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Section 16 Planning Application

Proposed Temporary Warehouse for Storage of Construction Materials (Timber and Metal) for a Period of 3 Years and Associated Filling of Land at Lots 123 RP, 124 (Part), 125 (Part), 126 (Part) and 127 (Part) in D.D. 113 and Adjoining Government Land, Ma On Kong, Kam Tin South, Yuen Long, N.T.

Planning Statement

Applicants

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Executive Summary

This planning statement is submitted to the Town Planning Board (the “Board”) in support of a planning application for Proposed Temporary Warehouse for Storage of Construction Materials (Timber and Metal) for a Period of 3 Years and Associated Filling of Land (the “proposed development”) at Lots 123 RP, 124(Part), 125(Part), 126(Part) and 127(Part) in D.D. 113 and Adjoining Government Land, Ma On Kong, Kam Tin South, Yuen Long, N.T. (“the Application Site”).

The Application Site, covering an area of about 6,133 sq.m. (including Government Land of about 1,043 sq.m.), falls within an area zoned “Agriculture” (“AGR”) on the Approved Kam Tin South Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/YL-KTS/15 gazetted on 21.12.2018. According to the Notes of the OZP, ‘Warehouse’ is neither a Column 1 nor Column 2 use of the “AGR” zone, and temporary use or development of any land or building not exceeding a period of three years requires planning permission from the Board.

The Application Site, or part of it, is the subject of 4 previous applications. The last application (No. A/YL-KTS/946) was approved for a temporary warehouse for storage of construction materials (timber and metal) on 19.5.2023 for a period of 3 years. The Application is to facilitate the relocation of the Applicants’ former warehouses on various lots in D.D. 96, Kwu Tung North, N.T., which was affected by the land resumption for First Phase Development of Kwu Tung North New Development Area. The Applicants had complied with approval condition (g) of the last application. While the Applicants have submitted a Short Term Waiver (STW) Application for erection of the proposed warehouses after the planning approval in 2023, the STW application is still under processing by the Lands Department, which have withheld the compliance of approval condition (h) of the last application. Since the total time period (18 months) for compliance with approval conditions of the last application have already exceeded half of the duration of the temporary approval (3 years), no further extension would be granted by the Board. As such, a fresh planning application is hereby submitted for the proposed development.

The Application Site is currently vacant and the development parameters and layout of the proposed development will be largely the same as the previously approved application. The proposed development will erect two warehouses for storage of timber and metal, with a floor area of about 2,234 sq.m. and 1,625 sq.m. respectively and height of not more than 12m. A 1-storey (height: 3m) site office of about 30 sq.m. will be proposed at the centre of the Application Site. Meanwhile, a 1-storey (height: 3m) washroom of about 15 sq.m. and 1-storey (height: 3m) meter room of about 5 sq.m. will be proposed at the western portion of the site near the ingress/egress point.

All loading/unloading activities and manoeuvring of vehicles will be conducted at the southern portion of the site. The ingress/egress point will be at the southern boundary connecting the local track from Kam Ho Road with 8m in width. There will be 3 loading/unloading spaces (3.5m x 16m) for container vehicles, 2 loading/unloading spaces (3.5m x 7m) for light goods vehicles and 4 private car parking spaces for staff/visitors (2.5m x 5m). The Application Site has been fenced off with corrugated metal sheets and wired fences of about 2.5m high. The operation hours of the Application Site are between 9am to 6pm from Mondays to Saturdays. There will be no operation on Sundays and public holidays.

The justifications of this application are:

1. The proposed development helps support the construction industry in Hong Kong;
2. The proposed development will not hinder future public housing development;
3. The Application Site is unsuitable for agricultural rehabilitation;
4. The Application Site is subject to prior planning approval granted for the same use;
5. The previous application at the Application Site is subject to unexpected delay in compliance with approval condition;
6. Similar Approvals for warehouse use have been given in the “AGR” zone;
7. The proposed development will encourage optimization of valuable land resource;
8. The proposed development is considered not incompatible with surrounding land uses; and
9. The proposed development will not generate adverse traffic, environmental, drainage and landscape impact on the surrounding areas.

