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Ref: LDS/PLAN/6966

Section 16 Planning Application

Proposed Temporary Holiday Camp for a Period of 3 Years at Lots 1213 RP, 1215 RP, 1216 RP, 1217 S.C RP (Part), 2579 (Part), 2583 (Part) and 2584 (Part) in D.D. 104 and Adjoining Government Land, Ngau Tam Mei, Yuen Long, N.T.

Planning Statement

Applicant:

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Prepared by

Lawson David and Sung Surveyors Limited

July 2024

Executive Summary

This planning statement is submitted to the Town Planning Board (the “Board”) in support of a planning application for Proposed Temporary Holiday Camp (the “proposed development”) for a Period of 3 Years at Lots 1213 RP, 1215 RP, 1216 RP, 1217 S.C RP (Part), 2579 (Part), 2583 (Part) and 2584 (Part) in D.D. 104 and Adjoining Government Land, Ngau Tam Mei, Yuen Long, N.T. (“the Application Site”).

The Application Site, covering an area of about 2,109 sq.m. (including Government Land of about 616 sq.m.), falls within an area zoned “Residential (Group D)” (“R(D)”) on the Draft Ngau Tam Mei Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/YL-NTM/13 exhibited on 8.3.2024. According to the Notes of the OZP, ‘Holiday Camp’ is neither Column 1 nor Column 2 use of the “R(D)” 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 is currently vacant. In view of the land being left idled for many years, the Applicant intends to utilize the existing natural landscape and convert the Application Site into a holiday camp to promote recreational development in the locality.

The majority of the Application Site will be used as private tent camping area. About 10 canvas tents will be set up at the free tent camping area with each tent accommodating a maximum of 2 campers. The Applicant will propose one 1-storey (height: about 2.5m) storeroom and one 1-storey (height: about 2.5m) site office both with a floor area of 15 sq.m. at the eastern boundary of the Application Site to assist the operation of the holiday camp. Meanwhile, three portable toilets with a total floor area of 7 sq.m. and height of 2.5m (1-storey) will be proposed next to the site office at the eastern boundary as well.

The ingress/egress point will be at the northern boundary connecting Chun Shin Road with 6.5m in width. There will be 4 private car parking spaces for staff/visitors (2.5m x 5m). The operation hours of the Application Site will be 24 hours daily including public holidays. A visit-by-appointment scheme will be adopted to assist the crowd control of the proposed holiday camp.

The justifications of this application are:

1. The proposed development promotes recreational development in the Ngau Tam Mei Locality;
2. The proposed development will not contravene with the planning intention of the “R(D)” zone;
3. The proposed development is considered compatible with surrounding environment;
4. The proposed development allows optimization of valuable land resources;
5. The proposed development would not set an undesirable precedent;
6. The proposed development will not generate adverse environmental, traffic, drainage and landscape impacts 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，旨在支持在新界元朗牛潭尾丈量約份第 104 約地段第 1213 號餘段、第 1215 號餘段、第 1216 號餘段、第 1217 號 C 分段餘段(部分)、第 2579 號(部分)、第 2583 號(部分)、第 2584 號(部分)及毗連政府土地(“申請地點”)，作為期三年的臨時度假營(“擬議發展”)的規劃申請。

申請地點的面積約 2,109 平方米 (包括政府土地約 616 平方米)，座落於在 2024 年 3 月 8 日展示的牛潭尾分區計劃大綱草圖 (圖則編號：S/YL-NTM/13) 上的「住宅(丁類)」地帶。根據該大綱圖的註釋，「度假營」不屬「住宅(丁類)」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。

申請地點現時已空置多年。申請人計劃善用現時申請地點的自然環境，將申請地點用作臨時度假營，以在牛潭尾地區推廣康樂發展用途。

申請地點大部分位置將用作私人帳幕營地，可容納約 10 個帳幕，每個帳幕最多可容納 2 人。申請人擬議於申請地點東面興建一座一層高(約 2.5 米高)的貯物室及一座一層高(約 2.5 米高)的辦公室，樓面面積各約 15 平方米。另外，申請人會於擬議的辦公室旁設置 3 個約 2.5 米高、總樓面面積約 7 平方米的流動洗手間。

申請人會於現時申請地點北面設置出入口(約 6.5 米闊)，連接真善路。申請地點亦會設有 4 個供職員/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每日 24 小時(包括公眾假期)。申請人將採用預約制度，以協助管理人流。

