

Draft Fanling/Sheung Shui Extension Area Outline Zoning Plan approved

The Chief Executive in Council has approved the draft Fanling/Sheung Shui Extension Area Outline Zoning Plan (OZP).

"The approved OZP provides a statutory land use planning framework to guide the development and redevelopment in the Fanling/Sheung Shui Extension Area", a spokesman for the Town Planning Board said today (February 23).

The planning scheme area covers a total area of about 32 hectares (ha). It is located to the immediate south and southwest of the Fanling/Sheung Shui New Town, and stretches from Ping Kong Road and Po Kin Road to its north and to the Tai Lung Experimental Station at its southeastern end, with Fan Kam Road to its west and Ping Kong to its east. On the other side of Po Kin Road and Ping Kong Road are North District Hospital and its extension, as well as existing public housing estates and schools.

In view of the fact that the proposed public housing use and development parameters of about 9.54 ha area in the northern-most portion of the planning scheme area (the Site) are subject to further review by the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) and the outcome of the judicial review (JR) in relation to the environmental impact assessment report for the proposed development, the Site is zoned "Undetermined" at this juncture to provide appropriate planning control on the Site during the interim period. Subject to the completion of the CEDD review and the JR proceedings, further rezoning of the Site will be processed in accordance with the Town Planning Ordinance.

The remaining southern portion of the area zoned "Other Specified Uses" annotated "Conservation cum Recreation" (about 21.65 ha) is intended primarily to conserve existing natural landscape and ecological features. It is also intended for the provision of space for passive recreational uses for the general public, which are compatible with the conservation intention.

The approved Fanling/Sheung Shui Extension Area OZP No. S/FSSE/2 is now 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 North District Office, and (v) the Sheung Shui District Rural Committee.

Copies of the approved 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 at the Town Planning Board's website (www.tpb.gov.hk).

Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (February 23) released the latest grading of water quality for four gazetted beaches that are open all year round for swimming.

Four beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1).

Grade 1 beaches are:

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Clear Water Bay Second Beach | Golden Beach |
| Deep Water Bay Beach | Silverstrand Beach |

Compared with the grading released last week, there was no change in the grading for these beaches.

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, an 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.

SCED to attend 13th WTO Ministerial

Conference in Abu Dhabi

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Algernon Yau, will depart for Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates, tomorrow afternoon (February 24) to attend the 13th World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference (MC13) to be held from February 26 to 29.

The Ministerial Conference is the highest decision-making body of the WTO. Ministers from across the WTO membership will gather at the MC13 to review the functioning of the multilateral trading system and to give direction for the future work of the WTO. During the Conference, Mr Yau will speak on a host of trade issues, including e-commerce, dispute settlement reform, etc. He will also have bilateral meetings with his counterparts to exchange views on issues of mutual interest.

After attending the MC13, Mr Yau will visit Bahrain on March 2 and 3 to meet with senior officials and business leaders, with a view to strengthening economic and trade co-operation.

Mr Yau will return to Hong Kong in the morning on March 4. The Under Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Dr Bernard Chan, will be the Acting Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development during Mr Yau's absence.

Firing practice for March 2024

Firing practice will take place at two military sites, namely the San Wai/Tai Ling Firing Range and the Tsing Shan Firing Range, next month (March).

Red flags or red lamps will be hoisted at the firing areas before and during firing practice. For their safety, people are advised not to enter the firing area.

Following are the dates and times for the firing practice sessions in March 2024:

San Wai/Tai Ling Firing Range

| Date | Time |
|------|------|
|------|------|

| | |
|----------------------|---------|
| March 4 (Monday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 5 (Tuesday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 6 (Wednesday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 7 (Thursday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 11 (Monday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 12 (Tuesday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 13 (Wednesday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 14 (Thursday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 15 (Friday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 16 (Saturday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 18 (Monday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 19 (Tuesday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 20 (Wednesday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 21 (Thursday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 22 (Friday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 23 (Saturday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 25 (Monday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 26 (Tuesday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 27 (Wednesday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 28 (Thursday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 29 (Friday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 30 (Saturday) | 8am-9pm |

Tsing Shan Firing Range

| Date | Time |
|----------------------|---------|
| March 1 (Friday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 4 (Monday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 5 (Tuesday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 6 (Wednesday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 7 (Thursday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 8 (Friday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 9 (Saturday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 11 (Monday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 12 (Tuesday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 13 (Wednesday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 14 (Thursday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 15 (Friday) | 8am-9pm |
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| March 28 (Thursday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 29 (Friday) | 8am-9pm |
| March 30 (Saturday) | 8am-9pm |

Registered minor works contractor reprimanded and fined by disciplinary board

The Registered Contractors' Disciplinary Board has completed a disciplinary inquiry under the Buildings Ordinance (BO) and decided that a registered minor works contractor (RMWC) should be disciplined for having been convicted by court of an offence relating to minor works, having been negligent or misconducted itself in building works, and having certified minor works that had been carried out in contravention of the BO.

The Board ordered the RMWC to be reprimanded and be fined \$15,000. Also, the RMWC was ordered to pay \$50,400 in total, being the costs of the Board and the Buildings Department (BD) for conducting the inquiry.

The Board's written decision and order issued on February 6 was published in the Gazette today (February 23). Details are available at the following link: www.gld.gov.hk/egazette/pdf/20242808/egn20242808911.pdf.

The RMWC submitted a certificate to the BD in April 2019, notifying the commencement of minor works, i.e. the erection of a projecting signboard, at the external wall of a building at Gilman's Bazaar. The BD notified the RMWC in early July of the same year that Gilman's Bazaar was a carriageway where emergency vehicles could enter as and when necessary, and the concerned works might hinder the access of emergency vehicles. However, the RMWC subsequently still submitted a completion certificate to the BD certifying the completion of the signboard erection works. After an audit inspection by the BD, it was revealed that the erection of the signboard contravened section 31(1)(aa)(v) of the BO, i.e. the location and dimensions of the signboard constituted an obstruction to the means of access for firefighting and rescue. The RMWC was later prosecuted, convicted and fined \$4,000 at the Eastern Magistrates' Court in February 2021, pursuant to section 40(1B)(a) of the BO for contravention of the requirement on projections on or over streets under section 31(1) of the BO. All of the above showed that the RMWC had certified minor works that had been carried out in contravention of the BO, and that the RMWC had been negligent or had misconducted itself in building works.

In view of the conviction and conduct of the RMWC, the BD notified the Board for its consideration of disciplinary action against the RMWC under the provisions of section 13(1) and 13(3) of the BO.

A spokesperson for the BD reiterated that any registered contractor who contravenes the relevant provisions of the BO in carrying out minor works will be subject to enforcement action including criminal prosecution and disciplinary action under the BO.