In view of the justifications as presented in this planning statement, it is hoped that members of the Board and relevant Government departments will approve this application for a period of 3 years.

行政摘要

此規劃報告書向城市規劃委員會(“城規會”)呈交，旨在支持在新界新界元朗錦田南馬鞍崗丈量約份第 113 約地段第 123 號餘段、第 124 號(部分)、第 125 號(部分)、第 126 號(部分)、第 127 號(部分)及毗連政府土地(“申請地點”)，作為期三年的臨時存放建築材料(木材及五金)貨倉及相關的填土工程(“擬議發展”)的規劃申請。

申請地點的面積約 6,133 平方米(包括政府土地約 1,043 平方米)，座落於在 2018 年 12 月 21 日刊憲的錦田南分區計劃大綱核准圖(圖則編號：S/YL-KTS/15)上的「農業」地帶。根據該大綱圖的註釋，「貨倉」不屬「農業」地帶內的第一欄或第二欄用途，然而不超過三年土地或建築物的臨時用途或發展，須先向城規會提出申請。

申請地點或其部分涉及四宗規劃申請，最後一次申請(申請編號：A/YL-KTS/946)於 2023 年 5 月 19 日獲批准作臨時貨倉存放建築材料(木材及五金)(為期三年)。此申請是為協助申請人重置早前受古洞北新發展區第一期發展計劃收地影響，位於古洞北丈量約份第 96 約多個地段的貨倉。申請人已履行該規劃許可附帶條件(g)項。自 2023 年取得規劃許可後，申請人已向地政處申請短期豁免書，以興建構築物作貨倉用途。由於地政處現階段仍在處理短期豁免書的申請，申請人故此未能履行規劃許可附帶條件(h)項。由於履行附帶條件的總期限(18 個月)已超過上次規劃許可有效期(3 年)的一半，城規會不會再批准任何延期申請。因此，申請人再次遞交是項規劃申請。

申請地點現時為空置土地。這次申請的佈局及發展參數大致與上次獲批申請相同。擬議發展將興建兩個樓面面積分別約 2,234 平方米及 1,625 平方米以及其高度不超過 12 米的貨倉，用作存放木材及五金。同時，申請地點的中間位置會提供一座一層高(約 3 米高)的辦公室，面積約 30 平方米。此外，於申請地點西邊近出入口位置亦會提供一座一層高(約 3 米高)的洗手間及一座一層高(約 3 米高)的電錶房，面積分別約 15 平方米及約 5 平方米。

所有上落貨及車輛迴轉將於申請地點的南面進行。申請地點的出入口(約 8 米闊)設於場地南面，由一條道路連接錦河路。申請地點亦設有 3 個貨櫃車上落貨位(3.5 米 x 16 米)、2 個輕型貨車上落貨位(3.5 米 x 7 米)和 4 個職員/訪客使用的私家車停車位(2.5 米 x 5 米)。擬議發展的營運時間為星期一至星期六上午 9 時正至下午 6 時正，星期日及公眾假期不會運作。

本規劃申請的理據為：

1. 擬議發展有助支持本港的建築業；
2. 擬議發展不會阻礙未來的公營房屋發展；
3. 申請地點不適合用作農業復耕；
4. 申請地點之前獲相同貨倉用途的規劃許可；
5. 上次申請在履行規劃許可附帶條件時遇到未能預計的延誤；
6. 在「農業」地帶有類近貨倉用途申請獲得規劃許可；
7. 擬議發展可優化申請地點及有效利用寶貴的土地資源；
8. 擬議發展與周邊土地用途兼容；及
9. 擬議發展不會對附近地方構成不良的交通、環境、排水及景觀影響。

基於本規劃報告書所述的理據，敬希 各城規會委員及有關政府部門能批准此項申請，作為期三年的臨時用途。

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

Pursuant to Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance, this Planning Statement Report is submitted to the Town Planning Board (“the Board”) in support of a planning application for Proposed Temporary Warehouse for Storage of Construction Materials (Timber and Metal) for a period of 3 years and Associated Filling of Land (the “proposed development”) at Lots 123 RP, 124(Part), 125(Part), 126(Part) and 127(Part) in D.D. 113 and Adjoining Government Land, Ma On Kong, Kam Tin South, Yuen Long, N.T. (hereafter referred to as “the Application Site”). **Figure 1** shows the location of the Application Site and the Lot Index Plan indicating the concerned lots is shown per **Figure 2**.