本規劃申請的理據為：

1. 擬議發展能推廣牛潭尾地區的康樂用途發展；
2. 擬議發展不會違背「住宅(丁類)」地帶的規劃意向；
3. 擬議發展與周邊土地用途兼容；
4. 擬議發展可有效利用寶貴的土地資源；
5. 擬議發展不會成為不良的先例；及
6. 擬議發展不會對附近地方構成不良的環境、交通、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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Existing Condition of the Application Site

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 Holiday Camp (the “proposed development”) for a Period of 3 Years at Lots 1213 RP, 1215 RP, 1216 RP, 1217 S.C RP (Part), 2579 (Part), 2583 (Part) and 2584 (Part) in D.D. 104 and Adjoining Government Land, Ngau Tam Mei, 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 2,109 sq.m. (including Government land of about 616 sq.m.), falls within an area zoned “Residential (Group D)” (“R(D)”) on the Draft Ngau Tam Mei Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/YL-NTM/13 exhibited on 8.3.2024. According to the Notes of the OZP, ‘Holiday Camp’ is neither a Column 1 nor Column 2 use of the “R(D)” 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 is currently vacant. In view of the land being left idled for many years, the Applicant intends to utilize the existing natural landscape and convert the Application Site into a holiday camp to serve the local visitors and visiting campers for recreational purposes and promote recreational development in the locality.

1.2 Organization of the Planning Statement

Following this introductory chapter, this planning statement contains five further chapters:

- Chapter 2 presents the background details of the Application Site in terms of current land-use characteristics and neighbouring developments;
- Chapter 3 discusses the planning context of the Application Site;
- Chapter 4 outlines the development proposal;
- Chapter 5 gives account to the justifications of the proposed development;
- Chapter 6 is the conclusion of the planning statement.

2. Site Context

2.1 The Application Site and Its Existing Condition

The Application Site, with an area of about 2,109 sq.m. (including Government land of about 616 sq.m.), is located next to Chun Shin Road, Ngau Tam Mei, Yuen Long, N.T. The Application Site is generally flat, currently vacant. The Application Site is partially fenced off by chain-link fence of 2.5m high at the northern boundary (see **Site Photos**).

2.2 Surrounding Land Uses

The surrounding area of the Application Site is rural in nature and consists of a mixture of vacant land / fishponds, scattered temporary structures/village houses and residential dwellings. The Application Site is surrounded by vacant land and fishponds at the immediate east, south and west. Two planning approvals for proposed houses (Nos. A/YL-NTM/372 and A/YL-NTM/377) are located at the immediate east and west of the Application Site respectively. A temporary transitional housing with planning approval (No. A/YL-NTM/470), which is currently under construction, is located at the southeastern direction of the Application Site. To the north is Chun Shin Road and a nullah.

Meanwhile, the village settlement of Yau Tam Mei Tsuen is situated to the further southeast. Private house developments such as Elegant Park, Elegant Estate, The Vineyard, La Maison Vineyard and Green Crest, as well as the village settlements of Wai Tsai Tsuen are located at the further north and northeastern direction across Chun Shin Road and Ngau Tam Mei Road.

2.3 Accessibility

Public transport service (i.e. bus and minibus) is readily available along San Tam Road in vicinity of the Application Site. The Applicant proposes a site entrance of about 6.5m wide at the north of the Application Site with direct access to Chun Shin Road. A plan showing the proposed 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. The Applicant will apply for a Short Term Waiver (STW) for the proposed temporary structures and a Short Term Tenancy (STT) for the use of government land to the Lands Department upon obtaining planning approval for this application.

3. Planning Context

3.1 Outline Zoning Plan

The Application Site falls within an area zoned "Residential (Group D)" ("R(D)") on the Draft Ngau Tam Mei Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/YL-NTM/13 exhibited on 8.3.2024 (see **Figure 1**). The planning intention of "R(D)" zone is "primarily for improvement and upgrading of existing temporary structures within the rural areas through redevelopment of existing temporary structures into permanent buildings. It is also intended for low-rise, low-density residential developments subject to planning permission from the Town Planning Board."

Despite the fact that the proposed development ('holiday camp') is neither one of the Column 1 nor Column 2 uses under the Schedule of Uses for the subject "R(D)" 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 Application

The Application Site is not subject to any previous planning application.

3.3 Similar Application

There is no similar application within the same "R(D)" zone under the Ngau Tam Mei OZP.

4. Development Proposal

4.1 Site Configuration and Layout

The Applicant intends to utilize the existing natural landscape and proposes to use the Application Site as a temporary holiday camp for a period of 3 years. The proposed holiday camp intends to serve the local visitors and visiting campers for recreational purposes.

