



香港觀鳥會

THE HONG KONG BIRD WATCHING SOCIETY

認可公共性質慈善機構 Approved Charitable Institution of Public Character

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Secretary, Town Planning Board
15/F, North Point Government Offices
333 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong
(E-mail: tpbpd@pland.gov.hk)

4 Nov 2011

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Objection to Section 12A Application for Amendment of Plan in Tai Tong,
Yuen Long (Y/YL-TT/2)**

The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society (HKBWS) would like to raise our objection regarding the Application for Amendment of Plan in Tai Tong (Y/YL-TT/2) based on the following reasons:

1. Impacts on nearby egrettry

An active egrettry of Cattle Egrets (*Bubulcus ibis*) and Chinese Pond Heron (*Ardeola bacchus*)¹ is located in Tai Tong less than 500m from the application site. The site is within the foraging range (2 km) of breeding egrets². Cattle Egret is the least numerous breeding ardeid in Hong Kong and the Tai Tong egrettry hold 18% of the total breeding cattle egret population in 2010¹. According to the aerial photo of the area and observations during a site visit on 3 Nov 2011, active agricultural activities and abandoned fish ponds were found inside the application site. The rezoning would lead to loss of potential foraging ground for breeding egrets and herons.

2. Loss of wetlands

During a short (2 minutes) site visit on 3 Nov 2011 a Common Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) was found foraging in an abandoned fishpond at the south proportion of the

¹ Anon, 2010. Summer 2010 Report: Egrettry Counts in Hong Kong with particular reference to the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site. Report by Hong Kong Bird Watching Society to the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government.

² Wong, L.C., Lam, W.Y. and Ades, W.J. 2009. Ecology of the birds in Hong Kong. Hong Kong: Kadoorie Farm & Botanix Garden.

application site. This indicates that the ponds support wetland-dependant species and the proposed development would lead loss of wetlands.

3. Impacts on nearby Country Park

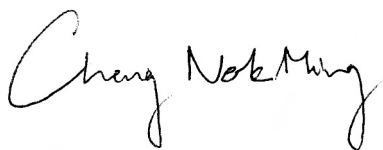
The application site is directly adjacent to the nearby Tai Lam Country Park. Currently, agricultural land and abandoned fish ponds within the “Agriculture” zone serve as buffer areas between the Country Park and villages/open storage uses. The rezoning would remove the important buffer area and introduce disturbance to the country park.

4. Justification for the rezoning

Agricultural land should be retained for agriculture purposes which contribute to sustainable development. It is also ecologically important as they supports unique biodiversity. Currently, there is no systematic and comprehensive planning study regarding agricultural land in Hong Kong.

The application aims to facilitate a massive expansion of Tai Tong Village involving 234 small houses. The size is larger than the existing Tai Tong Village and the application site extend far beyond the village environ of Tai Tong Village. Approval of the current application would set a bad precedent and encourage village expansions over New Territories, threatening land supply and biodiversity.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cheng Nok Ming". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cheng Nok Ming
Conservation Officer
Hong Kong Bird Watching Society