

S.16 PLANNING APPLICATION

**Proposed Minor Relaxation of Maximum Total Plot Ratio and
Building Height Restriction for Proposed Public Housing
Development at Chung Nga Road West, Tai Po, New
Territories**

Visual Impact Assessment

August 2024

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1. Introduction

1.1 This Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) is prepared by the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) as the project proponent in support of a Section 16 Planning Application for minor relaxation of maximum total plot ratio (PR) and building height restriction (BHR) for the public housing development at Chung Nga Road West (CNRW), Tai Po, New Territories (the Application Site) (**Figure 1** in the Supporting Planning Statement). The structure of this VIA has taken reference to the requirements set out in the “Town Planning Board Guidelines on Submission of Visual Impact Assessment for Planning Applications to the Town Planning Board” (TPB PG-No. 41). The site context and development proposal are in Sections 2 and 3 of the Supporting Planning Statement.

2. Assessment Area

2.1 An Assessment Area is delineated for the VIA to cover the area of visual influence within which the proposed public housing development is visible from the identified key public VPs. The assessment boundary is set out with regard to the size of the development, the site context, and the distance and location of the public viewers.

2.2 As per the TPB PG – No. 41, the Assessment Area (i.e. visual envelope) should be determined having regard to the size of the proposed public housing development, its potential visibility from the selected key public VPs and the actual site and surrounding topographical conditions by ground inspection. As cited in the TPB PG – No. 41, when the viewer is at a distance equals to three times of the height of the building, the viewer will tend to see the building as part of a group rather than a single building. Since the maximum building height of the proposed public housing development to cater for minor relaxation of maximum total PR and possible adoption of future Modular Integrated Construction (MiC) is 172mPD with base level of 12mPD, a radius of about 480m from the closest point of the proposed public housing development has been set as a starting point in defining the boundary of the Assessment Area.

2.3 Additionally, as per Para. 4.5 of the TPB PG – No. 41, key kinetic and static VPs, such as popular areas used by the public or tourists for outdoor activities, recreation, rest, sitting-out, leisure, walking and sight-seeing, and prominent travel routes have been taken into consideration when selecting the VPs.

3. Visual Context and Visual Elements

3.1 The Application Site is located in the northern fringe of Tai Po town centre, accessible from Chung Nga Road at its south. Key visual elements surrounding the Subject Site are summarized as below.

- Existing public housing developments (i.e. Chung Nga Court and Fu Heng Estate) are found at the Application Site's south across Chung Nga Road with BHR of 110mPD.
- Public housing development at Chung Nga Road East and Tai Po Area 9 (now known as Fu Tip Estate) are located at the Application Site's east and northeast with a maximum building height of 143mPD.
- Hong Chi Pinehill Integrated Vocational Training Centre (50mPD), Tai Po Hospital (52mPD) and Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital (45mPD) are located at the northeast, east and southeast of the Application Site respectively.
- Predominantly 3-storey low rise residential cluster e.g. Nam Hang Tsuen is found at the southwest of the Application Site with BH range of about 12mPD to 20mPD.

4. Identification of Viewpoints

4.1 A total of six viewpoints (VPs) from different directions and distances, which were used in the approved Visual Appraisal during the previous Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) amendment, are adopted (**Figures 1&2**). These VPs represent the views of pedestrian nodes which are accessible by the public and/or from key public open spaces. A brief evaluation of the selected VPs is outlined as below -

VP1: Playground at Chung Nga Court

4.2 This VP is located at about 100m to the southwest of the Application Site. It is a playground located inside Chung Nga Court for the enjoyment of the users living in the neighbourhoods. The visual context is characterised by high-rise residential buildings at Chung Nga Court and Fu Heng Estate, as well as trees surrounding the playground. The public viewers will be the users of the playground.

VP2: Near Chuen On Road Garden

- 4.3 This VP is located at about 200m to the southeast of the Application Site near Chuen On Road Garden, Fu Heng Estate and Fu Tip Estate Social Service Building. Chuen On Road Garden is frequently used by local residents of Fu Heng Estate and Fu Tip Estate. The visual context consists of Heng Yiu House on the left, roadside trees along Chung Nga Road and Fu Tip Estate Podium and Social Service Building in the foreground with open sky view in the background. The public viewers will be the users of Chuen On Road Garden.

VP3: Public Transport Interchange (PTI) at the South of Tai Po Hospital

- 4.4 This VP is located at about 300m to the southeast of the Application Site. This view is taken from the PTI outside Tai Po Hospital which is easily accessible and is frequently visited by staff and visitors of the hospital as well as other users of the PTI. The visual context consists of roadside trees along Chuen On Road with Fu Tip House and Ban Tip House of Fu Tip Estate located on the right. The public viewers will be the users of the PTI, staff and visitors of Tai Po Hospital.

VP4: Playground at the Junction of Ting Kok Road and Fung Yuen Road

- 4.5 This VP is located at about 900m to the southeast of the Application Site. The view is taken from Fung Yuen Playground located at the junction of Ting Kok Road and Fung Yuen Road which is under the management of Leisure and Cultural Services Department providing outdoor soccer pitch for public use. The visual context consists of the vegetation between the Application Site and this VP. The public viewers will be the users of the playground.

VP5: Agricultural Land at the North of Fung Yuen Butterfly Reserve Centre

- 4.6 This VP is located at 1km to the northeast of the Application Site. Since there is no direct view to the Application Site from Fung Yuen Butterfly Reserve Centre which is enclosed by existing trees and vegetation, this VP at the north of the Centre is therefore selected to demonstrate the visual impact to Fung Yuen area. This VP is accessible through Fung Yuen Road with agricultural activities nearby. The visual context consists of the high-rise residential development, i.e. Mont Vert and the public housing development in Fu Tip Estate at its south and southwest respectively. The public viewers will be the residents and visitors in and around Fung Yuen.

