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SECTION 16 TOWN PLANNING APPLICATION

Proposed Temporary Dangerous Goods Godown (for Storage of Timber Materials), Rural Workshop and Vehicle Repair Workshop for a Period of 3 Years at Lot Nos. 979, 980, 981, 1037 and Adjoining Government Land in D.D.123, Ping Shan, Yuen Long, New Territories

May 2024

Applicant:



Consultant:



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(Disclaimer: The Chinese translation is for reference only. If there is any discrepancy between the Chinese translation and the English original, the English original shall prevail.)

RAAW Limited (the Applicant) now seeks town planning permission from the Town Planning Board (TPB) for proposed Temporary Dangerous Goods Godown (for storage of timber materials), Rural Workshop and Vehicle Repair Workshop for a period of three years (the applied uses) at Lot Nos. 979, 980, 981, 1037 and adjoining Government Land in D.D.123, Ping Shan, Yuen Long, New Territories (the Application Site or the Site). The Application Site falls within an area zoned "Residential (Group A) 5" ("R(A)5") on the approved Ping Shan Outline Zoning Plan No. S/YL-PS/20 (the OZP), which has been rezoned from "Open Storage" for the planned Wang Chau Remaining Phases public housing developments. Although the applied uses are neither Column 1 or 2 uses in the "R(A)5" zone, according to the Notes of the OZP, temporary use or development of any land or buildings not exceeding a period of 3 years requires planning permission from the Town Planning Board (TPB), notwithstanding that the uses or the development is not provided for under the Notes of the OZP.

The Applicant is operating the HK Timberbank which recycles local fallen trees due to development or aging, or that have uprooted/collapsed due to typhoons, and upcycles the salvaged timbers into new wood products. Such operation involves the proposed uses, which will be compatible with the surrounding environment in Wang Chau predominated by warehouses, open storages/storage yards and vehicle parks. Upon the planning approval, the Applicant will pay attention to the Wang Chau public housing development programme and liaise with the Government to ensure that the Government project will not be affected by the proposed temporary uses. Approval of the application on a temporary basis of 3 years would not jeopardise the long term development of the Application Site.

The HK Timberbank has recycled approx. 1,000 tons of local trees in 5 years since 2019. Its services bring about positive impacts to the environmental protection and sustainable development in Hong Kong including a reduction in wastes that will be sent to landfills, a reduction in the demand for new timber from virgin forests, encouraging the use of materials originated locally to reduce the environmental impacts arising from transportation and promotion of public awareness on material recycling. The Applicant's good vision to further develop the recycled wood industry in the long run should be supported. In view of the justifications put forth in the Supplementary Planning Statement, the TPB is kindly invited to give favorable considerations to this application.

行政摘要

(聲明：此中文譯本僅供參考，如中文譯本和英文原文有差異時，應以英文原文為準。)

RAAW Limited (申請人) 現正向城市規劃委員會申請城市規劃許可，以於新界元朗屏山丈量約份第 123 約地段第 979 號、第 980 號、第 981 號、第 1037 號及毗連政府土地 (申請地盤) 作擬議臨時危險品倉庫 (木料倉)、鄉郊工場及汽車修理工場為期 3 年 (申請用途)。根據屏山分區計劃大綱核准圖編號 S/YL-PS/20 (下稱大綱圖)，申請地盤被劃為「住宅(甲類)5」地帶。地盤前身被劃作「露天貯物」地帶，並因應已計劃的元朗橫洲其餘公營房屋發展而後來被改劃成住宅用途。儘管申請用途不是「住宅(甲類)5」地帶的第 1 或第 2 欄用途，根據大綱圖的註釋，任何土地或建築物的臨時用途或發展，如為期不超過三年，須向城市規劃委員會申請規劃許可，即使圖則對於有關用途或發展沒有作出規定。

