

8 March 2021

Chairman and Members

Town Planning Board

15/F, North Point Government Offices

333 Java Road, North Point

Hong Kong

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Re: Draft Mui Wo North Development Permission Area Plan No. DPA/I-MWN/1

Dear Chairman and Members,

Designing Hong Kong **supports** the captioned draft Development Permission Area Plan to ensure the greatest possible planning and development control in Mui Wo North and to protect the rural and natural character with conservation value of the area.

We understand that DPA Plan will only be effective for maximum three years and will be replaced by an Outline Zoning Plan. We would like to raise our concerns in preparation of a better OZP as follows.

For the proposed 165.37 ha “Unspecified Uses”

- The majority of the coastal area is natural with limited human intervention. We urge the government to zone the coastal area with high conservation values such as Coastal Protection Area (CPA) to reflect its environmental value and prevent potential damage.
- The marsh and mangrove near Tai Wai Yuen are important habitats for birds and other animals in the area. Zoning with conservation intention such as Conservation Area (CA) should be the priority for these areas to provide sufficient protection of the landscape and ecology.
- There are two largely natural streams at Wang Tong and Tung Wan Tau. The area along the stream should have better protection by zoning to conservation uses in order to protect the natural streams and avoid pollution from human activities.
- The land in Man Kok is currently owned by a single developer and is currently occupied by farmland and several houses. We urge the Board to consider the zoning and to ensure strict controls against any further human development. Base on the example of other enclaves, it is common to see large scale environmental destruction once the land is owned by a single developer.

Review the definition of “Existing Uses”

- In the notes of the plan, it is stated that *no action is required to make the use of any land or building which was in existence immediately before the first publication in the Gazette of the notice of the draft development permission area plan conform to this Plan, provided such use has continued since it came into existence.*
- It is noted that human disturbance and destruction was previously found at Butterfly Hill and Tung Wan Tau. We are deeply concerned that these would be regarded as “Existing Uses” under the Town Planning Ordinance and that this loophole will be abused.
- We plea for the Board to review the definition of existing uses and to take a proactive approach to stop any “Destroy first, develop later” activity.

Better Protection of Lantau Island

- The Government has a clear principle of “Development in the North, Conservation for the South” for Lantau Island. However, there are continuous reports of natural destruction at Lantau over the last decade.
- There is no development control over other parts of South Lantau as there was no DPA before gazetting the OZPs. We urge the government to review the existing situation and to impose development control for areas which were not covered by DPA in order to have better protection of our nature.

Here we submit our concerns for your consideration.

Yours,

Designing Hong Kong Limited