The Application Site has an area of about 2,109 sq.m. The majority of the Application Site will be used as private tent camping area. About 10 canvas tents will be set up at the free tent camping area and each tent will accommodate a maximum of 2 campers. The Applicant will also erect a 1-storey (height: about 2.5m) storeroom and a 1-storey (height: about 2.5m) site office both with floor area of 15 sq.m. at the eastern boundary to meet the operation needs of the proposed holiday camp. Meanwhile, three portable toilets with total floor area of 7 sq.m. and height of about 2.5m will be proposed next to the site office at the eastern boundary. (see Layout Plan at **Figure 4**)

No permanent structures will be erected and no filling or excavation of land will be involved. The remaining part will be grassland for passive recreational uses including sitting out areas, landscape planting area and open space. As there are two electrical transformers within the Application Site, a 2m buffer area will be provided from the centre of the electrical transformer.

The Application Site will be fenced off by 2.5m high chain-link fence on all sides to ensure that the Application Site is clearly defined.

4.2 Site Operations

The proposed development will be privately-owned and will be operated by the Applicant to provide overnight accommodation to campers for leisure purpose. Onsite staff will be employed to manage the campsite. The proposed hours of operation at the Application Site will be 24 hours daily (including public holidays). A visit-by-appointment scheme will be adopted to ensure the Application Site will not be overcrowded with a maximum of 20 visitors at once. No public announcement system and loud speaker will be used on the site. The site office will provide canvas tents to visitors, which would only be temporarily set up at the site and could be easily removed from the site after visitors' stay.

4.3 Parking and Traffic Arrangement

The Applicant proposes a new ingress/egress point for the proposed development. The width of the proposed ingress/egress point will be about 6.5m wide and located at the northern side of the Application Site connecting to the Chun Shin Road. 4 private car parking spaces (2.5m x 5m) for staff/visitors are proposed. Visitor parking will be provided on appointment basis. As most visitors will travel to the Application Site via public transport, the number of generated trips from the proposed holiday camp will not be more than 4 round trips daily, which could be absorbed by the existing road.

4.4 Landscape and Tree Preservation

The major tree clusters are located along Chun Shin Road. Given the nature of the proposed development, the Applicant would preserve the existing trees within the Application Site as far as practical, which would enhance the overall amenity of the area and act as a noise barrier to minimize any potential noise impact. The proposed development would also fit well into the setting in the existing natural surroundings without causing any significant visual impact.

4.5 Safety Precautions

2 electrical transformers are found and will be kept within the Application Site. To avoid any accidents, 2m buffer distance and warning signs will be put up around the existing transformers to ensure visitors will not go near or set their camps nearby. No open burning or any fuel-burning equipment will be allowed within the Application Site. Verbal and written reminders will also be given to visitors by staff to make sure the visitors understand the potential risk. The Applicant will also provide access to the responsible party for maintenance of the electrical transformers.

4.6 Drainage Proposal and Sewage Treatment

The Application Site will not be hard-paved. As the Application Site will only be fenced off by chain link fence, free flow of rainwater will be absorbed or diverted to the nearby ponds. These ponds are seasonal, receiving rainwater surface run-off in the wet season and gradually drying up in the dry season. Three portable toilets will be provided within the Application Site. Vacuum tanker would be visiting the Application Site for emptying excrement on a regular basis.

4.7 Environmental Consideration

The nature of the proposed development is passive recreational use only. To minimize the possible environmental nuisance, the Applicant will adopt and implement the following mitigation measures:-

- (a) No more than 20 visitors will be allowed at the Application Site at the same time;
- (b) Mandatory advance booking to the proposed holiday camp and visitor car parking spaces are required to minimize any additional traffic pressure to the existing Chun Shin Road;
- (c) No open burning or any fuel-burning equipment will be allowed within the Application Site;
- (d) No public announcement system, whistle-blowing, portable loud speaker or any form of audio amplification system will be used on site;
- (e) Any waste generated by the proposed development will be treated and removed on a regular basis in order to avoid any hygienic nuisance to the surroundings; and
- (f) On-site staff will be employed to manage the Application Site and keep the site in a tidy manner.

5. Planning Justifications

5.1 Promote Recreational Development in the Ngau Tam Mei Locality

While subject locality is characterized by rural and residential uses, there is no major recreational development in the vicinity of the Application Site. As highlighted in the Ngau Tam Mei OZP, passive recreational development is encouraged to complement the existing low-density suburban developments including private residential development and village housing. In consideration of the future transitional housing development in the locality, as well as the future San Tin Technopole nearby, the approval of the subject application could therefore promote recreational development in the Ngau Tam Mei locality and satisfy the demand for local visitors.