申請人經營的「香港木庫」回收和處理本地因發展、老化或颱風而砍伐的樹木材料，並將回收木材設計成新的木製品。營運涉及該申請的擬議用途，並與橫洲的週邊環境相協調，主要為貨倉、露天貯物/貯物場和停車場。申請人會留意橫洲公營房屋發展計畫，並會與政府聯絡，以確保政府項目不會受到擬議的臨時用途影響。三年期的臨時性質許可不會阻礙履行該地段的長遠發展。

「香港木庫」成立 5 年內已回收 1,000 噸樹木，其服務對香港的環境保護及可持續發展帶來正面影響，包括減少送往堆填區的廢物、減少來自原始森林的新木材需求、鼓勵使用原產地的材料以減少運輸對環境的影響及提升大眾對木料回收的認知。申請人意欲為再生木材產業長遠發展的良好願景實在值得支持。基於規劃綱領中提出的理據，懇請城規會批准此規劃申請。

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

The site under this application is located at Lot Nos. 979, 980, 981, 1037 and adjoining Government Land in D.D.123, Ping Shan, Yuen Long, New Territories (the Application Site or the Site). The Application Site falls within an area zoned "Residential (Group A) 5" ("R(A)5") on the approved Ping Shan Outline Zoning Plan No. S/YL-PS/20, which was rezoned from "Open Storage" in 2022 for the planned Wang Chau Remaining Phases public housing developments. Currently, RAAW Limited (the Applicant), has been operating the HK Timberbank at the Application Site, which recycles local fallen trees due to development or aging, or that have uprooted/collapsed due to typhoons, and upcycles the salvaged timbers into new wood products. Such operation involves temporary dangerous goods godown (for storage of timber materials), rural workshop and vehicle repair workshop, which are being applied by Applicant for a period of three years under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance for carrying out on the Application Site. Please see **Figure 1** for the Location Plan and **Figure 2** for the Site Plan.

1.2 About the Applicant

The Applicant operates the HK Timberbank, which is a well-established eco-social enterprise run by relatively young and energetic leadership, pursuing industrialization of the local timber industry by recycling local felled trees due to typhoon, aging or urban development. As one of the few remaining operators in the timber industry, HK Timberbank provides one-stop solution for tree collection and upcycling, bringing a second life to local timber with the philosophy of 'R3 – ReCYCLE, ReDESIGN, ReLINK', thereby reducing the city's landfill wastes and reliance on imported wood.

ReCYCLE - HK Timberbank launched after Typhoon Mangkhut uprooted tens of thousands of trees in the city. Approx. 1,000 tons and more than 80 species of trees have been recycled since 2019.

ReDESIGN - HK Timberbank believes design and artistry can bring the beauty of felled timber back to light. Salvaged timbers are turned into commercial building materials, furnitures and outdoor art installations.

ReLINK - HK Timber Foundation organizes Timberbank Volunteer Team. Collaborating with professional arborists, the team conducts tree pruning, after-typhoon disasters tree caring services, routine maintenance projects for social needed.

2. SITE CONTEXT

2.1 The Application Site

The Application Site is located at Lot Nos. 979, 980, 981, 1037 and adjoining Government Land in D.D.123, Ping Shan, Yuen Long, New Territories with a site area of about 2,252m². The Site is hard-paved and accessible from Fuk Hi Street to its east via a local track. It consists of three temporary structures for workshop uses.

According to an aerial photo taken on 28.4.1992 retrieved from the Lands Department's record (see **Figure 3**), the Application Site appears to have been used for brownfield operation immediately before the first publication in the Gazette of the notice of the draft Ping Shan Development Permission Area (DPA) Plan No. DPA/YL-PS/1 on 18 June 1993.

The Application Site falls within the Site Formation and Infrastructural Works for Remaining Phases of Public Housing Developments at Wang Chau, Yuen Long. The Government has completed the town planning process in 2022 to rezone the sites to "R(A)5" zone and plans to acquire the relevant sites progressively to facilitate public housing developments.

