

政府總部
發展局
規劃地政科

香港添馬添美道2號
政府總部西翼



CB(1)1578/13-14(01)
Planning and Lands Branch
Development Bureau
Government Secretariat

West Wing, Central Government
Offices, 2 Tim Mei Avenue,
Tamar, Hong Kong

本局檔號 Our Ref. DEVB (PL-L) 40/05/34
來函檔號 Your Ref.

電話 Tel.: 3509 8832

傳真 Fax : 2845 3489

6 June 2014

Dr Hon Lau Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP
Chairman of the Panel on Development
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong
(Attn: Ms Sharon Chung)

Dear Ms Chung,

West Rail Property Development Project at Yuen Long Station

Thank you for your email of 30 April 2014 to the Development Bureau, referring to us a letter on the West Rail property development project at Yuen Long Station from Hon Chan Ka-lok, Kenneth and Hon Kwok Ka-ki for our reference. In consultation with the Planning Department, the Transport Department, the Buildings Department, the Lands Department and the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL), we set out our response to the concerns expressed by the two Members at **Annex**.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W W Chong".

(W W Chong)

for Secretary for Development

cc:

Planning Department	(Attn: Ms Bonita Ho)
Transport Department	(Attn: Mr Ludwig Chan)
Buildings Department	(Attn: Ms Janet Cheng)
Lands Department	(Attn: Ms Yvonne Chang)
MTR Corporation Limited	(Attn: Ms Amy Lau)

West Rail Property Development Project at Yuen Long Station

Background

The Master Layout Plan of the property development project at West Rail Yuen Long Station (Yuen Long project) was first approved by the Town Planning Board (TPB) in January 2002, and the slightly revised scheme was subsequently approved by the TPB in January 2005 (**Annex 1**).

2. The 2007 Policy Address mentioned that the scheme of the Yuen Long project would be reviewed to address the concerns of the local residents/villagers and the Yuen Long District Council (YLDC) about the development intensity of the project.

3. As the agent of the West Rail property development projects, the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) put forward a revised scheme (**Annex 2**) in November 2008. The key improvements included the deletion of two residential blocks and the reduction of the total plot ratio (PR) from 4.64 to 3.93, bringing about a decrease in the gross floor area (GFA) of about 24 480m² (about 15%). The Development Bureau (DEVB) and the MTRCL consulted the Shap Pat Heung Rural Committee (SPHRC), the residents of the Sun Yuen Long Centre (SYLC) and the YLDC in March and April 2009 respectively. The YLDC and the local residents/villagers requested for further reduction in development intensity, provision of more greenery and enhancement of air ventilation.

4. The 2011-12 Budget announced that the West Rail Property Development Limited would redesign six property development projects along the West Rail of which master layout plans and building plans had already been approved, so as to comply with the guidelines on quality and sustainable building design to be effective on 1 April 2011, as well as to increase the supply of small and medium-sized flats. The scheme for the Yuen Long project was also revised along this principle.

The revised scheme in 2013

5. The MTRCL has revised the scheme of the Yuen Long project (**Annex 3**). Out of the total GFA of 137 990m²¹, the residential floor area and commercial/retail floor area would make up 126 455m² and 9 900m²² respectively. Compared with the scheme approved by the TPB in 2005 (**Annex 1**), the key improvements of the revised scheme are as follows:

- (a) **Compliance with the Sustainable Building Design Guidelines:** The scheme was revised to comply with the guidelines on quality and sustainable building design promulgated by the BD, which include:
 - (i) reduction of the length of the buildings' continuous projected façade so as to comply with the requirement on building separation;
 - (ii) compliance with the requirement on building set back;
 - (iii) compliance with the requirement on total site coverage of greenery; and
 - (iv) abiding by the overall 10% cap on the granting of GFA concessions;
- (b) **Reduction in the total number of residential blocks and overall building bulk:** A total of three residential blocks, i.e. one at the "northern site" and two at the "southern site", would be deleted to increase building separation and permeability. The public transport interchange (PTI) originally planned in the "southern site" would be relocated under the revised scheme (see paragraph 7 below), and an additional basement carpark would be provided. As a result, the podium height would be reduced by 5.45metres (m) from 23.45m to 18m above Principal Datum (mPD). All of these measures would be conducive to reducing the overall building bulk;
- (c) **Enhancement of breezeways/visual corridors:** The space between the towers at the "southern site" would be widened from about 9m to about 50m, and the widest breezeways/visual corridor at the "northern site" would be widened from about 83m to about

¹ According to the guidelines of the Buildings Department (BD), the 330m² covered footbridge connecting the "northern site" and the "southern site" (FB1) is exempted from floor area calculations.

² The remaining non-residential floor area includes a 24-hour covered pedestrian walkway system of about 400m² and an at-grade covered plaza of about 1 235m² in area.

