



19 October, 2016

To: Central & Western District Council

Re: Objection to the proposed 21-storey high-rise construction next to Declared Monument Man Mo Temple (proposed amendment of the Sai Ying Pun & Sheung Wan Outline Zoning Plan No. S/H3/29)

Reuse the ex-TWGHs Lee Sai Chow Primary School in Hollywood Road as an elderly care centre

Dear Chairman and Members of the Central & Western District Council,

On May 13 2016, despite strong objections from the community the Town Planning Board approved the application from the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals to build a 21-storey hostel next to the Man Mo Temple on Hollywood Road in Sheung Wan , a Declared Monument.

The main concern was that no adequate geotechnical assessment had been carried out for the project and construction work could seriously damage the 170-year old temple.

These concerns were substantiated just two weeks later when on May 29th the married quarters at the Central Police Station, built between 1862 and 1864, so of a similar age to Man Mo Temple, suddenly collapsed. These historic buildings are obviously sensitive to disturbances and should not be exposed to the pressures imposed by development at close quarters.

The fate of the married quarters must certainly have given the Tung Wah board cause for concern and to question whether the hostel plan should go ahead.

Last week 'The Elderly Services Programme Plan', a two-year study commissioned by government advisory group the Elderly Commission, was published. This study, led by the University of Hong Kong, is the city's first comprehensive plan on elderly care service. It recommends that urban planning rules should be revised, requiring every estate to include elderly care facilities such as nursing homes and that at least one neighbourhood elderly centre be provided in each district or residential complex.

In view of this report and Tung Wah's long history of providing support and care for the elderly, we would recommend that the former TWGHs *Lee Sai Chow Memorial* Primary School be converted into an elderly centre in order to ensure that there are adequate services in place to cater for the growing numbers of elderly in the Central and Western District.

Conversion of the premises into an elderly care centre could be carried out without imposing undue stress on the sensitive Man Mo Temple compound. The ground

floor could accommodate a visitor's centre with a separate entrance to cater to the many visitors who visit the temple every day.

Elderly care facilities come under the banner of Social Welfare Centres, a column One use and therefore extremely compatible with the GIC zoning of the site. The government has pledged to support an increase in such services. The 2016 Policy Address states that 'To help the elderly obtain appropriate care we will: provide more subsidized places for community care services and residential care services to meet the long-term care needs of frail elderly persons'

The school has been empty for many years so it would be most beneficial for the community that a worthy use be made of the premises as soon as possible.

We trust that the Tung Wah board will take serious consideration of our proposal.

We also take this opportunity to reiterate our objection to the proposed amendment of the Sai Ying Pun & Sheung Wan Outline Zoning Plan No. S/H3/29. The proposed construction of a 21-storey building right next to Man Mo Temple will create great structural stress to the 170-year-old declared monument as well as destroy the low-rise amenity of the Man Mo Temple area. Converting the existing school building into an elderly care centre will achieve a "win-win" for both the community which has great demand for elderly services as well as the need for more sensitive protection of our heritage building.

We request the Central & Western District Council to support this proposal and to ask the government to withdraw the proposed amendment of the Sai Ying Pun & Sheung Wan Outline Zoning Plan No. S/H3/29.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Best regards,

Katty Law

Central & Western Concern Group

Letter copied to

Planning Department

Development Bureau

The Commissioner for Heritage's Office