The Application Site, covering an area of about 6,133 sq.m. (including Government land of about 1,043 sq.m.), falls within an area zoned “Agriculture” (“AGR”) on the Approved Kam Tin South Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/YL-KTS/15 gazetted on 21.12.2018. According to the Notes of the OZP, ‘Warehouse’ is neither a Column 1 nor Column 2 use of the “AGR” zone, and temporary use or development of any land or building not exceeding a period of three years requires planning permission from the Board.

The Application Site, or part of it, is the subject of 4 previous applications. The last application (No. A/YL-KTS/946), which was applied by the Applicants, was approved for a temporary warehouse for storage of construction materials (timber and metal) on 19.5.2023 for a period of 3 years. The Application is to facilitate the relocation of the Applicants’ former warehouses on various lots in D.D. 96, Kwu Tung North, N.T., which were affected by the land resumption for First Phase Development of Kwu Tung North Development Area. The Applicants had complied with approval condition (g) of the last application. While the Applicants had submitted a Short Term Waiver (STW) Application for erection of the proposed warehouses after the planning approval in 2023, the STW application is still under processing by the Lands Department (LandsD), which have withheld the compliance of approval condition (h). Since the total time period (18 months) for compliance with approval conditions of the last application have already exceeded half of the duration of the temporary approval (3 years), no further extension would be granted by the Board. As such, a fresh planning application is hereby submitted for the proposed development.

1.2 Organization of the Planning Statement

This planning statement is divided into 6 chapters. Chapter 1 is an introduction outlining the above background of the planning application. Chapter 2 will then illustrate the site context and land status followed by Chapter 3 which describes the planning context in details. Chapter 4 gives the particulars of the proposed development. Detailed accounts of planning justifications of the proposed development are presented in Chapter 5. The planning statement finally concludes with a summary in Chapter 6.

2. Site Context

2.1 The Application Site and Its Existing Condition

The Application Site, with an area of about 6,133 sq.m. (including Government land of about 1,043 sq.m.), is located at a local track leading to Kam Ho Road in Ma On Kong, Kam Tin South, Yuen

Long, N.T. The Application Site is generally flat with an elevated platform and hard paved. It is currently vacant and fenced off by corrugated metal sheets and wired fences (see **Site Photos**).

2.2 Surrounding Land Uses

The surrounding area of the Application Site is rural in nature and consists of open storage/storage yards, warehouses and vacant land. To the east of the Application Site are open storage/storage yards with a series of temporary structures. To the west of the Application Site see a series of open storage yards, warehouses and vacant land. To its immediate north is a parcel of vacant land zoned "Green Belt". The village settlements of Ma On Kong are located at the further southern direction.

2.3 Accessibility

The Application Site is accessible to Kam Ho Road via a local track. The entrance to the Application Site is about 8m wide which located to the southwest and has been hard paved. A plan showing the vehicular access to the Application Site is provided at **Figure 3**.

2.4 Land Status

According to the records of Land Registry, the Subject Lots are held under Block Government Lease and demised for agricultural use with a lease term for 75 years, commenced from 1.7.1898, and are renewable for a further term of 24 years.

Lot 123 in D.D.113, which was included in the Application Site of the last application (No. A/YL-KTS/946), has recently undergone lot subdivision into Lots 123 S.A and 123 RP; whereas Lot 123 RP covers the application boundary of Lot 123 of the last application and will be included in the Application Site of the current application.

A Short Term Waiver (STW) application for the proposed warehouses and a Short Term Tenancy (STT) application for the use of the government land had been submitted for the last application (No. A/YL-KTS/946). However, the applications are still under processing by the LandsD.

