426 S. B RP & 426 S. C RP in DD244, owners' consent are sought. The Applicant is confident that consent could be obtained.

---End of Response Reply---

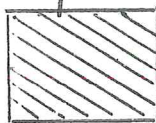
REVISED PLAN SHOWING PROPOSED PRIVATE GARDEN

Lot No.429 S. B (Part) in DD244 & adjoining Government land (House No. 450 Ho Chung New Village, Sai Kung)

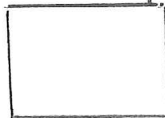


LEGEND

CULTIVATION PLOT



PAVED AREA



Scale 1:1000

SURVEY SHEET NO. 11-NE-4B, 11-RE-5A

The growing of Organic Vegetables at the proposed private garden at Lot No. 429 S. B (Part) in DD244 and adjoining Government land (House No. 450 Ho Chung New Village, Sai Kung, N.T.)

The following information is advised by those professionals in the trade of growing of Organic Vegetables:-

I. What is Organic Farming?

Organic farming is a system of agricultural production based on the use of natural processes and resources – no chemicals or genetically modified organisms are used – in order to obtain healthier and more nutritious food while protecting soil fertility, preventing the spread of pests and respecting the environment. It is a system that, instead of using agricultural inputs, carries out specific practices depending on the characteristics of each ecosystem.

II. Fertilizer used – Compost tea and Composting

Compost tea works well as a homemade plant fertilizer since it contains a wide array of nutrients and beneficial bacteria which are best for red leaf lettuce.

Composting is the act of combining organic materials to encourage healthy decomposition. To make compost, organic materials like food waste grass clippings, newspapers, and coffee grounds are layered together to create the perfect environment for microbes, fungi, and other decomposition bacteria to break them down into an all-natural fertilizer.

The benefits of compost include providing nutrients to crops as fertilizer, acting as a soil conditioner, increasing the humus or humic acid contents of the soil, and introducing beneficial microbes that help to suppress pathogens in the soil and reduces soil-borne diseases.

III. Organic pesticide used

Use the organic pesticide, BTK (*Bacillus thuringiensis kurstaki*). BTK is a naturally occurring microorganism that sickens and kills caterpillars without harming butterflies, bees, and other beneficial insects.

IV. Specific steps to be adopted by Applicant, Ms. LAM

Step 1. Choose the Right Variety of Lettuce

- Butterhead lettuce is chosen as it is a good source of carotenoid antioxidants which helps to protect our cells from free radical damage that can lead to chronic diseases like cancer.
- It is also High in iron and vitamins A & K.

Step 2. Prepare the Soil

- Soil Quality: Lettuce grows best in well-draining, fertile soil rich in organic matter.
- Soil pH: Aim for a slightly acidic to neutral pH (6.0–7.0).
- Amend the Soil: Add compost or well-rotted manure to improve soil fertility and structure. Avoid synthetic fertilizers to maintain organic practices.

Step 3. Planting Lettuce

- Sow seeds directly in the garden and transplant seedlings.
- Plant seeds $\frac{1}{4}$ inch deep and 1 inch apart.
- Thin seedlings to 6–12 inches apart once they have a few leaves.
- Spacing: Allow enough space for air circulation to prevent disease.

Step 4. Watering

- Consistent Moisture: Lettuce needs consistent moisture but avoid waterlogging.
- Water deeply 1–2 times per week, depending on weather.
- Mulching: Use organic mulch (straw, grass clippings, or shredded leaves) to retain soil moisture and regulate temperature.

Step 5. Organic Pest and Disease Management

- Common Pests: Watch for aphids, slugs, and caterpillars. Use organic solutions like:
 - Organic pesticide to be used as listed at Paragraph III, and also

- Neem oil or insecticidal soap for aphids.
- Beer traps or diatomaceous earth for slugs.
- Hand-pick caterpillars or use row covers.
- Diseases: Prevent fungal diseases by avoiding overhead watering and ensuring good air circulation. Crop rotation may be applied annually to prevent soil-borne diseases.

Step 6. Fertilizing

- As mentioned at Paragraph II and also use fish emulsion, or seaweed extract every 3–4 weeks to provide nutrients.

Step 7. Harvesting

- Leaf Lettuce: Harvest outer leaves as needed, allowing the plant to continue growing.
- Head Lettuce: Harvest the entire head when it reaches full size.
- Timing: Harvest in the morning for the best flavor and crispness.

Step 8. Succession Planting

- To enjoy a continuous harvest, plant new seeds every 2–3 weeks.

V. Conclusion

By following the advice of the professionals and the steps, Ms. LAM is confident that she can grow healthy, organic lettuce in the proposed private garden.

And with the setting up of the sand trap plus the septic tank immediately beneath part of the proposed private garden area at Lot 429 S. B in DD244 as advised by the architect Mr. PAU Wah Lung, it is believed that the organic vegetable growing will not cause any contamination to the Water Gathering Ground, and will not pose any threat to water quality in and around the area.

Prepared by Mr. YEUNG Siu Fung in collaboration with the Applicant, Ms. LAM Yeuk Yin

1st March 2025