

# DEVB's response to DEP's decision on EIA report on San Tin Technopole

A spokesman for the Development Bureau today (May 17) welcomed the decision of the Director of Environmental Protection (DEP) to approve the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report on the San Tin Technopole.

The spokesman said, "This is an important step that provides us with a solid foundation to proceed with the next stage of the town planning process and to enable the commencement of the works project as scheduled. The Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) will make every effort to follow up on the conditions attached to the relevant approval, and to fully implement the environmental mitigation measures and the Sam Po Shue Wetland Conservation Park (SPS WCP) according to the design. During the process, we will, through the environmental committee (EC) with outsiders' participation, take into account expert advice and continuously assess the effectiveness of the ecological mitigation/enhancement measures."

Located at the heart of the Northern Metropolis, the San Tin Technopole is strategically positioned to be a hub for clustered innovation and technology (I&T) development. Together with the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park in the Loop, it will provide approximately 300 hectares of I&T land, which will effectively address the shortage of local I&T land supply, promote a more comprehensive development of the I&T ecosystem with the upstream, midstream and downstream processes, and create synergy with the Shenzhen I&T Zone in close proximity. As a modern new development area, the San Tin Technopole will be a new community combining industrial development, ecological conservation and a livable environment.

The Government has been adhering to the vision of "development and conservation" in planning the San Tin Technopole. Apart from preserving the Ramsar Site in its totality and minimising the area of pond filling, the project will reserve a 300-metre-wide bird flight corridor in an east-west direction to the north of the Lok Ma Chau Boundary Control Point, and will convert the existing Mai Po Lung Village Egrettry, the third-largest egrettry in Hong Kong, as well as the brownfield in the vicinity into green open space.

In addition, the Government proposes to establish the 338-hectare SPS WCP near the San Tin Technopole. Not only can the Government achieve no-net-loss in the ecological function and capacity of the wetland concerned under the project, it will also enhance the ecological value of the existing wetland. The Government will also designate a 35m-wide non-building area on the I&T land adjacent to the SPS WCP as eco-interface and adopt a descending stepped building height, so as to ensure a smooth and harmonious transition between the San Tin Technopole and the SPS WCP.

The approval of the EIA report by the Environmental Protection Department is subject to certain conditions, including the requirement for

the CEDD to submit to the DEP a Habitat Creation and Management Plan and a Detailed Design Plan for Establishment of Wildlife Corridor as recommended in the submitted EIA report, as well as to formulate a Bird-friendly Design Guideline. The CEDD will proactively follow up on the DEP's requirements, and has already started preparations for the establishment of the EC with a wide representation of stakeholders including relevant government departments, green groups and academics. The EC will provide advice on the preparation of the aforementioned plans, and monitor the effectiveness of the proposed ecological mitigation/enhancement measures. Moreover, the CEDD will set up a working group with the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department to co-ordinate the progress of pond filling and the implementation of the wetland conservation park, and will regularly report the progress to the Advisory Council on the Environment. The CEDD has also commenced the detailed design of the environmental mitigation measures proposed in the EIA report.

As for the town planning procedures, the Government has gazetted on March 8 this year the draft Outline Zoning Plans (the draft OZPs) in relation to the San Tin Technopole. The Town Planning Board will arrange public hearings for the representations submitted by the public on the draft OZPs. The Government plans to seek funding approval for the first batch of site formation and infrastructural works for the San Tin Technopole from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council in the second half of this year, targeting to commence works by the end of the year.