3. Planning Context

3.1 Outline Zoning Plan

The Application Site falls within an area zoned "Agriculture" ("AGR") on the Approved Kam Tin South Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/YL-KTS/15 gazetted on 21.12.2018 (see **Figure 1**). The planning intention of "AGR" zone is "primarily to retain and safeguard good quality agricultural land/farm/fish ponds for agricultural purposes. It is also intended to retain fallow arable land with good potential for rehabilitation for cultivation and other agricultural purposes".

Despite the fact that the proposed development ('warehouse') is neither one of the Column 1 or Column 2 uses under the Schedule of Uses for the subject "AGR" zone, the Board may grant planning permission (with or without conditions) for a maximum period of three years under section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance.

3.2 Previous Applications

The Application Site, or part of it, is involved in 4 previous planning applications as follows:

Application No.	Applied Use	Location	TPB's Decision (Date)
A/YL-KTS/783	Temporary Warehouse for Storage of Drainage Pipes with Ancillary Site Office for a Period of 3 Years	Lots 123(Part), 124(Part), 125(Part), 126(Part) and 127(Part) in D.D.113 and adjoining Government land	Rejected (07.09.2018)
A/YL-KTS/885	Temporary Animal Boarding Establishment (Dog Kennel) for a Period of 3 Years	Lots 123(Part) and 124(Part) in D.D. 113	Rejected (28.05.2021)
A/YL-KTS/891	Temporary Animal Boarding Establishment (Dog Kennel) for a Period of 3 Years	Lots 125 and 126 in D.D.113	Approved with condition(s) on a temporary basis (25.06.2021)
A/YL-KTS/946*	Proposed Temporary Warehouse for Storage of Construction Materials (Timber and Metal) for a Period of 3 Years	Lots 123(Part), 124(Part), 125(Part), 126(Part) and 127(Part) in D.D.113 and adjoining Government land	Approved with condition(s) on a temporary basis (19.5.2023)

*Applied by the Applicants

The Applicants have complied with the approval condition (g) of the last application (No. A/YL-KTS/946) as follows:

Condition	Approval Date	Approval Letter
(g) submission of a revised fire service installations (FSIs) proposal	4.9.2023	see Appendix 1

While the Applicants had submitted a STW application since the planning approval in 2023, the STW application is still under processing by the LandsD. As such, the compliance of approval condition (h) was withheld.

3.3 Similar Applications

2 applications for similar warehouse uses were approved by the Board in the last three years at "AGR" zone of the Kam Tin South OZP area. These approved applications are summarized as below:

Application No.	Applied Use	Gross Floor Area (m ²)	Decision	Date of Approval
A/YL-KTS/959	Proposed Temporary Warehouse for Storage of Construction Materials for a Period of 3 Years and Filling of Land	1,306	Approved with Conditions	9.6.2023
A/YL-KTS/997	Proposed Temporary Warehouse (Excluding Dangerous Goods Godown) with Ancillary Facilities for a Period of 3 Years and Associated Filling of Land	378	Approved with Conditions	10.5.2024

4. Development Proposal

4.1 Site Configuration and Layout

The Applicants seek planning permission to use the Application Site as temporary warehouse for storage of construction materials (timber and metal) for a period of 3 years. The proposed development is to facilitate the relocation and continuation of the Applicants' business affected by First Phase of the Kwu Tung North New Development Area.

The layout and development parameters of the proposed development will be largely the same as the last application (No. A/YL-KTS/946), other than switching the proposed guard room to a meter room to meet the operation needs of the Applicants. Two warehouses for storage of timber and metal, with floor area of about 2,234 sq.m. and 1,625 sq.m, and height of not more than 12m, will be erected at the northeastern and northwestern portion of the Application Site for the usage of respective applicant. Meanwhile, a 1-storey (height: 3m) site office of about 30 sq.m. will be proposed at the centre of the Application Site. A 1-storey (height: 3m) washroom of about 15 sq.m. and 1-storey (height: 3m) meter room of about 5 sq.m. will be proposed at the western portion of the site (see Layout Plan at **Figure 4**). The Applicants will retain the existing ingress/egress point at the southern boundary connecting the local track leading from Kam Ho Road with 8m in width. The Application Site is fenced off by the existing 2.5m high corrugated metal sheets and wired fences on all sides.

