

Approved Nam Sang Wai Outline Zoning Plan amended

The Town Planning Board today (July 12) announced amendments to the approved Nam Sang Wai Outline Zoning Plan (OZP).

The amendments mainly involve (i) rezoning an area to the north of Ho Chau Road from "Residential (Group D)" ("R(D)") to "Residential (Group A)1", "Residential (Group A)2" and "Other Specified Uses" annotated "Pumping Station" to facilitate public housing and private residential developments under a Land Sharing Pilot Scheme application; (ii) rezoning a strip of land to the north of Ho Chau Road from "R(D)" to "Village Type Development" ("V") as an extension of the adjacent "V" zone, with the remaining knoll from "R(D)" to "Green Belt" to reflect the existing condition; and (iii) rezoning a site at Wing Kei Tsuen from "Other Specified Uses" annotated "Comprehensive Development to Include Wetland Restoration Area" ("OU(CDWRA)") to "OU(CDWRA)1" for a private comprehensive residential development.

The Notes and Explanatory Statement of the OZP are amended to take into account the above amendments. Opportunity is also taken to update the general information of various land use zones and the planning scheme area, where appropriate.

The draft Nam Sang Wai OZP No. S/YL-NSW/9, incorporating the amendments, is available for public inspection during office hours at (i) the Secretariat of the Town Planning Board, (ii) the Planning Enquiry Counters, (iii) the Fanling, Sheung Shui and Yuen Long East District Planning Office, (iv) the Yuen Long District Office, (v) the San Tin Rural Committee, and (vi) the Shap Pat Heung Rural Committee.

Any person may make written representations in respect of the amendments to the Secretary of the Town Planning Board on or before September 12. Any person who intends to make a representation is advised to read the Town Planning Board Guidelines No. 29C on "Submission and Processing of Representations and Further Representations" (TPB PG-No. 29C).

Submission of a representation should comply with the requirements set out in TPB PG-No. 29C. In particular, the representer should take note of the following:

- * If the representer fails to provide his or her full name and the first four alphanumeric characters of his or her Hong Kong identity card or passport number as required under TPB PG-No. 29C, the representation submitted shall be treated as not having been made; and
- * The Secretariat of the Town Planning Board reserves the right to require the representer to provide identity proof for verification.

The Guidelines and the submission form are available at the above

locations (i) and (ii) as well as the Town Planning Board's website (www.tpb.gov.hk).

Copies of the draft Nam Sang Wai OZP are available for sale at the Map Publications Centres in North Point and Yau Ma Tei. The electronic version of the OZP can be viewed on the Town Planning Board's website (www.tpb.gov.hk).

Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (July 12) released the latest grading of water quality for 39 gazetted beaches (see Note 1) and one non-gazetted beach (see Note 2).

Fifteen beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1), 22 as Fair (Grade 2), and three as Poor (Grade 3).

Grade 1 beaches are:

Cheung Chau Tung Wan Beach*	Lo So Shing Beach
Chung Hom Kok Beach	Repulse Bay Beach*
Clear Water Bay Second Beach*	Silverstrand Beach*
Discovery Bay Tai Pak Beach	South Bay Beach*
Hap Mun Bay Beach*	St Stephen's Beach
Hung Shing Yeh Beach*	Trio Beach
Kiu Tsui Beach	Turtle Cove Beach
Kwun Yam Beach	

Grade 2 beaches are:

Anglers' Beach*	Lower Cheung Sha Beach
Approach Beach	Ma Wan Tung Wan Beach*
Big Wave Bay Beach*	Middle Bay Beach
Butterfly Beach*	Pui O Beach*
Cafeteria New Beach	Shek O Beach*
Casam Beach*	Silver Mine Bay Beach*
Clear Water Bay First Beach	Stanley Main Beach*
Deep Water Bay Beach*	Tai Po Lung Mei Beach*
Golden Beach*	Ting Kau Beach*
Hoi Mei Wan Beach	Tong Fuk Beach
Lido Beach*	Upper Cheung Sha Beach

Grade 3 beaches are:

Cafeteria Old Beach
Castle Peak Beach

Kadoorie Beach

Compared with the grading released last week, Cheung Chau Tung Wan Beach and Silverstrand Beach have been upgraded from Grade 2 to Grade 1, and Anglers' Beach, Approach Beach, Butterfly Beach, Golden Beach, Lido Beach, Silver Mine Bay Beach and Ting Kau Beach from Grade 3 to Grade 2. Deep Water Bay Beach and Middle Bay Beach have been changed from Grade 1 to Grade 2.