2.2 Surrounding Areas

The surrounding areas are intermixed with warehouses, open storages/storage yards, vehicle parks, grassland and rural temporary structures. The Site is accessible from Fuk Hi Street to its east via a local track, paved and fenced off and currently occupied by the applied uses.

2.3 Land Status

The Application Site comprises private lands of Lot Nos. 979, 980, 981 and 1037 in D.D.123. The Applicant is a tenant and not a "current land owner" but has fully complied with the Town Planning Board Guidelines on Satisfying the Owner's Consent/Notification Requirements under Sections 12A and 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance by obtaining consent letters from the current land owners. The private lots are old schedule agricultural lot held under Block Government Lease. The Application Site is covered by Short Term Waivers granted by the Lands Department (LandsD) nos. 2641-2643 permitting non-agricultural building purposes (vehicle repair workshop excluding paint spraying).

The Application Site comprises Government Lands with a total area of 126 m² covered by a valid Short Term Tenancy (STT) (ref. no. STT1810) granted by LandsD in 2002 for vehicle repair uses for a term of 1 year and renewed thereafter quarterly.

Should planning approval be given to the subject application, the STW/STT holders will apply to LandsD for modification of STW/STT conditions where appropriate, so as to apply to permit the structures to be erected or regularize any irregularities on site, if any.

3. TOWN PLANNING CONTEXT

3.1 Statutory Planning Context

The Application Site falls within an area falls within an area zoned "Residential (Group A) 5" ("R(A)5") on the approved Ping Shan Outline Zoning Plan No. S/YL-PS/20 (the OZP). The planning intention of the "R(A)5" zone is primarily for high-density residential developments. Commercial uses are always permitted on the lowest three floors of a building or in the purpose-designed non-residential portion of an existing building.

On land designated "Residential (Group A) 5", no new development, or addition, alteration and/or modification to or redevelopment of an existing building shall result in a total development and/or redevelopment in excess of a maximum plot ratio of 6.5 and a maximum building height of 135mPD, or the plot ratio and height of the existing building, whichever is the greater.

According to the covering Notes of the OZP, temporary use or development of any land or building not exceeding a period of 3 years requires permission from the Town Planning Board, notwithstanding that the uses or the development is not provided for under the Notes of the OZP.

The Application Site was under an amendment item of the draft Ping Shan OZP No. S/YL-PS/19 being rezoned from "Green Belt" and "Open Storage" to "Residential (Group A)5" to cater for Wang Chau Remaining Phases (WCRP) public housing development, which was approved by the CE in C on 13 September 2022.

3.2 Long Term Development

Following a review of "GB" sites by the Planning Department (PlanD) for increasing housing land supply, a piece of land (about 33.31 ha) to the west of Long Ping Estate and the Yuen Long Industrial Estate, partly zoned "GB" and partly zoned "OS", was studied for public housing development. In 2014, the Government decided to carry out the public housing development in phases and a site to the west of Long Ping Estate (about 5.67 ha) was rezoned for public housing development first, i.e. Wang Chau Phase 1 Public Housing Development. To facilitate the Wang Chau Remaining Phase public

housing development, the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) completed an engineering feasibility study (EFS) for the proposed housing development and associated Government, Institution and Community (GIC) facilities to provide about 13,000 public housing units to accommodate about 36,400 people, according to the relevant Town Planning Board paper. (TPB Paper No. 10799)

3.3 Town Planning History

The Application Site is not the subject of any previous application.

3.4 Similar Planning Application(s)

Previously approved S.16 applications for similar temporary uses within/straddling "R(A)" zones in Hong Kong within the past 5 years are tabled hereunder.