130m. The distance from Towers 1, 2 and 5 of the SYLC would be increased from about 24m, 11m and 13m to about 28m, 32m and 56m respectively. An urban window of about 33m wide would be provided on the ground level of the “southern site” under the revised scheme;

- (d) **Quality urban design:** A stepped podium would be adopted and greenery space would be increased. A landscaped open plaza of about 1 200m² would be introduced at the “southern site” to provide open space and green belt, bringing the overall site coverage of greenery to 20%³. As suggested by the Social Welfare Department (SWD), a net operating floor area of about 1 200m² has been earmarked on the ground floor of the “southern site” podium to accommodate an integrated children and youth services centre and an integrated family service centre so as to provide youth and family welfare services to facilitate harmony and cohesion in the community; and
- (e) **Reduction in the total number of flats and increase in the proportion of small and medium-sized flats:** The total number of flats would be reduced from 2 214 to 1 876, representing a reduction of 338 flats (about 15%). Among the flats to be produced, 1 312 would be small and medium-sized flats with a saleable area of 50m² or less. The proportion of this type of flats would be increased from about 61% to about 70%.

6. The main difference between the revised scheme and the proposed scheme of 2008 is the deletion of one residential block at the “southern site”, thereby increasing building separation and further reducing the overall building bulk. This would bring about greater improvements in terms of air ventilation and greenery coverage on the ground level for the benefit of the residents/villagers and the community.

Matters relating to road traffic and public facilities

7. To take forward the Yuen Long project, corresponding adjustments would be made to the road traffic and footbridge network (**Annex 4**). Road improvement works would be carried out at the junction of Castle Peak Road/Long Yat Road (East), including the addition of traffic lanes to permit vehicles turning from Castle Peak Road

³ As the site areas of the “northern site” and the “southern site” are both less than 20 000m², they should have a minimum of 20% site coverage of greenery (i.e. the percentage of greenery area over site area) according to the Practice Notes of the BD.

to Long Yat Road and vice versa, as well as the addition of a U-turn lane at the road junction. Long Lok Road currently located at the “southern site” would be converted into a private road⁴, and the land to the north of the “southern site” would be developed into a realigned Long Lok Road to serve as a carriageway and a pick-up and drop-off point for residents’ coaches, buses and mini-buses. The originally planned PTI at the “southern site” would be relocated. Upon its relocation, the bus terminus of routes No. 53 and N30 would be reprovisioned to the existing PTI at the “northern site”, and the bus stops of routes No. K65 and K74, the green mini-bus stands and the pick-up and drop-off point for residents’ coaches would be reprovisioned to the realigned Long Lok Road to the north of the “southern site”. The existing Long Lok Road at the “southern site” would be converted into a private road for use by owners of the lot and the vehicles from SYLC. Such arrangements have already been agreed by the Transport Department (TD) and the Highways Department (HyD).

8. Generally same as the scheme approved by the TPB in 2005, the revised scheme would provide a covered public pedestrian walkway at the podium. This would include the construction of a footbridge (FB1) and a vehicular bridge (VB) connecting Yuen Long Station and the “southern site”, demolition and part reconstruction of the existing footbridges (FB2 and FB3) connecting SYLC and the south of Castle Peak Road for linking the 24-hour pedestrian walkway of the shopping arcade of Yuen Long project, as well as the construction of a footbridge (FB4) connecting the “southern site” with the Fung Cheung Road Garden. Such arrangements have been agreed by the TD and the HyD. In addition, a provision at the east of footbridge FB3 at the “southern site” would be reserved for connecting a possible pedestrian walkway in future, with a view to enhancing the connectivity of the “southern site” with the surrounding properties.

9. The latest traffic impact assessment (TIA) has taken into account the above traffic arrangements. According to the TIA, the Yuen Long project would have slight impact on the overall traffic condition of the district. The road works (see the general layout at **Annex 5**) would be gazetted in accordance with the procedures stipulated in the Roads (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance (Chapter 370) in due course.

⁴ The Government and the MTRCL are exploring the feasibility of the option of pedestrianised walkway (see paragraph 17 below). Subject to the outcome of the study, the arrangement for converting Long Lok Road at the “southern site” into a private road might be revised.

10. Besides, the existing public toilet at the “southern site” would be reprovisioned on the ground floor of the podium.

Local consultation

11. The Government, together with the MTRCL, consulted the SPHRC and the village representatives in July 2013, and has thereafter maintained contact with relevant members of the YLDC to exchange views on the villagers’ aspirations.

12. Separately, the Government and the MTRCL consulted the residents of the SYLC in July 2013 and April 2014 respectively. In order to gain better understanding of and to address the residents’ views, we have also adopted other means of communication, such as responding to residents’ submissions and meeting their Owners’ Corporation. On 29 April 2014, the Government and the MTRCL consulted the YLDC again to listen to their views on the Yuen Long project.