The proposed development involves associated filling of land of about 6,133 sq.m. and a depth of not exceeding 0.2m. A plan showing the proposed land filling area of the Application Site is shown in **Figure 6**.

The major differences of the current application and the last application are shown below:-

Major Development Parameters	Last Application (No. A/YL-KTS/946)	Current Application	Difference
Applied Use	Proposed Temporary Warehouse for Storage of Construction Materials (Timber and Metal) for a Period of 3 Years and Associated Filling of Land	Proposed Temporary Warehouse for Storage of Construction Materials (Timber and Metal) for a Period of 3 Years and Associated Filling of Land	No difference
Site Area	About 6,133 sq.m.	About 6,133 sq.m.	No Difference
Total Floor Area (Non-domestic)	3,908 sq.m.	3,909 sq.m.	+1 sq.m. (+0.03%)
No. of Structures	5 - 2 proposed warehouses for storage of timber/metal - 1 proposed site office - 1 proposed guard house - 1 proposed washroom	5 - 2 proposed warehouses for storage of timber/metal - 1 proposed site office - 1 proposed meter room - 1 proposed washroom	Switching the proposed guard house for meter room
Height of Structures	3m - 12m (1-storey)	3m - 12m (1-storey)	No Difference
No. of Parking Spaces	4 nos. (private cars for staff/visitors use)	4 nos. (private cars for staff/visitors use)	No Difference
Loading/unloading Space	5 nos. - 3 for container vehicles - 2 for light goods vehicles	5 nos. - 3 for container vehicles - 2 for light goods vehicles	No Difference

Operation Hours	9:00am to 6:00 pm Mondays to Saturdays (excluding Sundays and public holidays)	9:00am to 6:00 pm Mondays to Saturdays (excluding Sundays and public holidays)	No Difference
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4.2 Vehicular Access and Parking Arrangement

The proposed development will continue using the existing ingress/egress point of the Application Site, which is about 8m wide and located at the southern side of the Application Site connecting to the local track to Kam Ho Road. Same parking arrangement will be proposed for the proposed development as the last application (No. A/YL-KTS/946) with 3 loading/unloading spaces (3.5m x 16m) for container vehicles, 2 loading/unloading spaces (3.5m x 7m) for light goods vehicle and 4 private car parking spaces (2.5m x 5m) for staff/visitors.

Given no major change in development parameters and parking arrangement, the submitted swept path analysis of the last application (see **Appendix 2**) would be able to demonstrate that satisfactory manoeuvring of vehicles entering to and exiting from the Application Site and manoeuvring within the Application Site. There will be no difficulties in internal traffic circulation sense as sufficient space for manoeuvring of vehicles is reserved at the southern portion such that no waiting or queuing of goods vehicles along Kam Ho Road will arise under any circumstances.

In addition, according to the Applicants, trips for transporting the storage materials to/from the Application Site made by the goods vehicles will not be more than 3 round trips daily at non-peak hours (between 10am – 4pm) with the materials stored within the Application Site remaining stagnant all the time. There will be no more than 5 working staff on-site. Considering the business nature and operational needs, only 2 daily round trips for private vehicles to the Application Site is expected.

The estimated traffic arising from the proposed development is as follows:

Time	No. of Trips (Container/ Goods Vehicles)		No. of Trips (Private Cars)	
	In	Out	In	Out
08:00-09:00 (peak hour)	0	0	2	0
09:00-10:00 (peak hour)	0	0	0	0
10:00-11:00	1	0	0	0
11:00-12:00	1	1	0	0
12:00-13:00	0	1	0	0
13:00-14:00	1	0	0	0
15:00-16:00	0	1	0	0
16:00-17:00	0	0	0	0
17:00-18:00 (peak hour)	0	0	0	2

4.3 Site Operations

The operation hours of the Application Site are between 9am to 6pm from Mondays to Saturdays. There will be no operation on Sundays and public holidays. The main use of the Application Site will be storage purpose of construction materials (timber and metal). To minimize any potential noise and environmental impacts to the surrounding area, no workshop and open storage activities will be conducted within the Application Site.