Case No.	Proposal	Key Planning Considerations
A/HSK/468 (11/08/2023) Approved	Temporary Logistics Centre and Storage of Exhibition Materials and Recyclable Materials (Plastic, Metal and Paper) with Ancillary Workshop for a Period of 3 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst the applied use is not in line with the planning intention of the "R(A)" zone, approval of the application on a temporary basis of three years <u>would not jeopardise the long term development of the Site.</u> • <u>not incompatible with the surrounding land uses</u> which are predominantly used for open storage yards , warehouses, vehicle repair workshop and logistics centre. • <u>In line with the TPB PG No. 13G</u>
A/YL-YST/1209 (05/05/2023) Approved	Temporary Open Storage of Construction Equipment and Materials with Ancillary Office and Maintenance Workshop for a Period of 3 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite the applied use is not in line with the planning intentions of the "R(A)" and "O" zones and the planned road alignment of YLS Development, approval of the application on a temporary basis of three years <u>would not jeopardise the long-term development of the area.</u> • <u>The surrounding area comprises predominantly open storage/ storage yards.</u> • <u>Generally in line with TPB PG-No. 13G.</u>
A/HSK/ 496 (22.12 .2023) Approved	Temporary Open Storage of Containers with Ancillary Logistics Uses, Vehicle Repair Workshop, Container Repair Workshop and Parking of Tractors for a Period of 3 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst the applied use is not in line with the planning intentions of the "R(A)2", "G/IC" and "O" zones , approval of the application on a temporary basis of three years <u>would not jeopardise the long term development of the Site.</u> • The applied use is considered <u>not incompatible with the surrounding land uses</u> which are predominantly used for open storage yards, logistics centres and warehouses, with some of them covered by valid planning permissions. • <u>Generally in line with TPB PG No. 13G</u>

<p>A/HSK/454 (23.6.2023) Approved</p>	<p>Temporary Warehouse, Open Storage of Construction Materials and Containers with Container Vehicles Park, Container Tractors Park and Logistics Yard with Ancillary Workshop (Including Compacting and Unpacking Workshop) for a Period of 3 Years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst the applied use is not in line with the planning intentions of the G/IC ", "R(A)2", "OU(POFEFTS)" and " zone s , approval of the application on a temporary basis of three years <u>would not jeopardise the long term development of the Site.</u> • The applied use is considered <u>not incompatible</u> with the surrounding land uses which are predominantly logistics centres, open storage yards and warehouse. • The applied use is <u>generally in line with the TPB PG No. 13G.</u>
<p>A/HSK/289 (12.3.2021) Approved</p>	<p>Temporary Warehouse, Open Storage of Construction Materials, Open Storage of Containers with Container Vehicles Park, Container Tractors Park and Logistics Yard with Ancillary Workshop (Including Compacting and Unpacking Workshop) for a Period of 3 Years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst the applied use is not in line with the planning intentions of the "G/IC", "R(A)2", "O" and "OU (POFEFTS)" zones, approval of the application on a temporary basis of 3 years <u>would not jeopardize the long-term development of the Site.</u> • The applied use is <u>not incompatible with the surrounding land uses</u> which are predominantly used for open storage yards, workshops, logistics centres, parking of vehicles and warehouses. • <u>Generally in line with TPB PG No. 13G.</u>
<p>A/YL-TYST/1102 (23.7.2021) Approved</p>	<p>Temporary Open Storage of Recycling Materials (Metal, Plastic and Paper) And Used Electrical/Electronic Appliances and Parts with Ancillary Workshop and Packaging Activities for a Period of 3 Years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although the applied use is not in line with the aforesaid planning intentions, and the Site falls within YLS Development, approval of the application on a temporary basis of three years <u>would not jeopardise the long-term development of the area.</u> • Generally <u>not incompatible with the surrounding uses</u> comprising predominantly open storage/storage yards and warehouses • <u>Generally in line with TPB PG-No. 13F.</u>
<p>A/YL-TYST/1172 (26.8.2022) Approved</p>	<p>Renewal of Planning Approval for Temporary Vehicle Inspection Centre with Ancillary Open Storage of Vehicles and Vehicle Parts for a Period of 3 Years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although the applied use is not in line with the aforesaid planning intentions, and the Site falls partly within areas zoned "Special Residential – Public Rental Housing (Zone 1) (with commercial)" and "Local Open Space" under Stage 2B of YLS Development, approval of the application on a temporary basis of three years <u>would not jeopardise the long-term development of the area.</u> • Generally <u>not incompatible with the surrounding area</u> comprising predominantly warehouses and open storage/ storage yards • <u>Generally in line with TPB PG-No. 13F.</u>
<p>A/HSK 421 (23.12.2022) Approved</p>	<p>Proposed Temporary Open Storage of Containers with Ancillary Logistics Uses, Vehicle Repair Workshop, Container Repair Workshop</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst the proposed use is not in line with the planning intention of the "G/IC" zone, approval of the application on a temporary basis of three years <u>would not jeopardise the long term development of the Site.</u>

