

Secretary, Town Planning Board
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By email only

香港觀鳥會

22 April 2016

THE
HONG
KONG
BIRD
WATCHING
SOCIETY

Since 1957 成立

Dear Sir/Madam,

Objection to the planning application for Proposed House (New Territories Exempted House – Small House) at Ta Tit Yan Village, Tai Po (A/TP/603)

The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society (HKBWS) would like to object to the planning application A/TP/603 under Section 16 based on the following reasons:

1. Not in line with the planning intention of the “Green Belt” (GB) zoning

The application site is located within the GB zone, where the planning intention is “define the limits of urban and sub-urban development areas by natural features and to contain urban sprawl... there is a general presumption against development within this zone”. We consider that small house development should be confined to the “Village Type Development” zone and should not encroach the GB zone.

2. Adverse ecological impacts caused by the development

According to the information provided by Green Power, a total of 154 butterfly species were recorded in the Ta Tit Yan and Yuen Tun Ha area, which accounts for about 60% of the local butterfly species. Nearly 40% of the rare and very rare butterfly species in Hong Kong were found in the area. This indicates the area has diverse natural habitats and thus should be adequately protected. We are concerned the small house development may lead to a loss in natural habitats (e.g. host plants for butterflies) and an increase in human disturbance to the surrounding environment.

In addition, we are concerned the approval of the current application for one small house would set an undesirable precedent for future similar applications, leading to further loss of habitat and increase in human disturbances. Therefore, the current application should be rejected.



3. The Town Planning Board should not encourage “destroy first, develop later”

Habitat destruction was discovered at the application site back in January 2013 by Green Power, where vegetation was completely cleared with only loose soil remaining at the site¹ (please refer to Attachment 1). Due to the lack of a Development Permission Area plan, Planning Department had no authority to press charges for these illegal activities². Nearly two years after the destruction was discovered, there was an application for 19 small houses at the previously damaged site (Application no. A/TP/569, please refer to Attachment 2), but then it was withdrawn by the applicant. Now, more than three years after the destruction, another small house development is proposed in the same area (i.e. the current planning application).

The HKBWS strongly urges the Town Planning Board (the Board) to proactively deter “destroy first, develop later” as stated in a press release in 2011, “*the Board is determined to conserve the rural and natural environment and will not tolerate any deliberate action to destroy the rural and natural environment in the hope that the Board would give sympathetic consideration to subsequent development on the site concerned*”³. The approval of these applications is not in-line with the Board’s promise to deter “destroy first, develop later”; in fact, it would provide incentives for developers/land owners to undertake eco-vandalism in hopes of the Board’s approval for development in the future. Decisions made by the Board should take into consideration that the undesirable precedent it sets for future applications, hence development permission should not be granted after the site has suffered from eco-vandalism.

The HKBWS respectfully requests the Town Planning Board to take our comments into consideration and **reject** the current application.

Thank you for your kind attention and consideration.

Yours faithfully,

¹ Illegal excavation in Ta Tit Yan unveiled. Green Power. Available at: http://www.greenpower.org.hk/html/eng/job_butterfly_23.shtml

² Land owners act on Tai Po green belt sites. South China Morning Post. 07 February 2013. Available at: <http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/1144814/land-owners-act-tai-po-green-belt-sites>