Residents/Villagers’ views on the Yuen Long project and the Government’s response

13. Regarding the views expressed by the residents/villagers and the YLDC during the consultation exercise, the Government’s response is set out below:

Development intensity

14. The Government and the MTRCL understand the concerns of the residents/villagers about the development intensity of the Yuen Long project. The design of the Yuen Long project has been refined twice since 2008. Both the Government and the MTRCL have undertaken extensive and in-depth work in devising the revised scheme, and have strived to address the public aspirations for a better living environment, as well as to strike a reasonable balance among factors like the provision of residential flats above railway stations, feasibility of project implementation and efficient use of scarce land resources, etc.

15. In the 2014 Policy Address, the Chief Executive outlined a series of measures to increase housing land supply, including increasing development intensity as appropriate. Given the current tight situation of housing land supply, there is an imminent need to make more efficient use of our scarce land resources so that land could be made available for

development within a short timeframe. Taking into account the relevant planning considerations, the Government considers that the maximum domestic PRs for housing sites located in the respective Density Zones of the Main Urban Areas and New Towns could be increased as appropriate. With regard to the Yuen Long project, its total PR under the revised scheme would only be 3.99, which would be 20% lower than that permitted for the Comprehensive Development Area (CDA). Further reducing the development intensity of the Yuen Long project will deviate from the above policy direction and is not in the overall interest of the community.

16. Compared with the 2008 proposed scheme, the domestic and commercial floor area proposed in the 2013 scheme has remained unchanged. The slight increase in the total GFA is mainly due to technical reasons and the need to improve the floor design (such as the need to include in calculation the floor area of the 24-hour pedestrian walkway and the at-grade 33m wide urban window at the podium of the “southern site”). Under the 2013 revised scheme, 1 876 flats are proposed to be built, representing an increase of 118 flats (about 7%) as compared with that of 2008. The main reason is that the proportion of small and medium-sized flats with a saleable area of 50m² or less has been increased under the 2013 revised scheme to meet the market demand for flats of this type.

17. The residents considered the “pedestrianised walkway option” proposed in the 2008 scheme more desirable, and suggested that the Government and the MTRCL should consider turning the area in front of the residence entrance of SYLC into a pedestrianised walkway. The YLDC expressed similar views at the meeting of 29 April 2014. To address the demands of the residents and the YLDC, the MTRCL has proposed to set back the “Government, Institution or Community” (G/IC) facilities at the “southern site” by 5m to widen the pedestrian area (see the photomontage at **Annex 6**). In the meantime, the Government and the MTRCL are assessing the feasibility of the above pedestrianised walkway option and/or other enhancement measures.

Technical assessment data

18. During consultation, the villagers/residents requested the Government and the MTRCL to provide technical assessment data for their reference. Under Section 4A(2) of the Town Planning Ordinance, in making application for development within the site specified as “CDA”, the MTRCL must prepare a master layout plan and conduct a number of

detailed technical assessments in respect of environment, air ventilation, traffic, drainage and sewerage, etc. The technical assessments have taken into account the impact on the residents/villagers in the vicinity, and have been in compliance with the relevant government technical guidelines. A summary of the assessments on air ventilation and traffic impact were passed to the villagers in November 2013, and residents of the SYLC were briefed on the data during the consultation held in April 2014. The technical assessment reports, together with the application in respect of the project, will be submitted to the TPB for approval. The TPB will promulgate the application for public inspection under the Town Planning Ordinance. Members of the public may make written submission to the TPB within the statutory period in respect of the planning application to express their views.

Air ventilation

19. Residents/villagers were also concerned about the impact of the Yuen Long project on air ventilation. The design of the Yuen Long project has been refined twice since 2008, and there have been reduction in the scale of development, the podium bulk and the number of blocks. The 2013 revised scheme focuses on minimising air ventilation and visual impacts on at-grade pedestrians, the surrounding streets and the podium of the SYLC. Apart from adopting a stepped podium for both the “northern site” and “southern site”, vertical greening would also be provided on the façade of the railway station. The bulk, height and coverage of the podium at the “southern site” would be significantly reduced. On top of the provision of a landscaped open plaza on the ground floor, an urban window of about 33m wide would also be provided at the “southern site” to improve ventilation.

20. An independent consultant has been commissioned to conduct a series of detailed technical assessments on environment, air ventilation, landscape, etc. in relation to the above scheme. The technical assessments have taken into account the surrounding development, and the design of the scheme is also in compliance with the Sustainable Building Design Guidelines promulgated by the Government. As shown in the air ventilation and visual assessment reports, the revised scheme would bring about better ventilation and landscape for the surrounding areas when compared with the 2005 approved scheme and the 2008 proposed scheme.