	and Parking of Container Tractors for a Period of 3 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed use is considered <u>not incompatible with the surrounding areas</u> which are predominately used for open storage yards , warehouses and logistic centres <u>Generally in line with the TPB PG No. 13F.</u>
A/HSK/312 (9.7.2021) Approved	Temporary Logistics Centre, Warehouse, Cold Storage, Open Storage of Containers and Container Vehicle Park with Ancillary Workshop (Including Compacting, Unpacking and Tyre Repairing) and Canteen for a Period of 3 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst the applied uses are not in line with the planning intentions of the "G/IC", "C(4)" and "R(A)3" zones, approval of the application on a temporary basis of 3 years <u>would not jeopardize the long-term development of the Site.</u> The applied uses are <u>not incompatible with the surrounding land uses</u> which are predominantly occupied by warehouses and logistics uses, open storage of containers, and container and vehicle repairing workshop. <u>Generally in line with the TPB PG-No. 13F.</u>
A/HSK/165 (19.7.2019) Approved	Temporary Open Storage of Vehicle with Site Office, Storage of Vehicle Parts, Vehicle Inspection and Repairing Workshop for a Period of 3 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst the development is not in line with the planning intentions, approval of the application on a temporary basis of 3 years <u>would not jeopardize the long-term development of the Site.</u> <u>Not incompatible with the surrounding land uses</u> which are predominantly used for open storage yards and vehicle repairing workshops <u>Generally in line with the TPB PG-No. 13E.</u>
A/HSK/146 (3.5.2019) Approved	Temporary Open Storage of Containers with Ancillary Logistics Uses, Vehicle Repair Workshop, Container Repair Workshop and Parking of Tractors for a Period of 3 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst the applied development is not in line with the planning intentions of the "R(A)2", "G/IC", "O" and "OU(POFEFTS)" zones, approval of the application on a temporary basis of 3 years <u>would not jeopardize the long-term development of the Site.</u> The applied uses are <u>not incompatible with the surrounding areas</u> which are predominately occupied for open storage yards, logistics centres and warehouses. <u>Largely in line with the TPG PG-No. 13E.</u>

In summary of the above cases, the Town Planning Board has been adopting a consistent stance in approving planning applications for temporary uses, those fully utilize the land resources before the Government carries out its land resumption and clearance exercises. The key planning considerations are that approval of the applications on a temporary basis of 3 years would not jeopardize the long-term development of the sites, the applied uses are not incompatible with the surrounding areas and generally in line with the TPG PG-No. 13G. The subject application shares the same considerations.

4. THE PROPOSAL SCHEME

4.1 The Applied Uses

The applied uses involve the three existing temporary structures, including one 2-storey structure for proposed temporary Dangerous Goods Godown (for storage of timber materials) and Rural Workshop (Structure no. 1); one 1-storey structure for the proposed temporary Vehicle Repair Workshop (Structure no. 2) and one 2-storey ancillary structure (Structure no. 3). A layout plan is in **Figure 5**.

