

Development Bureau invites market to submit expressions of interest for three island and coastal tourism projects

The Development Bureau (DEVB) today (April 2) invites the market to submit expressions of interest (EOIs) within three months for eco-tourism development proposals at ex-Lamma quarry site, South Lantau Eco-Recreation Corridor, and Pak Nai and Tsim Bei Tsui.

The Chief Executive announced in the 2024 Policy Address (PA) to promote island and coastal tourism in Hong Kong. Along with other initiatives to be spearheaded by the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau, the DEVB has been working on the land use and project planning aspects of three projects under large-scale land disposal, which are to develop the ex-Lamma quarry site into an area for resort and outdoor recreational uses; to develop Cheung Sha, Pui O, Shui Hau and Shek Pik into the South Lantau Eco-recreation Corridor; and to develop Tsim Bei Tsui and Pak Nai into eco-tourism nodes.

This is the first time in recent years that the Government has initiated large-scale land disposal for the building of new tourism and recreation areas. The Government is also striving to make full use of corporate participation and market forces in the implementation. All three projects are on islands or coastal destinations in rural settings with rich natural resources and water bodies. They all present opportunities for the Government to collaborate with the private sector in promoting tourism and recreational developments while capitalising on local and rural characteristics.

A spokesman for the DEVB said, "We are also launching these three EOIs before commencing any statutory planning process. This goes to demonstrate the Government's goodwill to garner feedback from the market before finalising development requirements. It is believed that this process would help ensure the ultimate development schemes to be more attuned to market interests and considerations."

The three projects have different positionings and content, accommodating varying market interests:

Ex-Lamma Quarry Site

Its tranquil seaside location in a rural island setting, wealth of tourism and recreation resources particularly a large man-made lake, and proximity to the urban area have rendered this site suitable for development as a high-end lakefront and hillside resort, to be complemented by a world-class marina and low-rise luxury housing. The initiative aims to help promote yacht tourism on the one hand, and also help support the development of island hopping in Hong Kong. For this EOI, we will consult the market on ways

to optimise the use of the site by suitably incorporating the above-mentioned elements in its overall development and synergising with other attractions in the area. On implementation, it is proposed to adopt a single-developer approach for this project. In other words, the 25-hectare site would be sold by public tender to one single developer or consortium. This approach could facilitate a more co-ordinated and holistic design for the entire development, and expedite the provision of necessary infrastructure by leveraging market forces, while enabling the future developer to enjoy a high degree of flexibility in land-use allocation.

South Lantau Eco-Recreation Corridor

The South Lantau Eco-recreation Corridor project aims to make good use of the rich natural ecological, cultural and historical resources along the southern coast of Lantau. It provides a variety of recreation and eco-tourism facilities in Cheung Sha, Pui O, Shui Hau and Shek Pik with a view to shaping South Lantau into a one-of-a-kind leisure and recreation destination as well as bringing more experiences to the general public and tourists. On implementation, developers or consortiums may adopt a cluster approach to develop the entire areas or only focus on individual or multiple ecological and recreational facilities. This approach not only enhances the flexibility of project implementation, but also accelerates the development of the eco-recreation corridor.

Tsim Bei Tsui and Pak Nai Eco-tourism Nodes

The proposal to develop two Eco-tourism Nodes at Tsim Bei Tsui and Pak Nai was generally supported in the public engagement exercise on the Broad Land Use Concept Plan for the Lau Fau Shan area in 2024, with the former to be positioned as a "Thematic Activity Node" and the latter a "Tranquil Scenic Node". This EOI exercise aims to collect market proposals based on the more detailed development parameters for these two Nodes the Government has formulated following the public engagement. On implementation, given the substantial sizes of the two Eco-tourism Nodes (87 hectares for Tsim Bei Tsui and 33 hectares for Pak Nai), the future developer(s) may develop and operate the whole or part(s) of the Tsim Bei Tsui Eco-tourism Node, the whole or part(s) of the Pak Nai Eco-tourism Node, or the whole or part(s) of both Eco-tourism Nodes. In other words, there can be more than one developer.

"These three projects have different development scales, characteristics, objectives, timelines and deliverables (a table summarising major parameters is at the Annex). Through the three EOI exercises, we hope to collect market views and suggestions on the respective developments early in order to formulate appropriate development parameters and implementation details for incorporation into statutory plans and land tender documents."

"We would also like to have market feedback on alternative implementation approaches that can help speed up the developments. For example, in the case of ex-Lamma quarry site, we are proposing to launch the land tender right after the Government's substantial completion of the statutory planning process, while facilitating the successful bidder to complete the remaining statutory procedures with our assistance and support."

Such an approach can allow the successful bidder to start a detailed design and other preparatory works while the remaining statutory procedures are underway," the spokesman added.

The Invitation Documents for the EOIs have been uploaded onto the following websites:

- (a) Tsim Bei Tsui and Pak Nai Eco-tourism Nodes
(www.nm.gov.hk/en/high-end-professional-services-and-logistics-hub#c2);
- (b) Ex-Lamma Quarry site (www.devb.gov.hk/en/issues_in_focus/index.html); and
- (c) South Lantau Eco-recreation Corridor
(www.lantau.gov.hk/en/our-projects/leisure-and-recreation/eco-recreation-corridor/index.html).

Interested parties must submit their EOIs by noon on July 2 (Wednesday).

The DEVB will hold three briefing sessions, one for each of the EOI invitations on April 14 (Monday). For details of the briefings, please refer to the respective Invitation Documents for the three EOIs.

Taking account of the views and suggestions received through the EOI exercises, the DEVB will suitably refine the development parameters and requirements for the three projects. The land tender arrangements and timings will be firmed up thereafter, with reference to the market feedback received.