Traffic

21. As for traffic, residents/villagers were concerned about the impacts on pedestrian and vehicular flow upon completion of the Yuen Long project. The 2013 proposed scheme has conducted a detailed technical assessment on the traffic impacts as required for development within CDA. According to the TIA report, the recorded traffic volume to the “southern site” via Long Yat Road and Castle Peak Road was about 500/440 movements per hour during morning and evening peak hours respectively. The report projects that, upon completion of the development and the other planned/completed developments in the district, the vehicular flow of the realigned Long Lok Road in 2024 would be about 650/515 movements per hour during morning and evening peak hours respectively. The increased vehicular flow would still be within the capacity of the road, and would not cause any adverse impact on road junctions leading to nearby areas in the district.

22. In order to cope with the increased vehicular flow upon completion of the Yuen Long project, the MTRCL has proposed road improvement works at the junction of Castle Peak Road/Long Yat Road/Yuen Long On Lok Road. These include the provision of an additional lane that permits vehicles left-turning from Castle Peak Road to Long Yat Road, realignment and provision of an additional U-turn lane at the junction of Castle Peak Road/Long Lok Road (East), as well as the widening of a road section to provide a separate lane that permits vehicles left-turning from Long Yat Road to Castle Peak Road. It is estimated that the improvement works would be completed within 7 years after the Yuen Long project is successfully tendered.

Right of use and management of Long Lok Road after its conversion into a private road

23. The residents requested a clear delineation of the right of use and management responsibilities of Long Lok Road after its conversion into a private road. The management and maintenance responsibilities of Long Lok Road after its conversion would be taken up by the property owners of the Yuen Long project. Apart from providing access to property owners of the abovementioned lot, the said private road could also be used by vehicles from the SYLC. To ensure vehicles of the SYLC can continue to use Long Lok Road, the Government, when drafting the lease terms of the Yuen Long project, will specify that the lessee (and future owners) of the lot must provide a free-of-charge and

uninterrupted 24-hour vehicular access for the SYLC⁵.

Structural safety

24. The residents indicated that the location of the Yuen Long project used to be a karst cave and the construction works might affect the structural safety of SYLC.

25. In revising the development scheme of the Yuen Long project, the MTRCL and its project consultants have already taken into account the geological conditions of the area. During the design stage of the construction works, the authorized persons (APs) and project consultants engaged by the developer must prepare plans in accordance with the requirements of the Buildings Ordinance (BO) and related technical guidelines and practice notes issued by the BD, for onward submission to the BD and other related departments for approval. The foundation design plans include, inter alia, information on the engineering investigation of the construction site, its foundation design and methods of construction.

26. For the Yuen Long project, the development lot is located in Area 2 of Schedule 5 of the BO (i.e. the north-western part of the New Territories). There are stringent regulations on ground investigation, foundation design, the work of construction and monitoring under the BO for this area. APs and project consultants must conduct ground investigations on the development site of the Yuen Long project, as well as detailed studies, assessments and considerations on the geological condition (including that of karst caves) and foundations of nearby buildings (including the SYLC) which might be affected by the construction works in accordance with the requirements of the BO and related practice notes to ensure that the related works would not affect the bearing capacity of the foundations, as well as other foundations and buildings in the vicinity.

27. During the construction period, contractors shall set up adequate monitoring stations at appropriate locations to ensure that buildings in the vicinity would not be affected by the construction works. APs, project consultants and contractors shall conduct regular on-site inspections and examine the readings at the monitoring points to ensure safety and that the construction works are in compliance with related legislations. The

⁵ The Government and the MTRCL are exploring the feasibility of the option of pedestrianised walkway (see paragraph 17 above). Subject to the outcome of the study, the arrangement for converting Long Lok Road at the "southern site" into a private road might be revised.

developer, contractors and the BD shall take follow-up actions upon receipt of views from nearby residents.

Public facilities

28. The residents were of the view that the “southern site” should be reserved for public facilities and requested information on the public facilities within the district.

29. Land would only be reserved for a certain use, and specific public facilities would only be incorporated into individual site upon requests from relevant bureaux/government departments, with their confirmation of the need. The Planning Department has not received any requests from the Government Property Agency or other departments on reservation of the “southern site” for G/IC purpose. As such, there is no plan to reserve the lot for G/IC and recreational uses. On the other hand, an integrated children and youth services centre and integrated family service centre have already been included in the project as suggested by the SWD to address the needs for such services.