4.4 Drainage Proposal

The Applicants had submitted the revised drainage proposal on 27.6.2024 (see **Appendix 3**) to the Planning Department in compliance with approval condition (d) of the last application (No. A/YL-KTS/946), in which the latest comments from the Drainage Services Department (DSD) were received on 24.7.2024. Given no major change in the layout and development parameters of the proposed development, the Applicants are revising drainage proposal based on the comments from DSD, in which drainage facilities will be provided within the Application Site to collect and discharge surface runoff out of the Application Site. The Applicants will submit the revised drainage proposal upon approval of this application.

4.5 Fire Service Installations (FSIs) Proposal

The approval condition (g) of submission of a revised FSIs proposal of the last application (No. A/YL-KTS/946) has been approved by the Fire Services Department (FSD) on 4.9.2023 (see **Appendix 1**). Since the layout and development parameters of the proposed development remain largely the same, the Applicants will adopt the approved FSIs proposal and implement the FSIs upon approval of the STW application from the LandsD.

4.6 Landscape and Tree Preservation

6 new trees will be planted along the eastern boundary of the Application Site in compensation of 2 trees fell from the last application (No. A/YL-KTS/946) (see **Figure 5**). The proposed tree species is Bauhinia Blakeanna, which grow to a mature height of 2.75m to 3.75m with a canopy span of about 3m. Meanwhile, the Application Site is surrounded by mature trees of various species along the northern and eastern boundary of the Application Site. The Applicants would preserve the existing trees outside the Application Site, which would act as the natural hedges bounding the edge of the development and thus soften the building footprint of the proposed development. As a result, the proposed development would fit well into the setting in the neighborhood without causing any significant visual impact.

4.7 Environmental Consideration

The nature of the proposed use will merely involve the storage of construction materials (timber and metal). To minimize the possible environmental nuisance, the Applicants will follow the 'Code of Practice on Handling the Environmental Aspects of Temporary Uses and Open Storage Sites' and undertake to provide the following mitigation measures:

- (a) No workshop activities will be conducted at the Application Site;
- (b) All stocks will be stored within the proposed enclosed warehouses;
- (c) The existing 2.5m high corrugated metal fencing will be maintained along the site boundary;
- (d) The operating hours will be restricted from 9 am to 6 pm on Mondays to Saturdays and there will be no operation on Sundays and public holidays;
- (e) No more than 3 round trips by container vehicles daily to minimize the traffic and noise impact;
- (f) On-site washroom will be provided. Septic tank will be installed to treat the sewage generated from the Application Site. The Applicants will follow ProPECC PN 1/23 to prevent any water pollution.

5. Planning Justifications

5.1 Support the Construction Industry in Hong Kong

With the ongoing resumption projects in the Northern Metropolis area, a significant number of warehouse sites in Northern New Territories and North West New Territories have been / will be resumed by the Government for development of NDAs/public works in the near future. A significant number of local timber suppliers have therefore terminated their businesses due to the tremendous difficulty in searching for a suitable site to relocate and the Applicants are one of the few remaining timber suppliers in operation. Therefore, they play a significant role in the construction industry in Hong Kong in supplying timber/metal to many hardware stores and construction companies in the market, and thus in turn influence the progress of construction projects in the city of both public and private sectors.

In view of the much more stringent control on land usage coupled with shrinking supply of land for warehouse use and increasing difficulty in acquiring planning permission, the demand for warehouse sites has already become a key economic and logistics issue concerning the whole Territory. Granting approval to this application will maintain the supply of land for such use and provide a temporary solution to meet the pressing market demand of warehouse facilities in the Northern New Territories. It will also allow the Applicants to continue their business and maintain the timber/metal supply in the market to support the construction industry in Hong Kong.