VP6: Wilson Trail

- 4.7 This VP is located at about 350m at the north of the Application Site. This view is taken at Wilson Trail which is one of the popular hiking trail and can be easily accessed by the public with a panoramic view of Tai Po New Town. The viewing distance is relatively far with visual context consists of Tai Po New Town and Tai Po Industrial Area. The public viewers will be the general public, such as hikers.

5. Assessment of Visual Impact

- 5.1 The objective of this VIA is to evaluate the visual impact of the proposed minor relaxation of maximum total PR from 6 to 6.9 and BHR from 140mPD to 172mPD. The relevant appraisal in relation to Visual Composition, Visual Obstruction, Effects on Public Viewers and Effects on Visual Resources are focused on the changes between the OZP-Compliant Scheme and the Proposed Scheme.

VP1: Playground at Chung Nga Court (Figure 3)

- 5.2 High-rise residential developments at Chung Nga Court and Fu Heng Estate dominated the view at this VP. The proposed development at the Application Site will be completely blocked by Chung Nga Court and there will be no effect on the public viewers and visual resources contributed by the proposed development. The proposed increase in PR and BHR is not visible at this VP and it will not result in any adverse visual impact to the public viewers represented by this VP.

VP2: Chuen On Road Garden (Figure 4)

- 5.3 **Visual Composition:** View from this VP consists of Heng Yiu House on the left, roadside trees along Chung Nga Road, a section of Cloudy Hill backdrop and Fu Tip Estate Podium and Social Service Building in the foreground with open sky view in the background.
- 5.4 **Visual Obstruction:** Although the increase in building height of the proposed development inevitably adds more visual bulk to the locality, yet, with the high-rise public housing development of Fu Heng Estate in the vicinity, the proposed residential block is considered compatible with the local character. The magnitude of visual change is considered slight to moderate.

- 5.5 **Effect on Public Viewers:** This VP represents potential impacts on the users of Chuen On Road Garden. The sensitivity of the public viewers of this VP is considered medium as viewers generally have a glimpse of the proposed development from about 200m to the southeast of the Application Site. Although the increase in the building height of the proposed development will cast additional visual obstruction to the open sky view, the backdrop of Cloudy Hill is still visible at this VP. The effect on the public viewers is slightly to moderately adverse.
- 5.6 **Effect on Visual Resources:** The proposed development will not obstruct the view to this mountain backdrop. Part of the open sky is still visible from this VP. The effect on visual resources is slightly to moderately adverse.
- 5.7 To conclude, the proposed increase in PR and BHR will result in slightly to moderately adverse visual impact to the public viewers represented by this VP.

VP3: PTI at the South of Tai Po Hospital (Figure 5)

- 5.8 **Visual Composition:** View from this VP consists of roadside planting along Chuen On Road in the foreground and Cloudy Hill with open sky view in the background.
- 5.9 **Visual Obstruction:** The proposed development is largely covered by the roadside planting along Chuen On Road from the VP with minimal impact to the open sky view. There will be not impact on view to the Cloudy Hill.
- 5.10 **Effect on Public Viewers:** This VP represents potential impacts on the users of the public transport interchange at the south of Tai Po Hospital, staff and visitors of the hospital. Viewers generally have a glimpse of the proposed development from a distance of about 300m while waiting for transportation. As the proposed development at the Application Site will be shielded by dense vegetation at this VP, there will be minimal effect on the public viewers. The slight magnitude of change in the proposed development, alongside the medium sensitivity of public viewers at this VP, will have a slightly adverse visual effect on the public viewers.
- 5.11 **Effects on Visual Resources:** The proposed development at the Application Site is largely obstructed by the dense vegetation at this VP; there will be minimal effect on visual resources contributed by the proposed development.

- 5.12 To conclude, the proposed increase in PR and BHR will result in slightly adverse visual impact to the public viewers represented by this VP.

VP4: Playground at the Junction of Ting Kok Road and Fung Yuen Road
(Figure 6)

- 5.13 View from this VP consists of a soccer pitch, a refuse collection point behind the fencing and ample vegetation in the background. The proposed development at the Application Site will be shielded by dense vegetation and is not visible at this VP; there will be minimal effect on the public viewers and visual resources contributed by the proposed development. The proposed increase in PR and BHR will not result in any adverse visual impact to the public viewers represented by this VP.

VP5: Agricultural Land at the North of Fung Yuen Butterfly Reserve Centre
(Figure 7)

- 5.14 This VP is dominated by agricultural land with high-rise residential building blocks (i.e. Fu Tip Estate Mont Vert). The proposed development at the Application Site will be shielded by the dense vegetation and is not visible at this VP; there will be no effect on the public viewers and visual resources contributed by the proposed development. The proposed increase in PR and BHR will not result in any adverse visual impact to the public viewers represented by this VP.

VP6: Wilson Trail **(Figure 8)**

- 5.15 **Visual Composition:** This VP comprises woodland along the Wilson Trail on the Cloudy Hill in the foreground and a panoramic view of the Tai Po New Town. As Tai Po is a well-developed new town, the sense of openness and greenery offered from this VP have been compromised by the developments established. The public housing development at the Application Site is visually compatible with the surrounding and blend in well to the built environment of Tai Po New Town. There will be slight effect on the public viewers and visual resources contributed by the proposed development. The proposed increase in PR and BHR will result in slightly adverse visual impact to the public viewers represented by this VP.

- 5.16 **Visual Obstruction:** Views of the green mountain slope in the foreground and the open sky and the sea in the background from this VP are key positive visual resources at this VP. The proposed development does not result in significant visual obstruction. There will only be minimal visual changes to the visual openness.
- 5.17 **Effect on Public Viewers:** This long-range VP represents potential impacts on the hikers and travellers of Wilson Trail who are of transient nature. Viewers generally have a glimpse of the proposed development from a distance of over 300m while hiking. As the proposed development will harmoniously blend into the existing built environment, it will have minimal visual impact on the public viewers. The slight magnitude of change in the proposed development, alongside the medium sensitivity of public viewers at this VP, will have a slightly adverse visual effect on the public viewers.
- 5.18 **Effect on Visual Resources:** The proposed development located at the fringe of the Tai Po New Town is compatible with the surrounding development and will emerge with the existing built environment. There will only be slight obstruction to the green backdrop, but the woodland in the foreground as well as open sky and sea views in the background will not be affected.
- 5.19 To conclude, the proposed development is unlikely to cause any significant visual impact. The proposed increase in PR and BHR will have slightly adverse visual impacts from this VP.