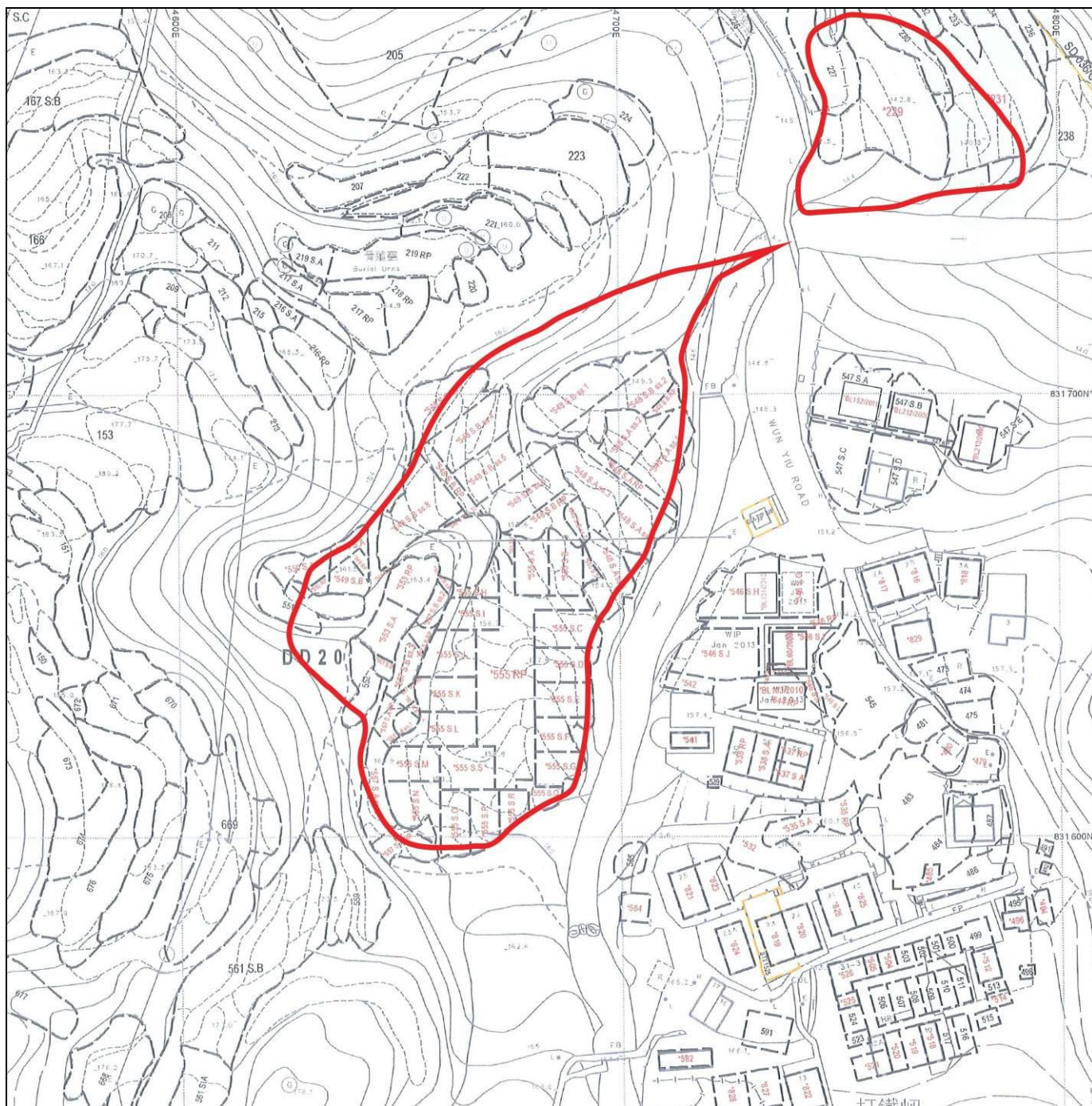
³ Press Release – Town Planning Board adopts approaches to deter, “destroy first, build later” activities. 4 July 2011. Available at: <http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201107/04/P201107040255.htm>



Woo Ming Chuan
Conservation Officer
The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society

cc.
The Conservancy Association
Designing Hong Kong
Green Power
Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden
WWF – Hong Kong

Appendix II Location map showing the vandalized site in Ta Tit Yan discovered in Jan 2013



**Appendix III Photos showing vandalism at Ta Tit Yan
(photos taken on 26 & 31 January 2013)**



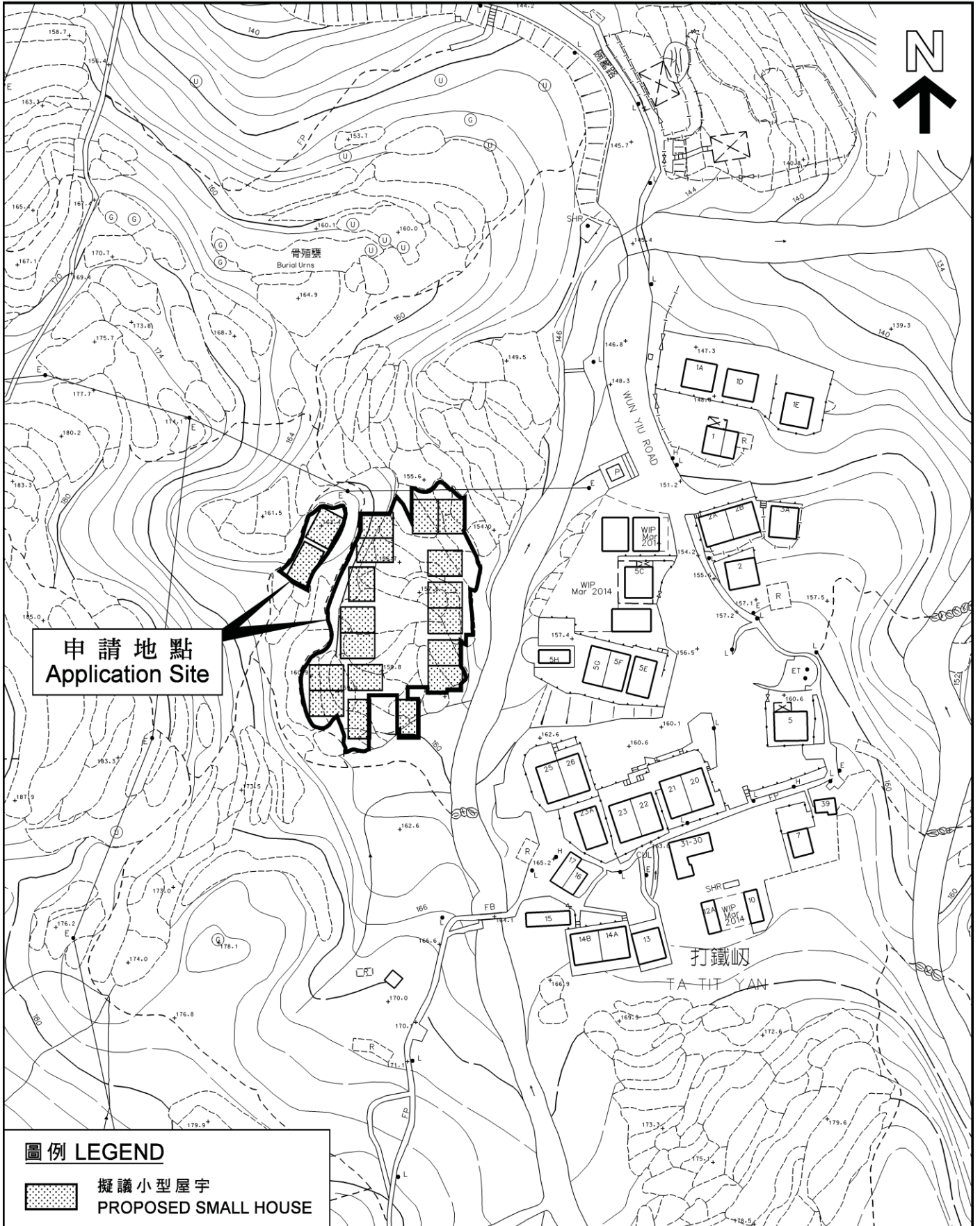
**關於申請編號 A/TP/569 的擬議用途/發展的概括發展規範
Broad Development Parameters of the Applied Use/Development
in respect of Application No. A/TP/569**