5.2 Will Not Hinder Future Public Housing Development

It is noted that the Application Site has been identified by the government as one of the four brownfield clusters shortlisted for public housing development in the second phase review on brownfield sites. The Applicants understand that the proposed development will only be temporary and agree to move out when the Application Site is resumed by the government for public housing development in the future. Due to the temporary nature of the Application, the proposed development will not hinder the future public housing development at the Application Site.

5.3 The Application Site is Unsuitable for Agricultural Rehabilitation

Notwithstanding the Application Site falls within an area zoned "AGR", the Application Site is unsuitable for agricultural rehabilitation. Majority of the land in the Application Site is already paved and formed. Having considered the fact that some open storage/storage yard uses are situated in vicinity of the Application Site, the planning intention of "AGR" zone is hardly materialized at the current capacity until the surrounding characteristics are entirely required to be reverted back to agricultural uses. The utilization of the not fully developed agricultural land would allow more efficient use of scarce land resource in Hong Kong and continuation of the Applicants' timber business. In contrast, the proposed development in the interim at the Application Site is deemed not incompatible and is able to flexibly meet the demand and operational needs of the Applicants.

5.4 Prior Planning Approval Granted for the Same Use at the Application Site

The applied use and development parameters of the current application are largely the same as the last application (No. A/YL-KTS/946). The last application for proposed warehouse was approved by the Board for a period of 3 years on 19.5.2023. Since the nature of use, development parameters and planning circumstances largely remain unchanged, this application is considered acceptable within the subject "AGR" zone.

5.5 Unexpected Delay in Compliance with Approval Condition

The Applicants have complied with approval condition (g) of the last application and the compliance of the approval condition (h) was hindered because of the unexpected delay in processing of the STW application by the LandsD. Additionally, the Applicants had been studying the comments from DSD to revise the drainage proposal to meet DSD's requirements in compliance with approval condition (d) as well. Given the prior planning approval for the same warehouse use at the same location, as well as the Applicants' genuine efforts in complying with the approval conditions, this application could be considered acceptable and in line with the previous decision of the Board.

5.6 Similar Approvals for Warehouse Use in the "AGR" Zone

As highlighted in para 3.3., the Board has previously approved 2 applications (Nos. A/YL-KTS/959 and 997) of similar warehouse uses in "AGR" zone of the Kam Tin South OZP area in the last three years. With similar applications approved in the vicinity for warehouse use, approval of this application is considered acceptable within the "AGR" zone and in line with previous decisions of the Board.

5.7 Optimization of Valuable Land Resources

The Application Site is currently vacant and will be mainly used as storage purpose. The proposed development provides an interim solution to maximize land utilization on the Application Site rather than leaving the Application Site idle and deteriorating. The proposed development would take full advantage of the location and the exceptional physical state of the Application Site i.e. close to Kam Ho Road for transportation of construction materials with flat and hard-paved land. Besides, the proposed development would greatly contribute to the construction industry in Hong Kong by providing timber and metal for various construction projects in Hong Kong. With the increasing number of construction projects in the coming years, the Applicants as one of the remaining timber suppliers in Hong Kong will help meet the greater demand. The proposed development is considered fully commensurate with its local geographical setting and ideal to attain utmost land use maximization without inflicting undesirable impacts on the environment.

5.8 Not Incompatible with Surrounding Land Uses

The proposed development is considered not incompatible with the surrounding land uses. The surrounding of the Application Site mainly consists of scattered fallow agricultural land, shrubland, graves, unused land / structures and storage yards. Taking into consideration that the Applicants have proposed proper mitigation measures, including operation within the enclosed structures and restriction of operation hours, the proposed development could co-exist well with all of these surrounding land uses without posing any adverse environmental impacts. As the proposed development is considered not incompatible with other developments/facilities in the adjacent areas in terms of nature and scale of use, approval of the application would therefore not result in any interface problems with the surrounding areas.