"The changes are generally within the normal range of fluctuation of the bacteriological water quality of the beaches," an EPD spokesman said.

Under the present grading system, beaches are classified into four grades, namely Good (Grade 1), Fair (Grade 2), Poor (Grade 3) and Very Poor (Grade 4), according to the level of E. coli in the water. Grades are calculated on the basis of the geometric mean of the E. coli counts on the five most recent sampling occasions.

While the ratings represent the general water quality at the beaches, the EPD spokesman reminded members of the public that water quality could be temporarily affected during and after periods of heavy rain. Bathers should avoid swimming at beaches for up to three days after a tropical cyclone or heavy rainfall.

A summary of beach grades is published weekly before the weekend. The latest beach grades based on the most current data may be obtained from the EPD's website on Beach Water Quality (www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach) or the beach hotline, 2511 6666. Members of the public can also obtain the latest daily water quality forecast information for all beaches that are open for swimming through the Beach Water Quality Forecast mobile application (available for download from: www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQApp) or the dedicated beach water quality forecast page (www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQForecast) on the EPD's beach thematic website.

Note 1: Lifesaving services are provided by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department at 21 gazetted beaches, marked with an asterisk (*) above, from June 1. Due to the damage caused to the footpaths leading to Chung Hom Kok Beach by landslides, the beach is temporarily closed until further notice. For details, please refer to the Leisure and Cultural Services Department's Special Announcement (www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/beach/index.html).

Note 2: This refers to Discovery Bay Tai Pak Beach which is a non-gazetted beach that has no lifesaving service.

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Friday, July 12, 2024 is 106.4 (down 0.2 against yesterday's index).

Inspection of aquatic products imported from Japan

In response to the Japanese Government's plan to discharge nuclear-contaminated water at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station, the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene issued a Food Safety Order which prohibits all aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds originating from the 10 metropolis/prefectures, namely Tokyo, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Miyagi, Chiba, Gunma, Tochigi, Niigata, Nagano and Saitama, from being imported into and supplied in Hong Kong.

For other Japanese aquatic products, sea salt and seaweeds that are not prohibited from being imported into Hong Kong, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will conduct comprehensive radiological tests to verify that the radiation levels of these products do not exceed the guideline levels before they are allowed to be supplied in the market.

As the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water is unprecedented and will continue for 30 years or more, the Government will closely monitor and step up the testing arrangements. Should anomalies be detected, the Government does not preclude further tightening the scope of the import ban.

From noon on July 11 to noon today (July 12), the CFS conducted tests on the radiological levels of 239 food samples imported from Japan, which were of the "aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt" category. No sample was found to have exceeded the safety limit. Details can be found on the CFS's thematic website titled "Control Measures on Foods Imported from Japan"

(www.cfs.gov.hk/english/programme/programme_rafs/programme_rafs_fc_01_30_Nuclear_Event_and_Food_Safety.html).

In parallel, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has also tested 50 samples of local catch for radiological levels. All the samples passed the tests. Details can be found on the AFCD's website (www.afcd.gov.hk/english/fisheries/Radiological_testing/Radiological_Test.html).

The Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) has also enhanced the environmental monitoring of the local waters. No anomaly has been detected so far. For details, please refer to the HKO's website (www.hko.gov.hk/en/radiation/monitoring/seawater.html).

From August 24 to noon today, the CFS and the AFCD have conducted tests on the radiological levels of 67 342 samples of food imported from Japan (including 43 302 samples of aquatic and related products, seaweeds and sea salt) and 16 042 samples of local catch respectively. All the samples passed the tests.

Seventh Joint Conference on Advancing Hong Kong's Full Participation in and Contribution to Belt and Road Initiative held in Beijing

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) and relevant central ministries held the seventh Joint Conference on Advancing Hong Kong's Full Participation in and Contribution to the Belt and Road Initiative in Beijing today (July 12).