(a) 申請編號 Application no.	A/TP/569		
(b) 位置/地址 Location/Address	大埔打鐵坳丈量約份第 20 約地段第 553 號 A 分段, 第 553 號餘段, 第 555 號 A 分段, 第 555 號 B 分段, 第 555 號 C 分段, 第 555 號 D 分段, 第 555 號 E 分段, 第 555 號 F 分段, 第 555 號 G 分段, 第 555 號 H 分段, 第 555 號 I 分段, 第 555 號 J 分段, 第 555 號 K 分段, 第 555 號 L 分段, 第 555 號 M 分段, 第 555 號 N 分段, 第 555 號 O 分段, 第 555 號 R 分段, 第 555 號 S 分段及第 555 號餘段和毗鄰的政府土地 Lots 553 S.A, 553 R.P., 555 S.A, 555 S.B, 555 S.C, 555 S.D, 555 S.E, 555 S.F, 555 S.G, 555 S.H, 555 S.I, 555 S.J, 555 S.K, 555 S.L, 555 S.M, 555 S.N, 555 S.O, 555 S.R, 555 S.S and 555 R.P. in D.D. 20 and adjoining Government land, Ta Tit Yan, Tai Po		
(c) 地盤面積 Site area	約 About 2,517.00 平方米 m ² (包括政府土地約 Includes Government Land of about 64.00 平方米 m ²)		
(d) 圖則 Plan	大埔分區計劃大綱草圖編號 S/TP/25 Draft Tai Po Outline Zoning Plan No. S/TP/25		
(e) 地帶 Zoning	「綠化地帶」 "Green Belt"		
(f) 申請用途/發展 Applied Use/ Development	擬議 19 幢屋宇 (新界豁免管制屋宇-小型屋宇), 私人發展計劃的公用設施裝置 Proposed 19 Houses (New Territories Exempted Houses - Small Houses), Utility Installation for Private Project		
(g) 總樓面面積 及/或地積比率 Total floor area and/or plot ratio		平方米 m ²	地積比率 Plot ratio
	住用 Domestic	約 About 3,706.71	-
	非住用 Non-domestic	約 About 58.95	-
(h) 幢數 No. of block	住用 Domestic	19	
	非住用 Non-domestic	1	
	綜合用途 Composite	-	
(i) 建築物高度/ 層數 Building height/ No. of storeys	住用 Domestic	8.23 米 m - 米(主水平基準以上)mPD 3 層 storey(s)	
	非住用 Non-domestic	3.50 米 m - 米(主水平基準以上)mPD 1 層 storey(s)	
	綜合用途 Composite	- 米 m - 米(主水平基準以上)mPD - 層 storey(s)	
(j) 上蓋面積 Site coverage	-		
(k) 單位數目 No. of units	-		
(l) 休憩用地 Open Space	- 私人 Private	- 平方米 m ²	
	- 公眾 Public	- 平方米 m ²	

(m) 停車位及上落 客貨車位數目 No. of parking spaces and loading/ unloading spaces	-
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* 有關資料是為方便市民大眾參考而提供。對於所載資料在使用上的問題及文義上的歧異，城市規劃委員會概不負責。若有任何疑問，應查閱申請人提交的文件。
The information is provided for easy reference of the general public. Under no circumstances will the Town Planning Board accept any liabilities for the use of the information nor any inaccuracies or discrepancies of the information provided. In case of doubt, reference should always be made to the submission of the applicant.

A/TP/569



申請地點
Application Site

圖例 LEGEND

 擬議小型屋宇
PROPOSED SMALL HOUSE