30. The number of major public facilities within the Yuen Long Outline Zoning Plan (YLOZP) can in general meet the requirements of the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG). The details are set out below:

Public facilities	Existing quantity
District Police Station	1
Divisional Police Station	1
Fire Station	1
General Clinic/Health Centre	3
Post Office	1
Community Hall/Community Centre	2
Public Library	1
Stadium/Coliseum	3
Sports Ground	1
Swimming Complex	1
Squash Court	3
Theatre	1

31. Furthermore, a community hall will be built at YOHO Town Phase 3 which is a private development project under construction for completion in 2017. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department is constructing the “Public Library and Indoor Recreation Centre in Area 3, Yuen Long” on Ma Tin Road, Yuen Long (near the Yuen Long Theatre) which is expected for completion by end 2015 (the existing Yuen Long Public Library in the Yuen Long Government Offices will be moved into the new block upon its completion). The new library will have a larger floor area than the existing one to provide more comprehensive library services and facilities for the residents. The Government will continue with the planning of public facilities in response to the needs of the future development of Yuen Long District to cater for population growth.

Open space

32. The residents were of the view that the “southern site” should be reserved for open space and requested information on the open space of the district.

33. The current and future estimated population (up to 2021) for the area within the YLOZP are 147 700 and 173 000 respectively. The demand for and supply of the existing and planned open spaces are as follows:

	Existing Provision		
	Minimum requirement (hectares)	Supply (hectares)	Surplus/shortfall (hectares)
District Open Space	About 14.77	About 7.39	About -7.38
Local Open Space	About 14.77	About 17.05	About +2.28

	Planned Provision (including existing and future sites)		
	Minimum requirement (hectares)	Supply (hectares)	Surplus/shortfall (hectares)
District Open Space	About 17.3	About 28.46	About +11.16
Local Open Space	About 17.3	About 29.97	About +12.61

34. According to the HKPSG, the YLOZP has already reserved adequate open space for the future development of Yuen Long district to cater for population growth.

35. In fact, a landscaped open plaza of about 1 200m² has been earmarked in the “southern site” for open space purpose. It would be open for public use during the operating hours of the shopping arcade of the property development. Moreover, the MTRCL will provide adequate greenery in accordance with the Sustainable Building Design Guidelines.