At G/F of structure no. 1, the Applicant will apply to the Dangerous Goods Enforcement Division of Fire Services Department for a Timber Store License for the proposed storage of timber in bulk. The proposed Rural Workshop is for recycling of felled trees and manufacturing of wood products. It comprises a kiln drying area and other machineries for treatment of timber materials; tools storage rooms; makers rooms for wood handicrafts with an R&D area for testing out new recycled timber products; carpenters' rooms and a visitors' room. At 1/F of the structure, an ancillary exhibition room, an ancillary showroom and an ancillary education workshop are provided for the promotion of local sustainable timber industry to visitors. An ancillary staff room is provided for management purposes.

Structure no. 2 is for the temporary Vehicle Repair Workshop permitted under the STW. Structure no. 3 is ancillary to the timber workshop with a makers room for timber products on G/F and an ancillary staff canteen on 1/F.

At the outdoor area, a sorting and sawmill works area, and a loading/unloading (tree reception), parking and vehicle manoeuvring area are provided. 2 private car parking space (5m x 2.5m) and 1 loading/unloading space for Medium / Heavy Goods Vehicles (M/HGV) (11m x 3.5m) will be provided. The key development parameters of the applied uses are presented in **Table 4.1** below.

Table 4.1 Proposed Development Parameters

Parameters	Proposal
Site Area	About 2,252 m ² , including about 2,126 m ² (94%) of private land and 126 m ² (6%) of government land
No. of Structures	3
Total Floor Area	1,500m ²
Site Coverage	About 50%
Temporary Timber Storage (Dangerous Goods Godown) and Timber Workshop for a period of 3 years	
No. of Structures	2
Floor Area*	About 1,160 m ²
No. of storeys	2
Height of Structures	Structure no. 1: About 7.4m Structure no. 3: About 5.5m
Temporary Vehicle Repair Workshop for a period of 3 years	
No. of Structures	1
Floor Area	About 340 m ²
No. of storeys	1
Height of Structure	About 6.4m
Provision of Internal Transport Facilities	
No. of Parking Spaces	2
No. of Loading/ Unloading Spaces (M/HGV)	1

Note*: Including structures comprising a Timber Storage area which is classified as a Dangerous Goods Godown (about 100 m²); a kiln drying area and other machineries for treatment of timber materials; tools storage rooms; makers rooms for wood handicrafts with an R&D area for testing out new recycled timber products; carpenters' rooms; a visitors' room; an ancillary exhibition room, an ancillary showroom and an ancillary education workshop and for the promotion of local sustainable timber industry to visitors; and an ancillary staff room. Excluding the sorting and sawmill works area at the outdoor area.

4.2 The Proposed Operation

ReCYCLE - The HK Timberbank recycles local fallen trees due to development or aging, or that have uprooted/collapsed due to typhoons or severe weathers. When the timbers are delivered to the workshop, it will be first sorted before they are cut into timber boards, planks and panels and treated in a vacuum drying kiln for 2-3 weeks to clear the sap, moisture, microorganisms, etc.

ReDESIGN - The dried woods will be designed and upcycled into environmentally friendly wood products by milling machine and polishing for sales mainly off the Application Site.

ReLINK - Educational workshops and guided tours for visitors for the promotion of local sustainable timber industry are held on Sundays as ancillary to the main use. An ancillary showroom is provided for the sales of wood handicrafts to visitors as souvenirs.

The operation hours for the applied uses are proposed from 8:00 am to 10:00 pm from Mondays to Saturdays, and from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm on Sundays. There is an average of about 10 staffs, including managers and carpenters, on site during the operation hours.

