

To : Secretary, Town Planning Board

Objection to the Application No. Y/TP/31

In response to the invitation of the Director of Planning to express views / comments on the Town Planning Application no. Y/TP/31 on rezoning various lots in D.D.12 and D.D.14 and adjoining Government land in Tung Tsz, Tai Po, N.T. from “Green Belt” to two “Comprehensive Development Areas” (CDA), the Education University of Hong Kong (EdUHK) has conducted an internal consultation with our staff and students to collect their views and please find below a summary of our major concerns / comments on the proposal.

1. Adverse Traffic Impact

The whole community of Tung Tsz relies solely and heavily on Ting Kok Road to connect with outside which however is already heavily loaded particularly during morning peak periods and public holidays when traffic jams occur all along the road. With such a large scale development proposal involving over 6,000 additional residents, whose primary access to and from the future estate is still Tung Tsz Road and Ting Kok Road which design is not for such a high volume of traffic, the adverse traffic impact to be created by the development is just too much to bear.

2. Incompatible Proposed Land Use

At present, all subject lots fall within a Green Belt Zone which is a precious asset in our territory. Any redevelopment into a CDA will only eliminate its high amenity value and not be welcome by the public at large. The development proposal consists of many high rise residential towers which are highly visible and intrusive for rural residential and recreational visitors. It could also fundamentally and adversely change the nature of the area around Plover Cove.

3. Building Height and Density of the Proposal

The tallest residential towers in the proposal are up to 13 storeys which are completely incompatible with the existing surrounding development. Moreover, it would block the scenic view of EdUHK and has impact on the aesthetic value of EdUHK in its relatively rural location which is irreversible. Moreover, the tall buildings, to be erected closely with each other, will also affect the natural ventilation to its surrounding and jeopardise a pleasant learning environment in EdUHK.

4. Lack of Community Facilities to Support the Development

There are currently no essential community facilities such as markets, schools, community centres or clinics in the vicinity of Tung Tsz which can support a development of such a scale being proposed.

5. Environmental Nuisance

In the short run when the development is being implemented, large amounts of dust, dirt and construction wastes and noise will be generated which will definitely affect the air quality, water courses, quiet environment, beautiful landscape and even the ecology in the vicinity.

After the completion of the project, the vehicle exhaust pollution, the noise and the glare nuisance created by the new residents will also spoil the peaceful learning environment of EdUHK.

On the ecological side, some precious species fauna, like a specially protected butterfly 裳鳳蝶 already found in the subject area, may be endangered and have a high risk of extinction caused by the development.

6. Liability of Reinstating the Land Use

We are all aware of the fact that the current Green Belt Zone has been being used improperly or even illegally by different activities such as debris / wastes dumping, vehicles parking and repairs yards, different types of workshops and stores with various types of suspected unauthorized structures / containers erected on it. Whilst EdUHK has been repeatedly raising our concerns and requesting different government departments to take regulatory actions to rectify the situation, it is regretted to note that all our efforts have been in vain. We opine the developer, who is actually the land owner and applicant in the subject application, holds an undeniable responsibility to reinstate all the land back to the original status immediately and not to use it as a reason to support his application of rezoning the Green Belt into a CDA.

7. Land Exchange for Establishing EdUHK Sports Centre

Compared to a CDA, we consider the subject lots could be ideally rezoned for learning and teaching purposes, including the re-provision of our Pak Shek Kok Sports Centre, by land exchange. Such idea had been included in our previous submission to the Town Planning Board in December 2017 when the original town planning application was submitted with a copy attached again for easy reference.

Other written comments received from our students and staff are also attached.

In conclusion, we strongly object to the Town Planning Application No. Y/TP/31 and your due consideration of all our comments is appreciated.

Thank you for your attention.

The Education University of Hong Kong

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