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Representation to the Amendments to the draft Shouson Hill and Repulse Bay  
Outline Zoning Plan S/H17/10 and the Seaview Building and Adjacent Open Space

The Civic Party would like to raise objection to proposed amendments pertaining to the rezoning of Seaview Building and its adjacent open space at Repulse Bay along Beach Road into a commercial/hotel area.

After consulting with professional advisors and local residents, we hold the opinion that any development which threatens the demolition of the existing Seaview Building and adjacent open space, and the privatization of these public properties, will have a detrimental effect on this area and fail to resolve the growing problems and deterioration along Beach Road. Our reasoning is as follows:

**1. Walled Building Effect:**

The Seaview Building and its adjacent open space represent the last remaining public land and open space on the strip. The open space currently serves as a critical pedestrian infusion point into the beach area from the hinterland. If this area becomes privatized and its open area built over, the entire strip would become a blockage physically and visually cutting off the beach area from its hinterland. Together with the existing commercial building (previous Lido site) Beach Road along the beach area would be occupied by a continuous low rise strip of mostly private buildings with little breathing space in between. Beach Road would then become a canyon full of tour buses creating unbearable road side pollution and an unfriendly noisy environment. Moreover, all views of the sea would be lost.

**2. Traffic Impact:**

The change in use would further aggravate the already critical pedestrian and vehicular traffic on Beach Road, drawing unwanted commercial traffic to the narrow road. The current open space serves as an important influx point on to the beach area from the hinterland for pedestrians. If this last remaining open

space becomes occupied by a building, pedestrian traffic would be forced to squeeze in between and through these privatized building, creating a bottle neck and loss of public rights. This would further restrict pedestrians and vehicles to what little space is left for Beach Road, creating dangerous and inconvenient congestion especially during peak hours. The north side of Beach Road is already heavily used by private tour buses waiting (with engines idling) for tourists, and most buses stop in the middle of Beach Road to drop off passengers and thereby seriously affecting the traffic flow. The use of the open space should be reconsidered as bus lay-by and drop off, to alleviate this situation.

### **3. Environmental Impact:**

The Seaview Building is (other than the toilet block) the last public building on the strip, and with this building gone, members of the public will no longer be able to enjoy this facility and the elevated views of the beach from a covered environment unless they are hotel guests or paying customers. This is not in line with Hong Kong's civic values of quality public spaces, values the Civic Party professes. In our view the Seaview Building must be retained as a public amenity for public use. Public ownership will ensure a greater diversity of services for beach goers. Although the building requires renovation, professional advice obtained has made clear that the building is structurally sound and that it can be re-furnished for adaptive re-use at reasonable cost. We do not object to alterations to the existing structure in order to make it more user-friendly and practical, but to tear down the entire structure and replace it with a new building would be un-necessary and create unwanted building demolition and construction waste. Such practice is not in line with the government's intention to minimize construction waste.

Herewith we strongly urge the Town Planning Board to withdraw the proposed amendments to the plan based on the above considerations. Repulse Bay is already over-congested and predominantly privatized with few public facilities left. The impact of developing over the open space would impose as a permanent impact to the Repulse Bay environment.

We have received the views from the public including the local residents and District Council, and believe there is overwhelming consensus against this development. However, there is a strong call to fix the congestion and idling tour bus problem. We trust that the Town Planning Board will consider public opinion and change the

Outline Zoning Plan accordingly.