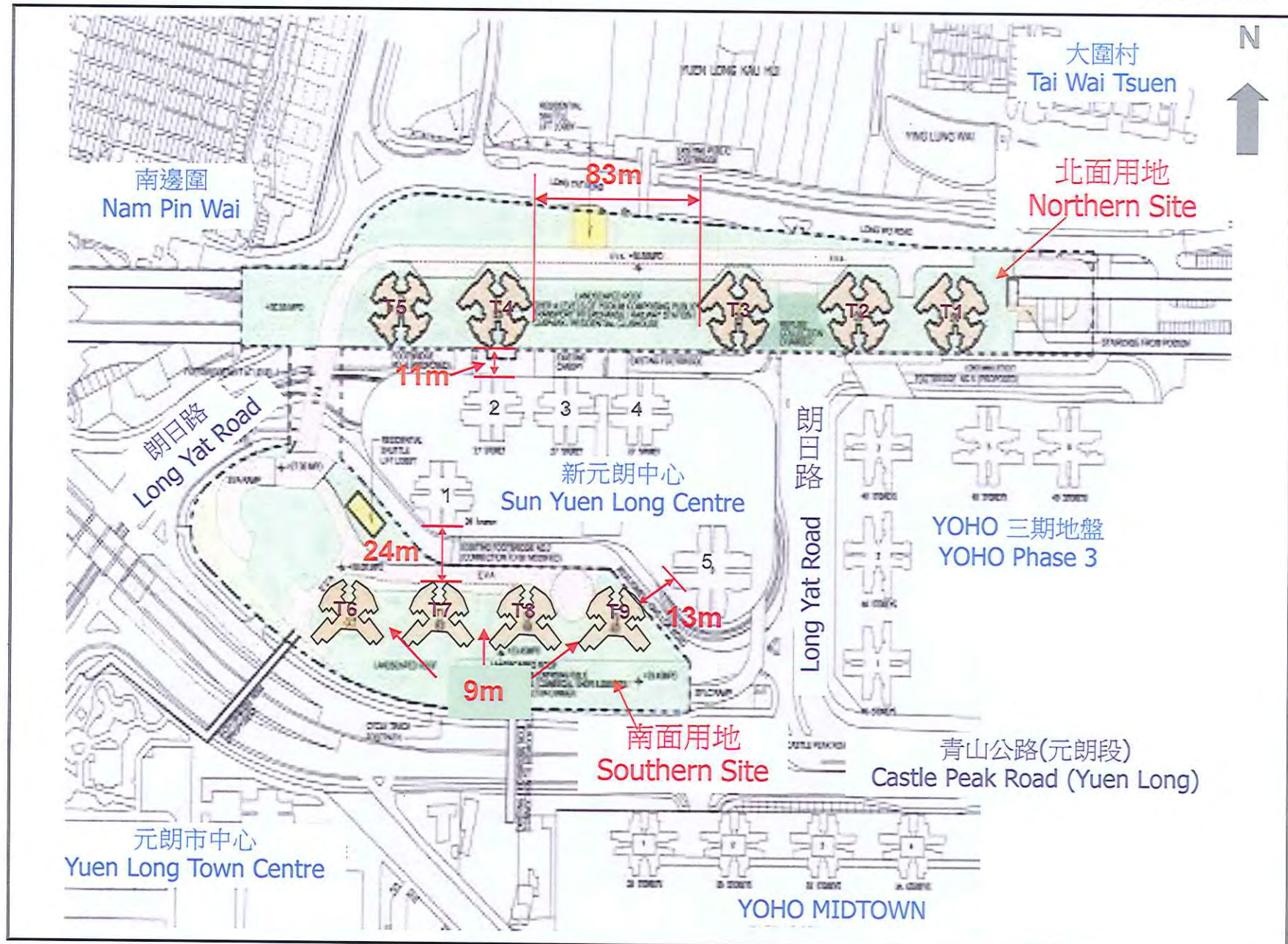
Conclusion

36. Housing is a livelihood issue which is one of the prime concerns of the community. Tackling the housing issue is one of the priority tasks of the current term of the Government. To meet the public’s strong demand for housing, the Government has to increase the supply of land for housing development. The Government is adopting a multi-pronged strategy to increase land supply in the short, medium and long term, through the continued and systematic implementation of a series of measures, including the optimal use of developed land as far as practicable and creating new land for development. The work on this front has become more urgent and important in view of the new housing target of providing 470 000 public and private residential flats in the coming 10 years to address the housing needs of the community. To provide adequate land to meet this housing target is a great challenge for both the Government and the community. The understanding and support of the Legislative Council, District Councils, districts and residents are very important during the process. The community as a whole should not lose sight of the full picture and should make trade-offs in the overall interest of the community.

Development Bureau
June 2014

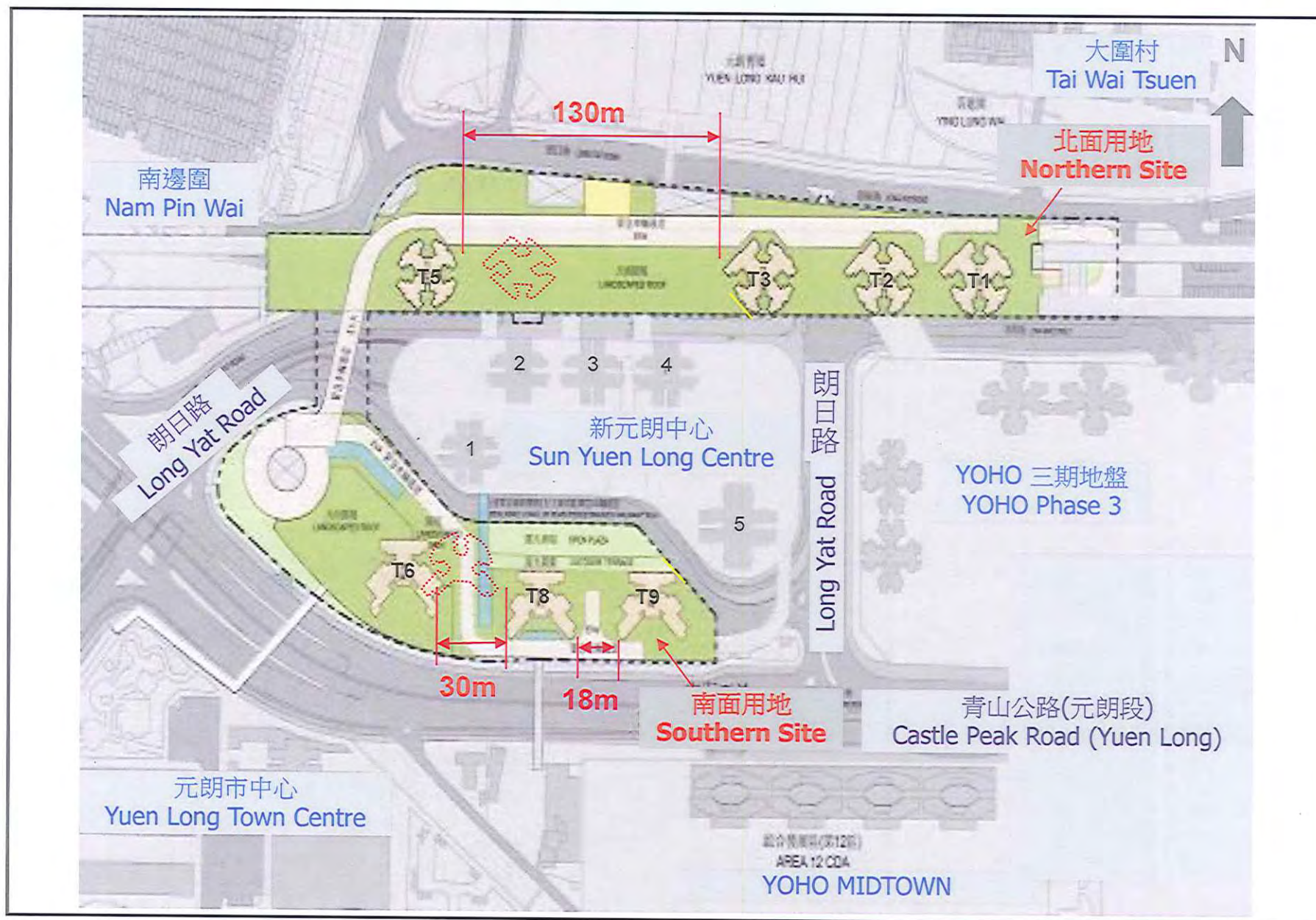
2005 年核准方案 (A/YL/125)
2005 Approved Scheme (A/YL/125)