It is noted that Ma On Kong, a village settlement, is located to the further south of the Application Site along Kam Ho Road. The vehicles entering into the Application Site are accessible from the north and thus will not pass this village. Taken into account the Application Site is separated by a series of open storage, temporary structures and wild vegetation, the visual impact is considered minimal.

5.9 No Adverse Impacts on the Surrounding Areas

Owing to the nature of the proposed development, no adverse impacts are anticipated on the surrounding areas, as discussed below:

Traffic

Similar to the last application, no more than 3 round trips daily will be made by goods vehicles to/from the Application Site. Most of the vehicles will enter to/get out of the Application Site at non-peak hours (between 10am – 4pm). As such, it is anticipated that traffic generated by the proposed development to Kam Ho Road will be very minimal and not be overloaded should the application be approved. In addition, sufficient spaces will be reserved at the southern portion of the Application Site for loading/unloading and vehicle manoeuvring. It is further envisaged and unlikely that the foregoing minimal volume of traffic generated from the proposed development would adversely affect the existing and/or planned road networks. There will also be no need for goods vehicles queuing up outside the Application Site under any circumstances. As such, no adverse traffic impact is anticipated.

Environment

As mentioned in Section 4.7, the proposed warehouses will only be used as storage of timber and metal. No workshop activities will be undergone within the Application Site and relevant mitigation measures will be conducted to minimize all the potential environmental impacts on the surrounding areas. In addition, the operating hours will be restricted from 9am to 6pm, the proposed development will unlikely create significant adverse environmental impact to the surrounding areas.

Since the surrounding environments are characterized by various rural and storage uses, the nearest village settlement is located about 300m to the south, with buffer areas of existing temporary structures and storage yards at the immediate south of the Application Site. The storage use will also be confined within the enclosed structure. Therefore, no adverse environmental impact on the surrounding area is expected.

Drainage

As mentioned in paragraph 4.4, the Applicants are revising the drainage proposal based on the latest comments from DSD, in which drainage facilities will be provided within the Application Site to collect and discharge surface runoff out of the Application Site. The Applicants will submit the revised drainage proposal upon approval of this application. Therefore, no adverse drainage impact is anticipated.

Landscape

The Applicants will plant 6 new trees along the eastern boundary of the Application Site to compensate for the 2 trees fell in the last application (No. A/YL-KTS/946). Together with the existing trees surrounding the Application Site to the north and east, they will act as natural hedges bounding the edge of the development and act as a buffer to the surrounding areas.

It should also be noted that the Application Site will only be used on a temporary basis and will be developed for future public housing, it is expected that the landscape character of the area will gradually change. Therefore, no adverse landscape impact is anticipated.

6. Conclusion

The Application Site falls within “AGR” zone on the approved Kam Tin South OZP. In view of the site location, surrounding land uses and the nature of the proposed development, the Application Site is considered suitable for proposed temporary warehouse for storage of timber and metal. The proposed development will meet the market demand for warehouse use and provide significant amount of construction materials for construction projects in the public and private sector; hence it is vital for the construction industry as it helps maintaining the supply of timber and metal for the future developments.

The Application Site has been granted for planning approval for the same use with similar approvals for proposed warehouse use also given in the vicinity. No adverse impacts on the surrounding are anticipated and the technical concerns of relevant Government departments could be addressed through the implementation of approval conditions.

Despite the fact that the Application Site fall within the “AGR” zone, the planning intention of “AGR” is hardly to be materialized in short term until the surrounding characteristics are entirely and compulsorily required to be reverted to agricultural activities. In contrast, the proposed development in the interim at the Application Site is deemed not unsuitable for temporary uses as the surrounding areas are currently characterized by a variety of rural storage uses. Also, instead of the Application Site being not fully utilized, the proposed development encourages the optimization and revitalization of the land use of the Application Site whilst contributing to the construction industry in Hong Kong. The temporary nature of the proposed development will not hinder future public housing development as well.

In view of the justifications as presented in this planning statement, it is hoped that members of the Board and relevant Government departments will approve this application for a period of 3 years.

LAWSON DAVID & SUNG SURVEYORS LIMITED
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