Vice Chairman of the NDRC Mr Zhao Chenxin attended the conference with Mainland officials led by him, including the Secretary General of the NDRC, Mr Wu Hao, who is also the Convenor of the Joint Conference, and representatives from the NDRC, the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council, the Supreme People's Court, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Commerce, the National Health Commission, the People's Bank of China, the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council, the National Administration of Financial Regulation, the National Immigration Administration, and the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the HKSAR.

The Secretary for Justice, Mr Paul Lam, SC, in his capacity as the chairperson of the Working Group on Belt and Road Development under the Steering Group on Integration into National Development, led HKSAR Government officials to attend the conference. They included the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development and Hong Kong-side Convenor of the Joint Conference, Mr Algernon Yau, and representatives from the Department of Justice, the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau, the Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau, the Belt and Road Office of the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, and the Office of the Government of the HKSAR in Beijing.

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority, the Insurance Authority and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) were also represented at the meeting.

Mr Lam said that as the Belt and Road Initiative (B&RI) has entered its next golden decade, President Xi Jinping announced at the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing in October last year the eight major steps the country will take to support the joint pursuit of high-quality Belt and Road (B&R) development, which Hong Kong's advantages are closely aligned with. Guided by the eight major steps, in particular co-operation in new fields such as green development and innovation, the Steering Group on Integration into National Development chaired by the Chief Executive and its Working Group on Belt and Road Development are steering various policy bureaux and departments to proactively capitalise on Hong Kong's role as the functional platform for the B&RI, as well as to give full play to its role as a "super connector" and a "super value-adder".

He pointed out that there are seven deliverables directly related to Hong Kong among the Lists of Deliverables announced after the Forum. The HKSAR Government is actively implementing these deliverables and has made good progress. These included an increase in the quota of the Belt and Road Scholarship to 150 per year, the launch of the inaugural Asia+ Festival, the commencement of joint production of television variety programmes with B&RI regions, and the organisation of the first event outside the Mainland for the Green Investment and Finance Partnership which was launched at the Forum. In addition, the HKSAR Government is taking forward the establishment of the Hong Kong International Legal Talents Training Academy and the Meteorological Training Centre for Belt and Road Countries, as well as planning to hold the ninth Belt and Road Summit in September, which will lay the groundwork for the 10th anniversary of the Summit next year. The HKSAR Government is also actively carrying out the preparatory work for the establishment of the International Organization for Mediation.

At the meeting, Mr Yau highlighted the HKSAR Government's achievements in various aspects in promoting the B&RI over the past year, including proactively expanding the HKSAR's economic and trade networks in B&R markets such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Middle East and North Africa; forging free trade and investment agreements with more trade partners in exploring B&R opportunities; and continuous enhancements to the relevant B&RI platforms in Hong Kong, such as the HKTDC Belt and Road Portal, the international carbon marketplace and the Hong Kong International Academy Against Corruption.

The meeting focused its discussion on the 12 work proposals on further promoting the B&RI that the HKSAR Government put forward for consideration by central ministries, covering B&R economic, trade and investment co-operation, legal and dispute resolution services, finance and risk management, and innovation and technology (I&T). Representatives of relevant Joint Conference Mainland ministries introduced their respective work in supporting Hong Kong's participation in and contribution to the B&RI, and provided feedback on the HKSAR Government's work proposals. The HKSAR Government is grateful for the support expressed by relevant central ministries at the meeting on

various work proposals, and will actively follow up with them to better facilitate Hong Kong's integration into national development.

The meeting also discussed the work priorities of the HKSAR Government in promoting Hong Kong's participation in and contribution to the B&RI under the guidance of the eight major steps in the year ahead. Among them, on supporting an open world economy, the Government will continue to actively seek for Hong Kong's early accession to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership; on carrying out practical co-operation, the Government will continue to organise a number of outbound missions to B&R markets; on promoting green development, the Government will strengthen Hong Kong's position as Asia's green finance hub; and on advancing scientific and technological innovation, the Government will continue to fully participate in the development of an international I&T centre in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

The Arrangement between the NDRC and the HKSAR Government for Advancing Hong Kong's Full Participation in and Contribution to the B&RI, signed between the HKSAR Government and the NDRC in 2017, provides the direction and a blueprint for Hong Kong's full participation in and contribution to the B&RI. The Joint Conference mechanism was set up to follow up on the implementation of 26 specific measures under the Arrangement, and meetings are convened at least once a year.