6. Summary and Mitigation Measures

6.1 The visual impact of all VPs are summarized below:

VPs	Magnitude of Visual Change (Negligible, Slight, Moderate, Substantial)	Visual Sensitivity of Public Viewers (Low, Medium, High)	Resultant Overall Visual Impact (Negligible, Slightly Adverse, Moderately Adverse, Significantly Adverse)
VP1 Playground at Chung Nga Court	Negligible	Low	Negligible
VP2 Near Chuen On Road Garden	Slight to medium	Medium	Slightly to Moderately Adverse
VP3 PTI at the South of Tai Po Hospital	Slight	Medium	Slightly Adverse
VP4 Playground at the Junction of Ting Kok Road and Fung Yuen Road	Negligible	Low	Negligible
VP5 Agricultural Land at the North of Fung Yuen Butterfly Reserve Centre	Negligible	Low	Negligible
VP6 Wilson Trail	Slight	Medium	Slightly Adverse

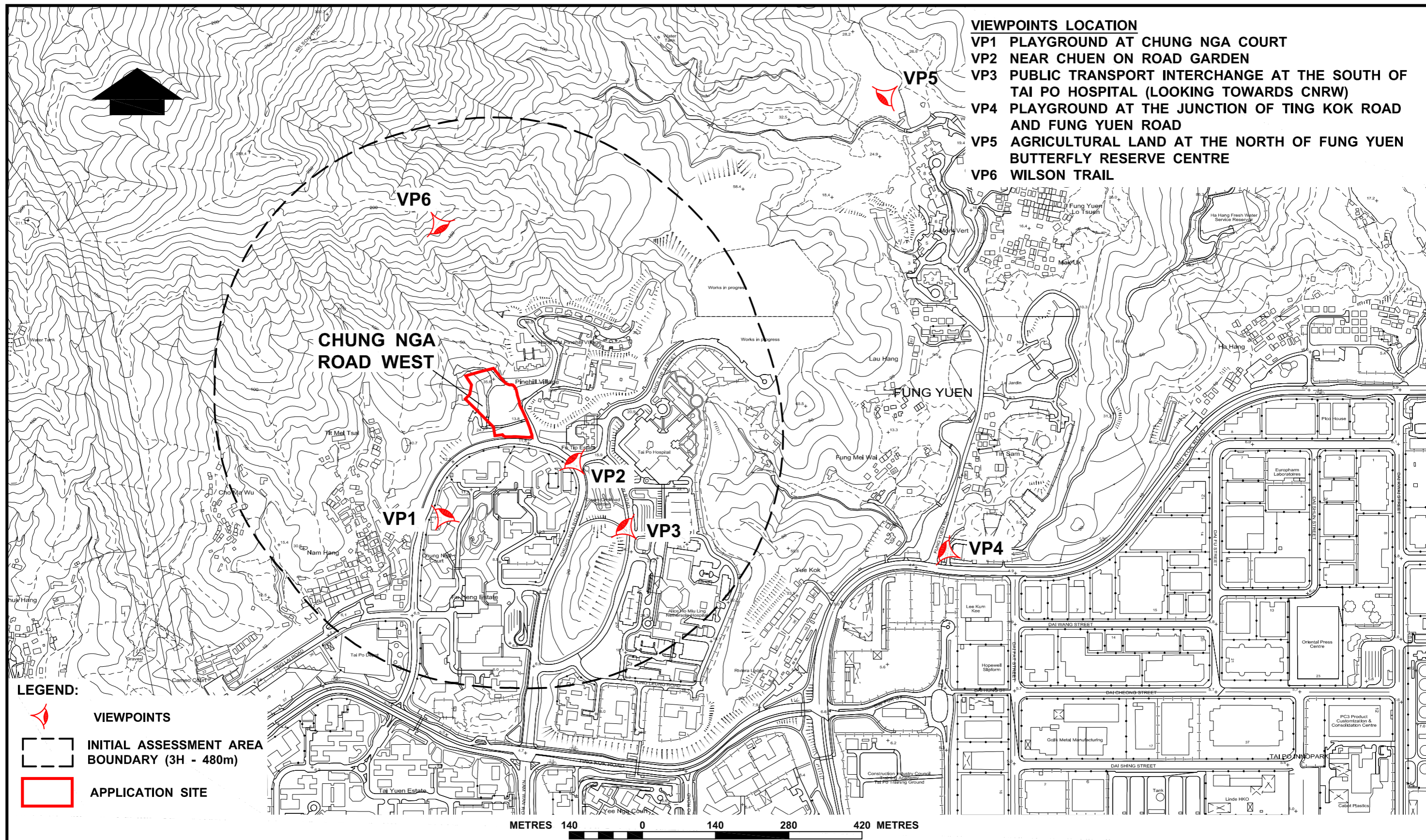
6.2 To conclude, three out of six VPs have negligible overall visual impact while VP2, VP3 and VP 6 have slightly to moderately adverse visual impact since the sense of openness offered from these VPs would be slightly compromised by the development. Yet, efforts have been made to mitigate the overall impact to a more acceptable level. The design measures to improve the schemes are summarized as below -

- The building block will be positioned to facilitate the 20m wide visual corridor from Chuen On Road Garden to Cloudy Hill, thus views towards the mountain backdrop to the north would be preserved.
- In a wider context, the proposed building height would blend in with the overall stepped height profile descending from the northern portion of the New Town i.e. the Application Site, via Fu Heng and Tai Yuen Estates to Tai Po Market.
- Open lawn plazas with greenery are created at podium level for the provision of open spaces. Landscape garden and children/communal play area will be provided to ensure sufficient leisure spaces for residents, to enhance greenery and to reduce visual impact.
- Carpark and social welfare facilities are built-over with children/communal play area with landscape which maximize the greenery coverage and enhance the visual impact.
- The color scheme and texture of materials of the domestic blocks have been carefully worked out. Simple and natural medium texture paint on fair faced concrete, soft and pure white colour background highlighted with a mix of pastel but energetic orange, yellow and green colour pattern imitating the movement of butterflies flying from surrounding butterfly reserve at Fung Yuen. Together with treatments, such as the provision of greening features, to break the bulkiness of the massing and add visual interest to the developments.