5. PLANNING JUSTIFICATIONS

5.1 Environmental merits of upcycling local fallen trees

Following the Super Typhoon Mangkhut hitting Hong Kong in 2018, there were over 20,000 number of collapsed trees having been sent to landfills. According to the "Monitoring of Solid Waste in Hong Kong 2022" published by the Environmental Protection Department, there were in average about 192 tons of yard waste disposed of at landfills every day. Based in the Application Site, the HK Timberbank has recycled approx. 1,000 tons of local trees fallen due to typhoons, aging or urban development in 5 years since 2019, which would have been otherwise sent to the landfills. Whenever there is a typhoon in Hong Kong, the Applicant would use its best endeavors to search around for and rescue fallen trees. Salvaged timber are re-designed and turned into timber products such as commercial building materials, fitting outs, furnitures and outdoor art installations.

The service of HK Timberbank contributes to multiple aspects of environmental protection and sustainable development in Hong Kong and the local timber industry, which include:

1. A reduction in wastes that will otherwise be sent to landfills, while Hong Kong's landfills are reportedly reaching their capacities soon. The amount of methane, a potent greenhouse gas potentially released from woods decomposing in landfills will be reduced.

2. Reducing the demand for new timber exploited from virgin forests, which helps conserving natural resources and reduces habitat and biodiversity loss.
3. Encouraging the use of materials originated locally so as to reduce the environmental impacts and carbon footprints arising from transportation.

An environmental protection business has not been an easy path. Yet, the HK Timberbank has been on a steady growing trend in their business scale and remains optimistic as they are looking forward to expand the scale of regenerating wood resources and product ranges in future.

5.2 Merits of promoting public awareness on the local sustainable timber industry

Apart from the main service, the HK Timberbank also spares no effort in promoting its sustainable practices to the public through different partnership projects. For example, it organizes the Timberbank Volunteer Team in collaboration with professional arborists to conduct tree pruning, after-typhoon disasters tree caring services and routine maintenance projects. It also works in collaboration with the Government and organizations eg. the Tourism Commission, YMCA, HKJC, The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, JCCAC, Federation of Hong Kong Industries and schools to organize eco-guided tours, educational activities, art displays, sharings and trainings, to promote a better understanding of public participants and visitors about its work and process. These projects providing opportunities for people to learn about woodworking, the local eco-friendly timber industry and sustainability, would not have been materialized without the strong foundation of the applied uses.

5.3 Will not jeopardise the long term development of the site

Utilizing the land resources, approval of the application on a temporary basis of three years would not jeopardise the long term development of the Application Site. To ensure timely and orderly implementation of the Government project, the Applicant will pay attention to the development programme and liaise with the Government to ensure that the applied uses would not affect the proposed development under the Remaining Phases of Public Housing Developments at Wang Chau.

5.4 Compatibility with the Surroundings

The surrounding areas are predominantly intermixed with warehouses, open storages/storage yards, vehicle parks, grassland and rural temporary structures. The applied uses are highly compatible with the surrounding context. This mix of land uses has been in existence and continued before the first publication in the Gazette of the notice of the draft Ping Shan DPA Plan No. DPA/YL-PS/1 on 18 June 1993 according to the aerial photo in Para 2.1 above.

5.5 Generally In line with the TPB PG No. 13G and the zoning history of "Open Storage"

As per its history of being zoned "OS", the application falls within the Category 1 areas defined in TPB PG-No. 13G, (see **Figure 4**) as considered suitable for open storage and

port back-up uses. According to the guideline, in general, there are compatible uses in these areas such as industrial uses, public utility installations and other port back-up and open storage activities and open storage/port back-up uses, which are permitted as of right. Favourable consideration will normally be given to applications within these areas, subject to no major adverse departmental comments and local objections, or the concerns of the departments and local residents can be addressed through the implementation of approval conditions.

The situation of Wang Chau also share similarities with “Applications in New Development Areas” as defined under TPB PG No. 13G, in which sympathetic consideration may be given to the application for existing open storage and port back-up uses permitted under the previous OZPs until the concerned site is required for implementation of new developments.