附圖一
Annex 1



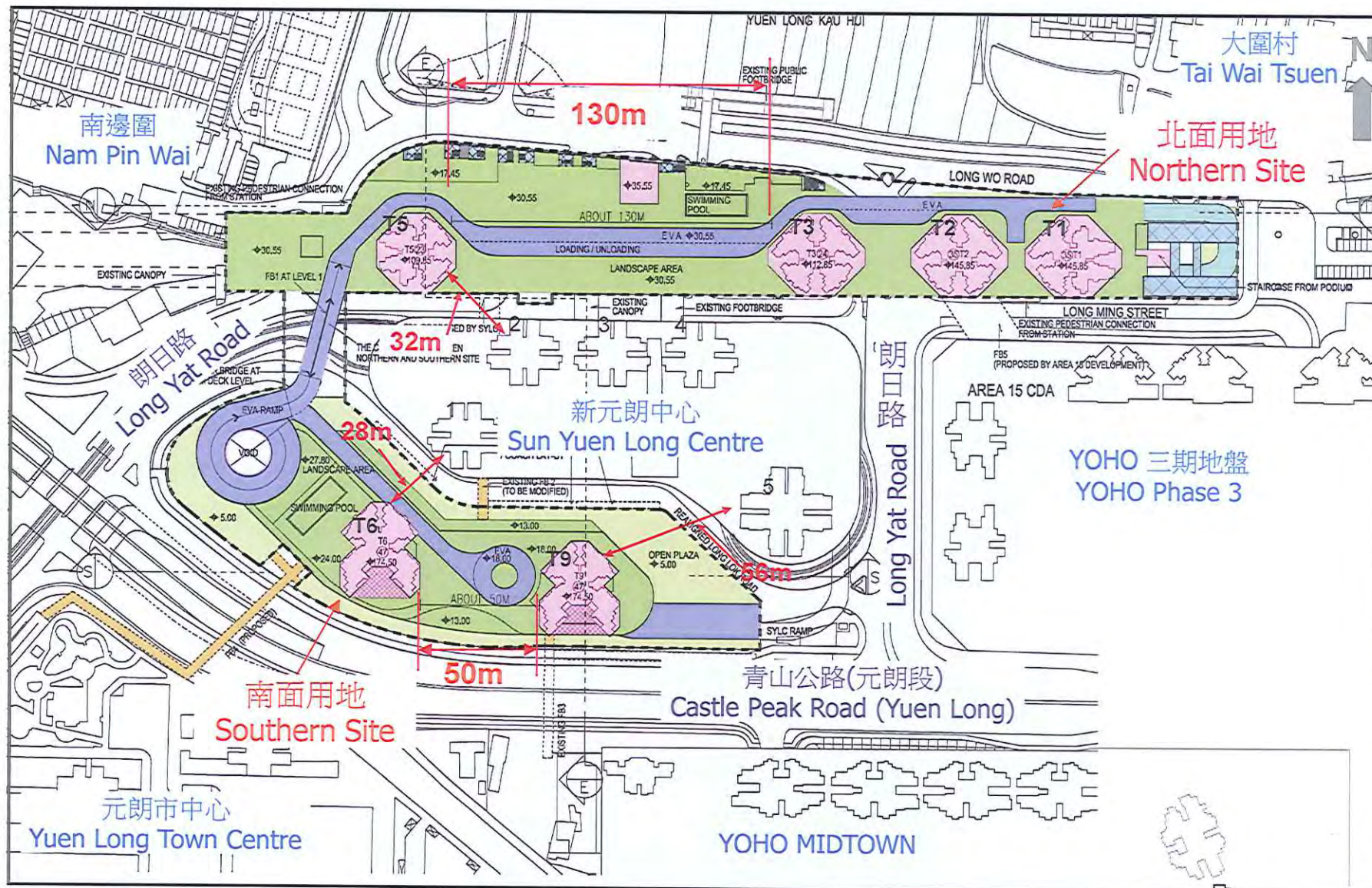
2008 年建議修訂方案
2008 Proposed Revised Scheme