- Minimum 20% green coverage with half of the at-grade / at ground floor of residential block planting will be provided through providing landscape elements at various levels. Open lawn plazas will be created to promote the harmonious co-existence of residents and the nature. Vertical greening and roof top greening will be incorporated as far as practicable to enhance the aesthetic value of the proposed development.




7. Conclusion

7.1 This VIA is prepared in support of a Section 16 Planning Application for minor relaxation of maximum total PR from 6 to 6.9 and BHR from 140mPD to 172mPD for the public housing development at the Application Site. The six VPs chosen for this VIA are consistent with those in the previously approved visual appraisal during the plan amendment process. Comparing the OZP-Compliant Scheme and Proposed Scheme, significant visual impact on the proposed increase in PR and BHR for the public housing development is not anticipated.



- VIEWPOINTS LOCATION**
- VP1 PLAYGROUND AT CHUNG NGA COURT
 - VP2 NEAR CHUEN ON ROAD GARDEN
 - VP3 PUBLIC TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE AT THE SOUTH OF TAI PO HOSPITAL (LOOKING TOWARDS CNRW)
 - VP4 PLAYGROUND AT THE JUNCTION OF TING KOK ROAD AND FUNG YUEN ROAD
 - VP5 AGRICULTURAL LAND AT THE NORTH OF FUNG YUEN BUTTERFLY RESERVE CENTRE
 - VP6 WILSON TRAIL

LEGEND:

-  VIEWPOINTS
-  INITIAL ASSESSMENT AREA BOUNDARY (3H - 480m)
-  APPLICATION SITE

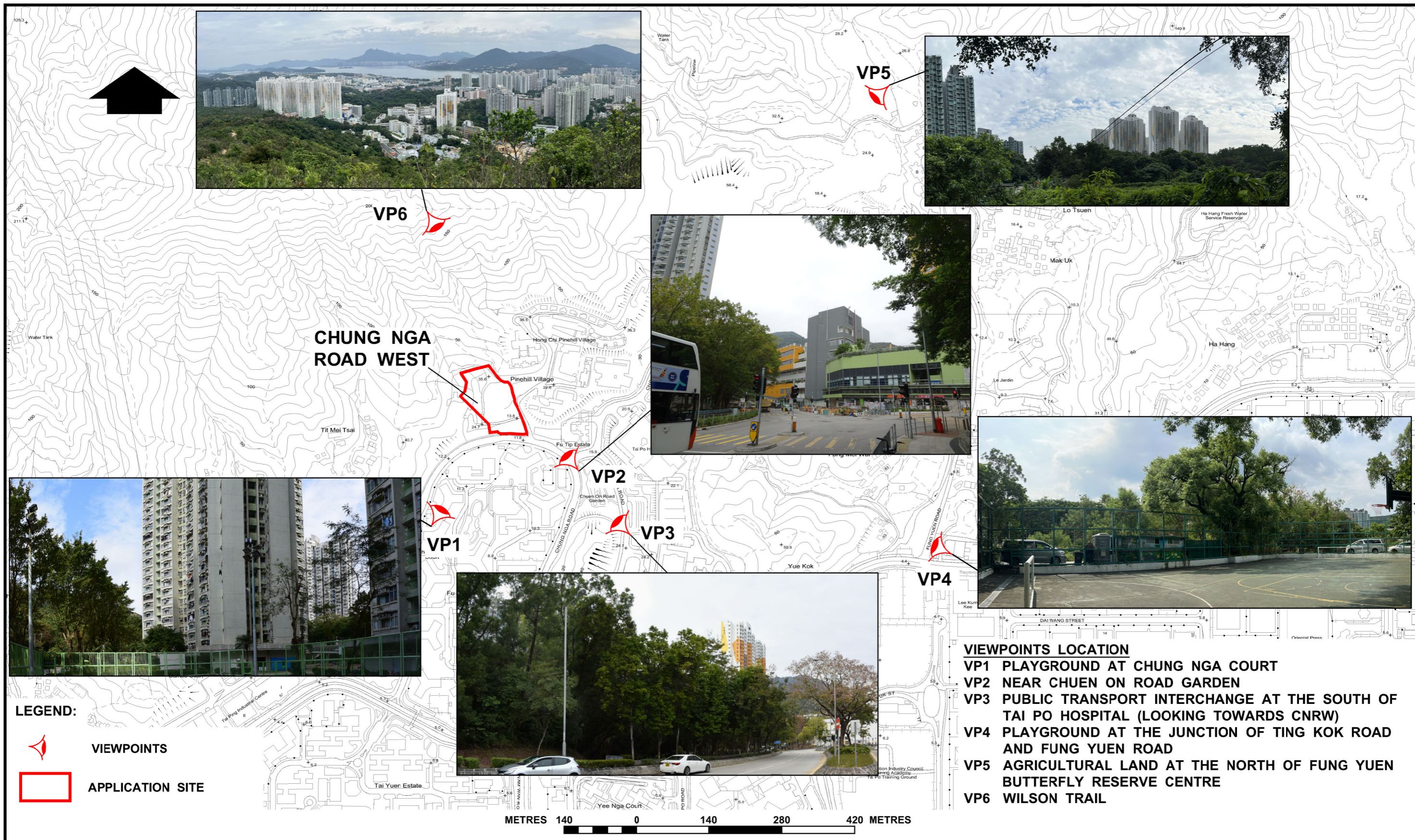
METRES 140 0 140 280 420 METRES

LOCATION OF VIEWPOINTS

 HOUSING DEPARTMENT
PLANNING SECTIONS

Figure 1

DATE :
26. 8. 2024



PHOTOS OF VIEWPOINTS

HOUSING DEPARTMENT
PLANNING SECTIONS

Figure 2

DATE :
26. 8. 2024





OZP - Compliant Scheme

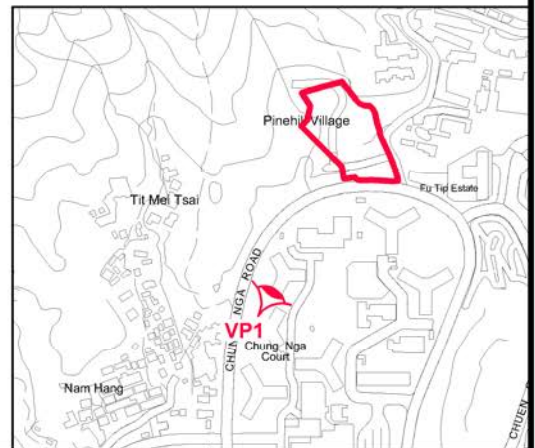


Proposed Scheme



LEGEND:

-  OZP - Compliant Scheme (140 mPD)
-  Differences between the OZP - Compliant Scheme and Proposed Scheme (169.04 mPD)
-  Possible Highest Building Height (172mPD) at Main Roof due to Future MiC Development
-  Application Site



PHOTOMONTAGE AT VIEWPOINT 1 (PLAYGROUND AT CHUNG NGA COURT)



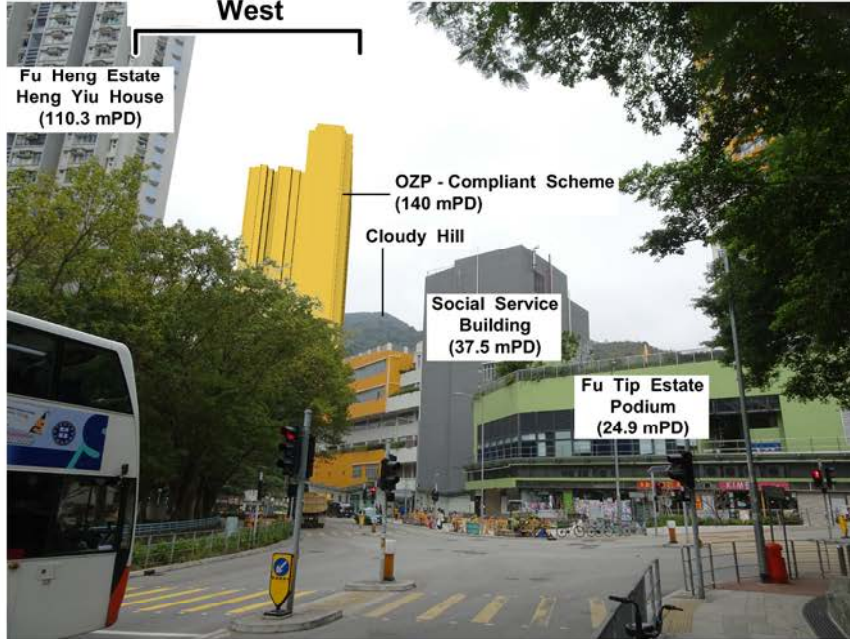
HOUSING DEPARTMENT
PLANNING SECTIONS

Figure 3

DATE :
26. 8. 2024

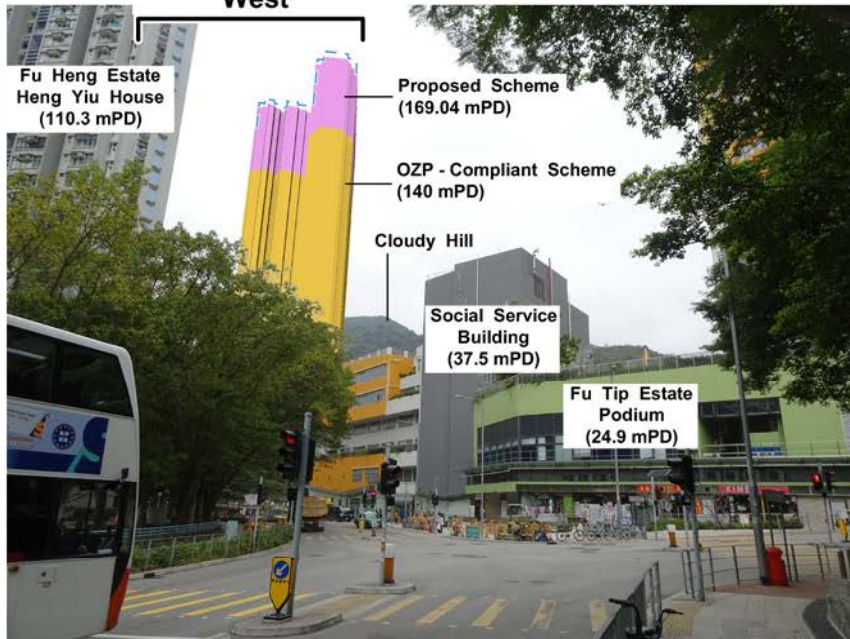
OZP - Compliant Scheme

Chung Nga Road
West



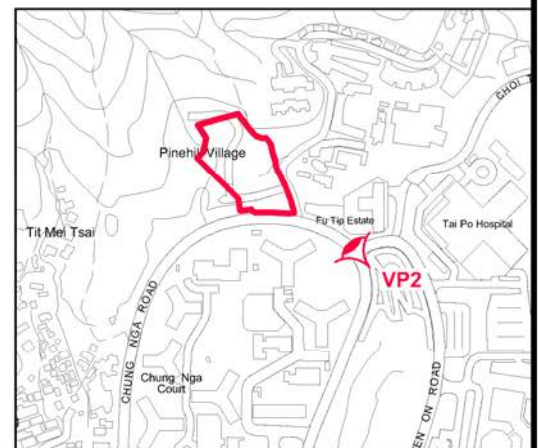
Proposed Scheme

Chung Nga Road
West



LEGEND:

- OZP - Compliant Scheme (140 mPD)
- Differences between the OZP - Compliant Scheme and Proposed Scheme (169.04 mPD)
- Possible Highest Building Height (172mPD) at Main Roof due to Future MiC Development
- Application Site



**PHOTOMONTAGE AT VIEWPOINT 2
(NEAR CHUEN ON ROAD GARDEN)**



**HOUSING DEPARTMENT
PLANNING SECTIONS**

Figure 4

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OZP - Compliant Scheme

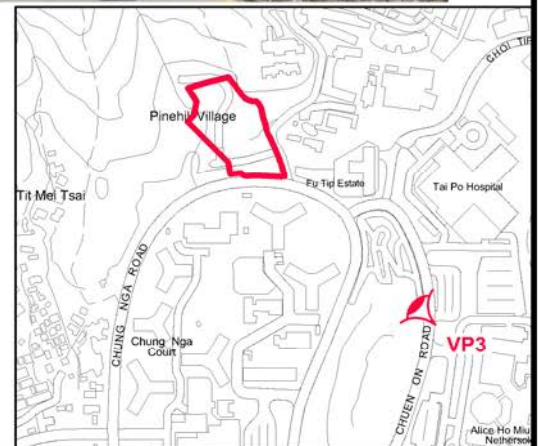


Proposed Scheme



LEGEND:

-  OZP - Compliant Scheme (140 mPD)
-  Differences between the OZP - Compliant Scheme and Proposed Scheme (169.04 mPD)
-  Possible Highest Building Height (172mPD) at Main Roof due to Future MiC Development
-  Application Site



**PHOTOMONTAGE AT VIEWPOINT 3
(PUBLIC TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE
AT THE SOUTH OF TAI PO HOSPITAL
(LOOKING TOWARDS CNRW))**

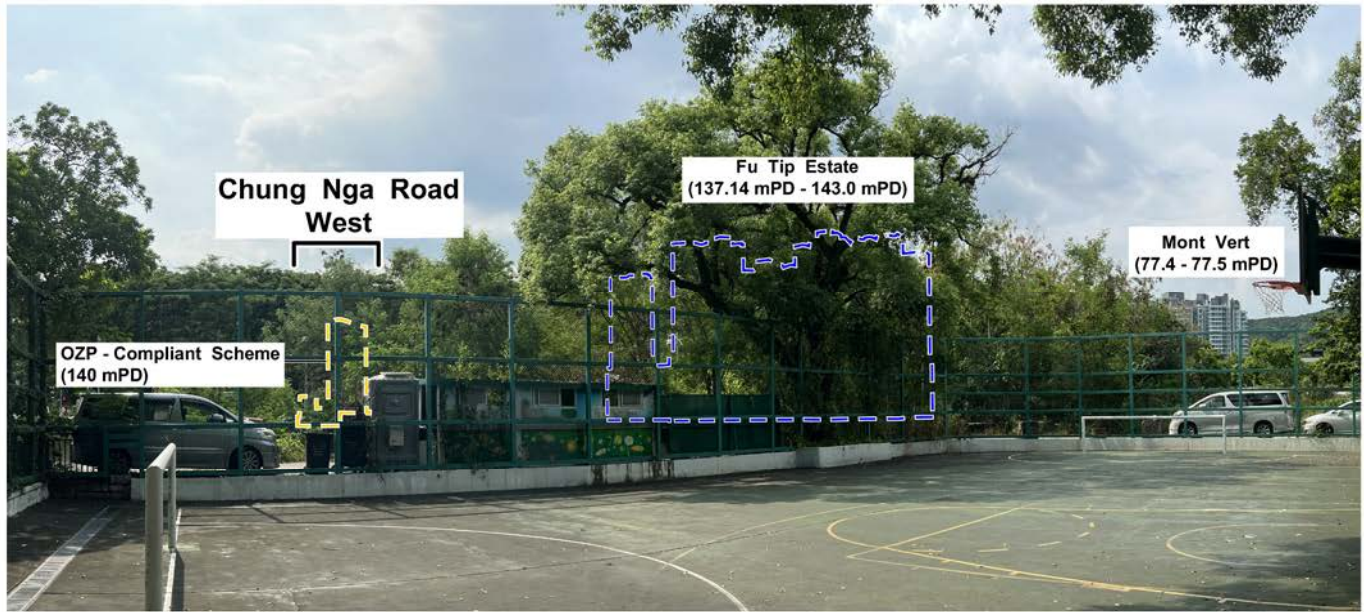


**HOUSING DEPARTMENT
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Figure 5

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26. 8. 2024**






OZP - Compliant Scheme

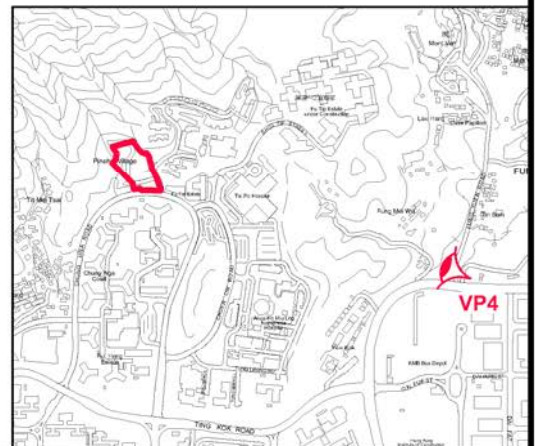


Proposed Scheme



LEGEND:

-  OZP - Compliant Scheme (140 mPD)
-  Differences between the OZP - Compliant Scheme and Proposed Scheme (169.04 mPD)
-  Fu Tip Estate
-  Possible Highest Building Height (172mPD) at Main Roof due to Future MiC Development
-  Application Site



**PHOTOMONTAGE AT VIEWPOINT 4
(PLAYGROUND AT THE JUNCTION OF
TING KOK ROAD AND FUNG YUEN ROAD)**

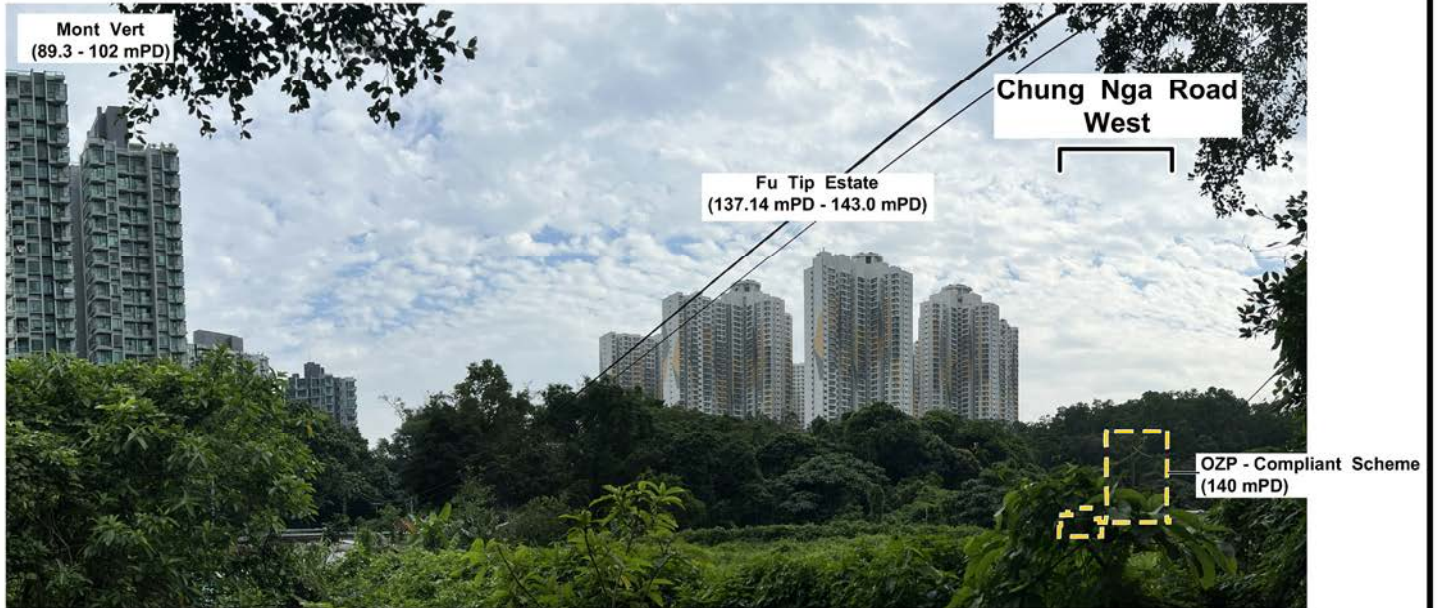


**HOUSING DEPARTMENT
PLANNING SECTIONS**

Figure 6

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26. 8. 2024**

OZP - Compliant Scheme

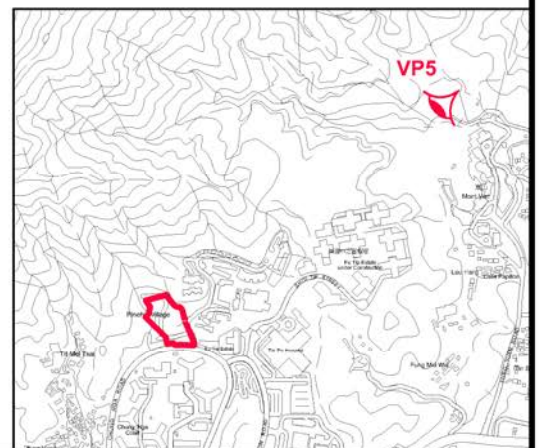


Proposed Scheme



LEGEND:

- OZP - Compliant Scheme (140 mPD)
- Differences between the OZP - Compliant Scheme and Proposed Scheme (169.04 mPD)
- Possible Highest Building Height (172mPD) at Main Roof due to Future MiC Development
- Application Site