5.6 In line with TPB’s consistent positions on similar temporary storage and workshop proposals in “R(A)” zones under a public works development programme

As per the non-exhaustive list in Section 3.3 above, there have been at least 10 planning applications previously approved by the Town Planning Board within the past 5 years for similar temporary storage and workshop proposals in “R(A)” zones, after being rezoned under a public works development programme. As per the table, the Town Planning Board adopted a consistent set of planning considerations, including not jeopardizing the long term development of the site, not being incompatible with the surrounding land uses and TPB PG No. 13G. In this regard, the subject application shares great similarities with these approved applications.

5.7 No Insurmountable Impacts to the Surroundings

No Adverse Traffic Impact

The transportation of timber materials are on an as-needed basis, e.g. when there is any fallen tree received, which has a low traffic generation and usually in non-peak hours. The timber to be stored within the Application Site would remain stagnant in most of the time. The current scale of the timber business will remain more or less the same for the proposed temporary period. The Site is accessible from Fuk Hi Street to its east via a local track. No parking, queuing and reverse movement of vehicles on public or the track outside the Site is allowed. Thus, adverse traffic impact on the surrounding is not anticipated.

No Adverse Environmental Impact

The Wang Chau area is characterized by a brownfield environment intermixed with warehouses, open storages/storage yards, vehicle parks, grassland and rural temporary structures. There is no sensitive use or residential building within 100m from the Application Site boundary. Most of the workshop activities will be conducted in the covered/enclosed areas. The Applicant will closely observe the guidelines set out in latest “Code of Practice on Handling Environmental Aspects of Temporary Uses and

Open Storage Sites”.

No Adverse Fire Safety Impact

The Applicant will comply with all lawful requirements of the Director of Fire Services made under the Dangerous Goods Ordinance and the Timber Stores Ordinance, any regulations made thereunder and any amending legislation. The Applicant will apply to the Dangerous Goods Enforcement Division of Fire Services Department for a Timber Store License. Fire service installations and water supplies for fire-fighting will be provided to the satisfaction of the Fire Services Department.

No Adverse Drainage and Sewerage Impact

The existing surface U-channel within the Site will remain unchanged and the applied uses involve no additional filling of land. Surface runoff within the Site is naturally diverted and discharged via the existing U-channels, effectively preventing surface water from flowing from the Application Site to the nearby public roads. No adverse drainage impact on the surrounding areas is anticipated.

No Adverse Visual and Landscape Impact

The Wang Chau area is characterized by a brownfield environment intermixed with warehouses, open storages/storage yards, vehicle parks, grassland and rural temporary structures. The area is hard-paved with very limited existing landscape resources. The applied uses will not induce any notable changes to the place. No landscape and visual impacts is expected to be generated.

In this connection, there will be minimal traffic, environmental, fire safety, drainage, sewerage, visual and landscape impacts arising from the applied uses.

6. CONCLUSION

The Applicant now seeks town planning permission for proposed Temporary Dangerous Goods Godown (for storage of timber materials), Rural Workshop and Vehicle Repair Workshop (for a period of 3 years) at the Application Site zoned “R(A)5” which has been rezoned from “Open Storage” for the planned Wang Chau Remaining Phases public housing developments. The applied uses are compatible with the surrounding brownfield environment in Wang Chau. Utilizing the land resources, approval of the application on a temporary basis of three years would not jeopardise the long term development of the Application Site. The HK Timberbank has the merits of bringing about positive impacts to the environmental protection and sustainable development in Hong Kong.

The applied uses are fully justified on the following grounds:

- Environmental merits of upcycling local fallen trees
- Merits of promoting public awareness on the local sustainable timber industry
- Will not jeopardise the long term development of the site

- Compatibility with the Surroundings
- In line with TPB's consistent positions on similar temporary storage and workshop proposals in "R(A)" zones under a public works development programme
- No insurmountable impacts to the surroundings

Whilst a great mission to redesign, upcycle and relink the recycled wood industry in the long run needs the support of more people, the Town Planning Board is kindly invited to give favorable considerations to this application.