

The Hong Kong Jockey Club Relocation Plan of Yat Tung Shopping Centre Off-course Betting Branch

This paper aims to brief on The Hong Kong Jockey Club's (hereafter "the Club") plan to relocate the Yat Tung Shopping Centre Off-course Betting Branch (hereafter "OCBB") from Shop No. 34, G/F to Shop No. 29, G/F of the same shopping centre (the shop currently leased by Mannings).

Background

The current OCBB at Yat Tung Shopping Centre is the only OCBB in Tung Chung and has been providing betting services since 2009.

Since the OCBB was relocated to Yat Tung Shopping Centre, local stakeholders have been expressing their views that the current location is not desirable. In order to address these views, the Club, with participations from Islands District Office, relevant government departments and District Councilors, have conducted exhaustive search for a more suitable alternative site in the whole Tung Chung area through various means. Progress of the site inspections was also reported to the Island District Council in a frequent manner (the latest meeting on the matter was in December 2016). Subsequent to various rounds of discussion and coordination, the Club has identified a feasible site at Shop No. 29, G/F of Yat Tung Shopping Centre (the shop currently leased by Mannings) for OCBB relocation.

The proposed premises

The primary principle of OCBB relocation, according to local stakeholders' major concern, is that the site should avoid, as far as applicable, locating on the popular routes leading to educational institutions nearby. In addition, the proposed OCBB should also avoid locating at high traffic zone and within major walkways with a view to minimizing potential nuisance caused to residents. Furthermore, the suitability to business operation is also a consideration factor. According to our thorough assessment and result of preliminary consultation with local stakeholders, the proposed site is deemed to be an appropriate one with all the above criteria met.

- 1) The proposed premises is located at the outer rim of Yat Tung Shopping Centre which can only be accessed through the mall or taking a detour to the rear lane of the mall. The Club has carefully examined every route between different residential blocks of Yat Tung Estate and the 15 educational institutions. Our findings suggested that the proposed OCBB is not on the popular route leading to

these educational institutions and therefore can prevent potential impact to students and youth.

- 2) The proposed premises is located at a less prominent area within the shopping centre with fewer traffic. It is also away from public transport facilities such as bus terminus. It will be more desirable comparing with the current OCBB which is facing the central open area that attracts high traffic at all times.
- 3) The proposed site, with a total floor area of 2,100 square feet, will be sufficient for OCBB's operation although its size is slightly reduced as compared with the current OCBB. Through optimization of space, the site is planned to accommodate 20 betting terminals, with an increase of 4 terminals so as to shorten the queueing time for betting services and avoid over-spilling of customers. In addition to an in-mall entrance, there is another entrance leading to the outdoor area to facilitate crowd control and management.

The management of OCBB

- 1) As in all OCBBs, the Club will deploy sufficient security guards to implement strict access control, keeping the underaged and those in school uniforms from entering the premises at all times.
- 2) The Club will adopt a standard shop front design for the proposed OCBB and conduct no active publicity for the OCBB except necessary customer service information and notices. To promote responsible gambling, the Club will continue to take proactive role in posting messages about the potential adverse impact of problem gambling inside the OCBB. The Club will also display counseling services information available in Hong Kong for customers' reference.
- 3) The Club will closely coordinate with the Link and the Housing Department in taking effective measures to ensure proper hygiene management for the environment surrounding the OCBB. These include posting "no-smoking" messages by the Link and Housing Department, and deploying additional staff by the Club to maintain tidiness during race days.
- 4) The Club is exploring with the Link on the installment of extra lighting at the rear lane area outside the proposed OCBB for the sake of safety and security.

Conclusion

Over the years, the Club, with a view to addressing local stakeholders' opinions, has made utmost effort to identify alternative site for relocating the current OCBB at Shop No. 34, G/F of Yat Tung Shopping Centre. The proposed site, situating at Shop No. 29, G/F of the shopping centre (the shop currently leased by Mannings), is deemed appropriate in view of factors including location, traffic as well as operation and the potential impact to local residents will certainly be minimized. The continued operation of OCBB in Tung Chung is important given that it is the only OCBB in the area. A smooth implementation of the relocation plan will allow the Club to sustain legal and regulated betting services for the community so as to combat illegal betting. The Club will always stay in close communications with the District Council and other stakeholders to make sure an effective operation of the OCBB after relocation.

The Hong Kong Jockey Club

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Annex 1: The existing and proposed locations of Yat Tung Shopping Centre OCBB