**PHOTOMONTAGE AT VIEWPOINT 5
(AGRICULTURAL LAND AT THE NORTH OF
FUNG YUEN BUTTERFLY RESERVE CENTRE)**

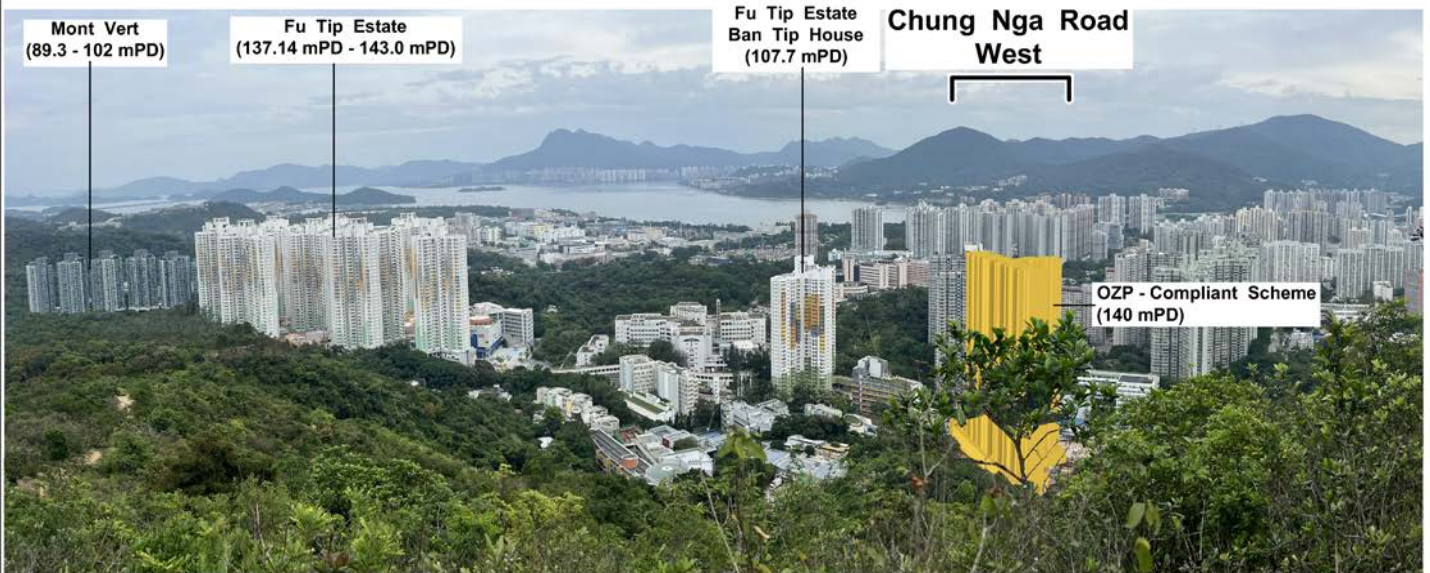


**HOUSING DEPARTMENT
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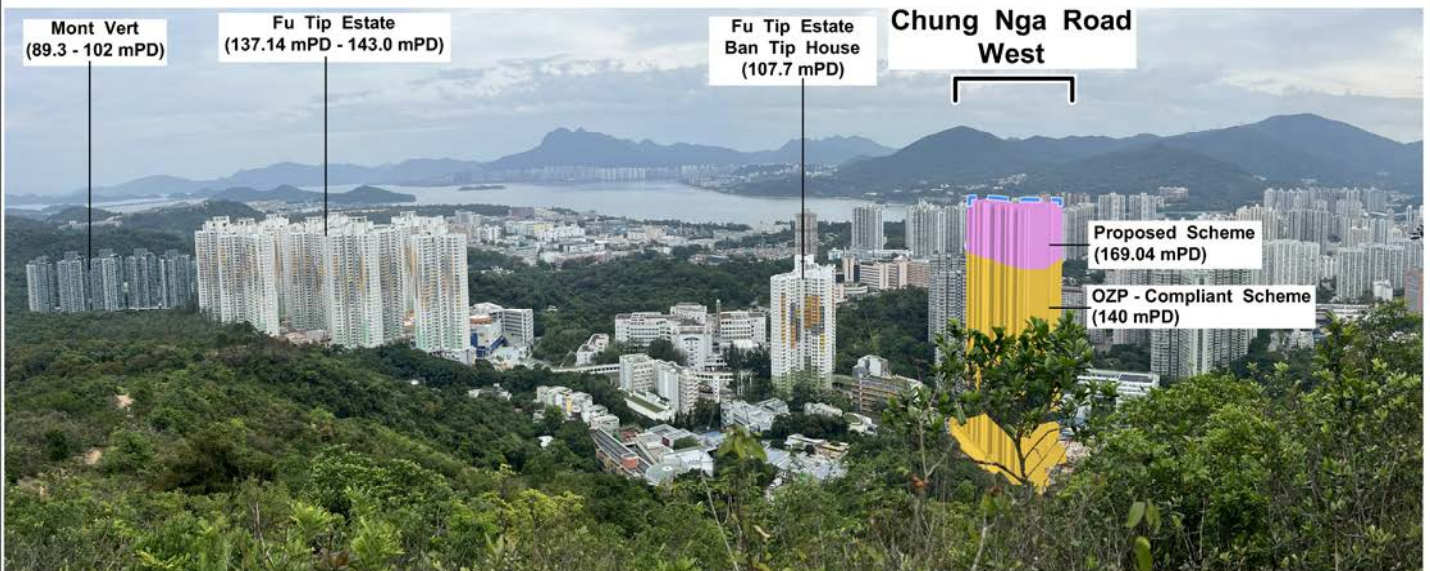
Figure 7

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26. 8. 2024**





OZP - Compliant Scheme

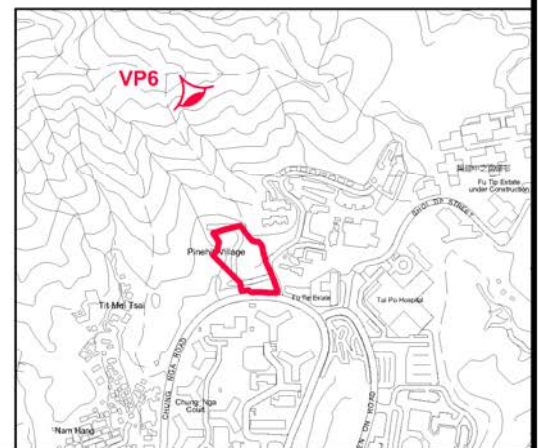


Proposed Scheme



LEGEND:

-  OZP - Compliant Scheme (140 mPD)
-  Differences between the OZP - Compliant Scheme and Proposed Scheme (169.04 mPD)
-  Possible Highest Building Height (172mPD) at Main Roof due to Future MiC Development
-  Application Site



PHOTOMONTAGE AT VIEWPOINT 6 (WILSON TRAIL)



HOUSING DEPARTMENT
PLANNING SECTIONS

Figure 8

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