

SCED visits Islands District (with photos)

The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, visited Islands District today (May 17) to learn more about the current situation and future development plans of Lantau. He also met with members of the Islands District Council (IDC) and exchanged views with them on various issues.

Mr Yau first met with the IDC members to listen to their views on matters relating to tourism, broadband services, transport and local economic development. He took the opportunity to brief them on relevant government policies, including a scheme to encourage telecommunications companies to extend fibre-based networks to remote villages by providing financial initiatives in the form of subsidies, with the Government taking the lead.

He then made a site visit to Pak Mong Pier at Tung Chung to observe the Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities (HKBCF) Island of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) and the site of Tung Chung East reclamation. The Government promulgated the Sustainable Lantau Blueprint in 2017 under the overarching principle of "Development in the North, Conservation for the South" to balance the needs for development and conservation in Lantau. Mr Yau was briefed by representatives of the Planning Department and the Civil Engineering and Development Department on the housing and economic development plans along the northern shore of Lantau, including the Tung Chung New Town Extension, the ongoing study of the topside development on the HKBCF Island and the proposed Sunny Bay reclamation.

Strategically located at the landing point of the HZMB and adjacent to the Hong Kong International Airport, the HKBCF Island will serve as a strategic gateway of Hong Kong connecting to the Greater Pearl River Delta and the rest of the world for the long-term development needs of Hong Kong. Mr Yau said the commissioning of the HZMB will enhance exchange and co-operation between Hong Kong and cities of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area, thereby promoting the development of multi-destination itineraries and strengthening Hong Kong's position as a regional tourism hub.

The Tung Chung New Town Extension offers extra retail and hotel facilities and there are plans to provide a marina and associated facilities. Mr Yau said this can help promote the economic and tourism development of Lantau.

Noting that the reclamation project at Sunny Bay has been positioned as the "Northeast Lantau Tourism Gateway" and that Sunny Bay could be developed into a converging point for leisure, sports, recreation, entertainment and tourism activities, Mr Yau said the proposal could achieve synergy with the further development of Hong Kong Disneyland Resort and other major developments in north Lantau.

Mr Yau then visited Pui O Beach to gain a better understanding of major conservation proposals in south Lantau. The Government is carrying out the "Ecological Study for Pui O, Shui Hau, Tai O and Neighbouring Areas" and the "Study on Traffic, Transport and Capacity to Receive Visitors for Lantau" to look into the feasibility of various proposals such as conservation measures for Pui O, Shui Hau and Tai O and the expansion of the cycle track and mountain bike trail network in Lantau. Mr Yau said he believed that the relevant work could develop the tourism potential of Lantau while taking into account Lantau's natural environment and other factors such as its transport infrastructures.

