

Government pressing ahead with San Tin Technopole project

The Chief Executive in Council has approved the draft San Tin Technopole Outline Zoning Plan (OZP), the draft Mai Po and Fairview Park OZP and the draft Ngau Tam Mei OZP. The approval provides a statutory planning framework for taking forward the San Tin Technopole (except the Loop with approved statutory planning earlier) and the Sam Po Shue Wetland Conservation Park (SPS WCP).

A spokesman for the Development Bureau said today (September 20) that, with the completion of the statutory planning process, the Government will press ahead with the San Tin Technopole and related projects. Although the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report for San Tin Technopole is under the challenge of a judicial review, the project is underpinned by comprehensive and professional studies and extensive consultation in accordance with the laws and regulations. The project also carries strategic importance to innovation and technology (I&T) development, and there is a strong voice in the society for accelerating I&T development without further delay.

"The Government is striving to promote the development of the Northern Metropolis as a strategic growth area, pressing ahead with various land development, infrastructure and housing projects to address the needs of the society, people's livelihood and economic development. The Government will not, and should not, halt a project that will bring benefits to the society simply because an individual has applied for a judicial review. The Government team will tackle the challenges of the judicial review in full strength, while proceeding with the project cautiously and pragmatically, with a view to minimising the impact to the project progress arising from the judicial review being pursued by that individual," the spokesman said.

"The Government will seek funding approval for the first batch of site formation and infrastructure works for the San Tin Technopole from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council towards the end of this year as scheduled, targeting to have the first batch of I&T sites formed in 2026. The availability of I&T land in a progressive and timely manner will create more space for local I&T start-ups to grow and better attract companies outside Hong Kong to settle in here. This will fuel up the momentum for development of the whole I&T sector, duly responding to the strategic support for Hong Kong to develop into an international I&T centre under the 14th Five-Year Plan," the spokesman added.

"Besides, the Government has been emphasising 'co-existence of development and conservation'. One of the goals of establishing the SPS WCP is to achieve no-net-loss in the ecological function and capacity arising from development. When we apply for the funding of works towards the end of this year, we will bundle it with the funding application for the design work

of the SPS WCP Phase 1."

The spokesman stressed that the funding application for the first batch of works will not involve pond filling. As committed earlier, the Government will not start the pond filling works before commencement of works for the SPS WCP in 2026/27.

Other preparatory work includes formulation of the Planning and Design Brief (PDB), which will be submitted to the Town Planning Board for approval after consultation with relevant stakeholders. The PDB will provide more detailed development guidance for the relevant I&T sites.

The San Tin Technopole is the flagship project of the Northern Metropolis. Together with the Loop, there is a total area of about 600 hectares, half of which are I&T land. The San Tin Technopole will provide about 160 000 employment opportunities, about 50 000 flats, as well as comprehensive transport infrastructures and community facilities. It will become a modern new development area with industrial development, ecological conservation and a livable environment. During the two-month public engagement activities held last year, members of the public generally supported the development of the San Tin Technopole. The EIA Report has proposed various mitigation and compensatory measures to address the environmental impacts arising from the project, including the establishment of the SPS WCP. Not only will no-net-loss in the ecological function and capacity of the wetland concerned be achieved under the project, it will also enhance the ecological value of the existing wetland.