附圖二
Annex 2



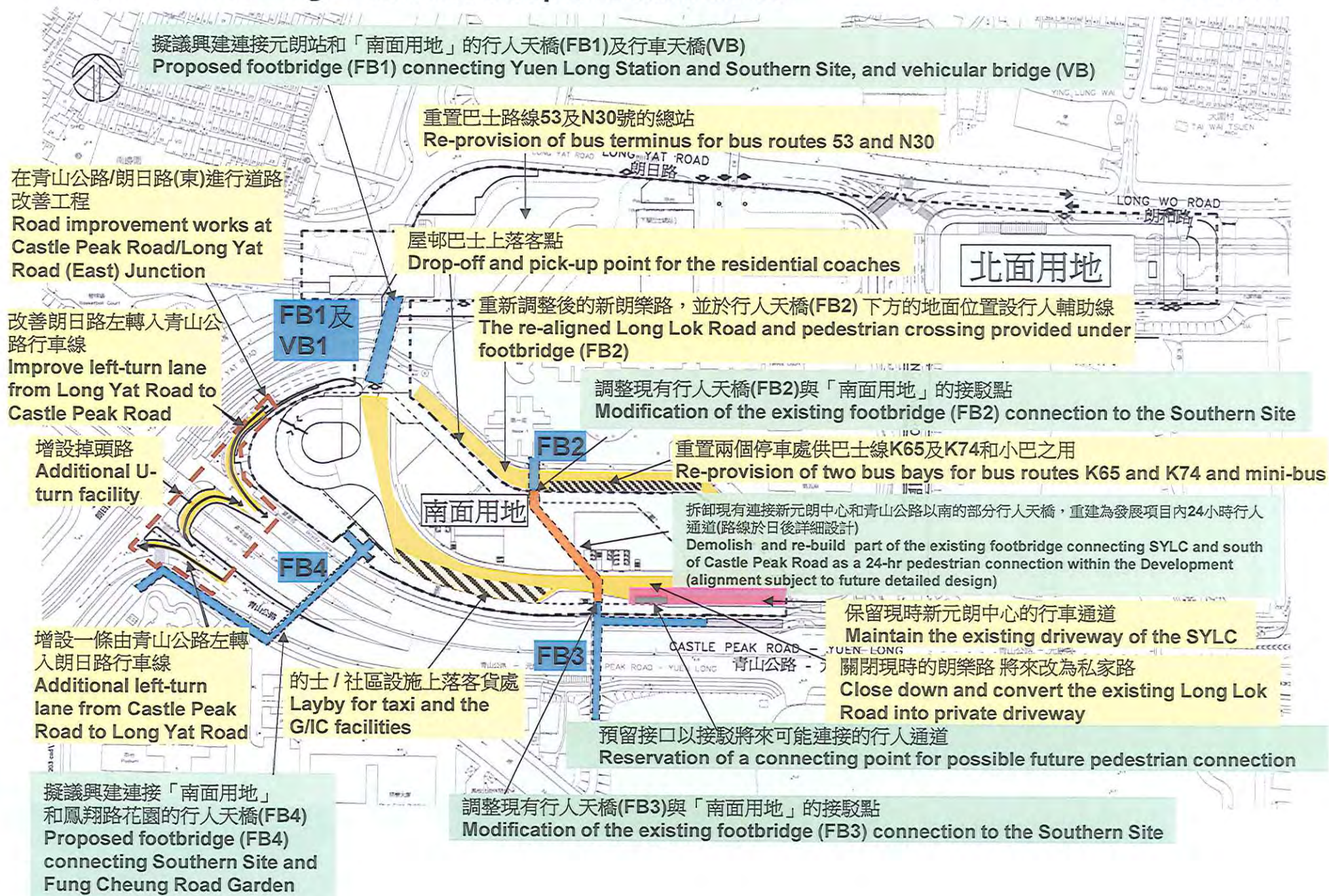
2013 年重新設計方案
2013 Proposed Scheme

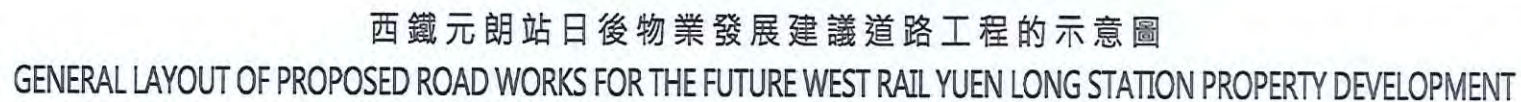
附圖三
Annex 3



建議行人天橋及道路改善工程 Proposed Footbridges and Road Improvement Works

附圖四
Annex 4





附圖六
Annex 6