5.2 Not Contravene with the planning intention of the “R(D)” Zone

The Application Site falls within an area zoned “R(D)” on the Ngau Tam Mei OZP No. S/YL-NTM/13. While the planning intention of the “R(D)” zone is for improvement and upgrading existing temporary structures within rural areas, it should be noted that the Application Site is currently vacant with overgrown vegetations and no known long-term residential development. In contrary, the proposed development would actually complement the surrounding residential uses with provision of recreational facilities and preservation of the existing rural and natural landscape. Additionally, the proposed development is a temporary use which would not jeopardize the long-term planning intention of “R(D)” zone, and the Application Site will be reinstated upon expiry of the planning permission.

5.3 Compatible with Surrounding Environment

The surrounding environment of the Application Site consists of a mixture of vacant land / fishponds, scattered temporary structures/village houses and residential dwellings. The proposed development is a passive recreational use with little to nil impacts to the surroundings, which could be considered compatible with the rural surroundings and natural landscape. All proposed structures of the proposed development are all one-storey of not exceeding 2.5m in height, which would be compatible with the surrounding low-density residential developments. Additionally, in view of the surrounding existing and future residential developments in vicinity, the proposed development would complement these residential uses with provision of recreational facilities.

5.4 Optimization of Valuable Land Resources

The Application Site has been left idled for a long period of time without any active usage. In view of the existing condition and surrounding natural landscape, the proposed development is considered a suitable interim use for the Application Site. Since the Applicant will preserve the existing trees and upkeep the maintenance of the Application Site, it can actually enhance the visual amenity and avoid any further degradation of the site. Compared to the existing idled status of the site, the proposed development is a better land use in terms of promoting optimization of valuable land resources and safeguarding the character and environment of the site.

5.5 Would not Set an Undesirable Precedent

As majority of the Application Site will merely be used as private tent camping ground, no filling / excavation of land or tree felling would be required for the operation of the proposed holiday camp. Additionally, the Applicant will preserve the existing trees within the Application Site as far as practical, the proposed development will promote preservation of the existing natural landscape and enhance the visual quality of the site. In view of the existing and future development of the subject locality, the proposed development would therefore be compatible with the surrounding environment. Moreover, the proposed development will promote recreational development in the Ngau Tam Mei locality. The approval of the proposed development would therefore not set an undesirable precedent.

5.6 No Adverse Impacts on the Surrounding Areas

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

Environment

The proposed development is merely a passive recreational use. The Applicant will preserve the existing trees as far as practical and provide maintenance to the existing natural landscape. Additionally, the Applicant will adopt and implement the mitigation measures mentioned in Paragraph 4.7 to minimize any possible environmental nuisance to the surrounding area. In this regard, it is envisaged that no environmental pollution or nuisance is anticipated from the proposed development.

Traffic

The Application Site is not a high traffic generating use. All visitor car parking spaces will require advance booking and most visitors will travel to the Application Site by public transport, which is readily available along San Tam Road. It is foreseen that there will be less than 4 round trips daily to and from the Application Site, which can be easily absorbed by the existing Chun Shin Road and induce minimal traffic generation to the existing local road networks. Since sufficient spaces will be provided within the Application Site for parking and vehicle manoeuvring, there will be no vehicles waiting or queuing up at Chun Shin Road under any circumstances.

Drainage

The Application Site will not be hard-paved and only fenced off by chain link fence, in which the rainwater surface run-off from the site can be easily absorbed or diverted to nearby ponds. Therefore, no adverse drainage impact is anticipated from the proposed development.

Landscape

The existing trees that are in good conditions will be maintained in-situ. The camping ground will be filtered by the existing on-site vegetation and surrounding trees. The existing landscape character will generally be maintained.

6. Conclusion

The Application Site falls within “R(D)” zone on the Draft Ngau Tam Mei OZP No. S/YL-NTM/13. In view of the site location, surrounding land uses and the nature of the proposed development, the Application Site is considered suitable for proposed holiday camp use.

Despite the fact that the Application Site fall within the “R(D)” zone, the proposed development could be considered complementing the planning intention of “R(D)” as it promotes recreational development in the Ngau Tam Mei locality and provide passive recreational use for local visitors.

In view of the passive recreational nature of the proposed development, the proposed development would actually preserve existing natural landscape and is considered compatible with the surrounding environment. It also encourages optimization of valuable land resources by utilizing the existing physical state of the Application Site without causing any adverse impacts on the surrounding areas. Therefore, the proposed development would not set an undesirable precedent.

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 Ltd.

July 2024