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21 June 2024

Ms. LINN Hon Ho, Bernadette, JP
Secretary for Development
Development Bureau
18/F, West Wing, Central Government Offices,
2 Tim Mei Avenue,
Tamar, Hong Kong

By Post and Email
sdev@devb.gov.hk

Dear Ms. LINN,

HKIA's Comments on Landuse Review Study on Lau Fau Shan, Tsim Bei Tsui and Pak Nai Area

The Hong Kong Institute of Architects (HKIA) supports government's holistic review of the development plans for this important area in the Northern New Territories. As the professional body representing architects in Hong Kong, we have a keen interest in ensuring the future plans for this region are well-designed and sustainable.

In our attached Annex I, we have highlighted several key considerations regarding the positioning, environmental protection, urban design, and transportation strategy for this area. We believe it is crucial to strike the right balance between economic development and safeguarding the sensitive ecological environment in this unique coastal region.

HKIA stands ready to further engage with the Development Bureau to provide our professional expertise and insights. We look forward to contributing to the formulation of plans that will create a green, smart and resilient community in Lau Fau Shan, Tsim Bei Tsui and Pak Nai Area.

Should there be any enquiries, please contact Mr. Nick KONG of the HKIA Secretariat at 2511 6323 or email to council@hkia.org.hk.

Yours Sincerely,

Benny CHAN Chak Bun, FHKIA, R.A.
President
The Hong Kong Institute of Architects

Encl.

Cc: Ms. HO Pui Ling, Doris, JP, Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning & Lands) Development Bureau pspl@devb.gov.hk
Cc: Mr. YAU Cheuk Hang, Vic, JP, Director, Northern Metropolis Co-ordination Office, Development Bureau d.nmco@devb.gov.hk

HKIA Comments on Landuse Review Study on Lau Fau Shan, Tsim Bei Tsui and Pak Nai Area

HKIA welcomes the government to holistically review the development of our Northern New Territories. Our comments on the Landuse Review Study on Lau Fau Shan, Tsim Bei Tsui and Pak Nai Area are as follows:

Positioning

- With the proximity to Nanshan across the bay and the natural beauty of the unique coastal environment, we have concern on the visual image shown on the Artist Impression of the LC Paper No. CB(1)249/2024(01). The development density and urban design for LFS should be carefully reviewed, to ensure that the future would be in harmony with the natural environment without adverse impacts on the sensitive environment and ecology. Same as our suggestions for the San Tin Technopole, good urban nature integration and urban rural integration is desirable in this area to create an innovative and liveable development that meet the expectation of international talents.
- The whole positioning and planning of LFS should be better integrated with HSK/HT since the 2 NDAs are connected. They are located enroute from HK International Airport and Nanshan/Qianhai. This area should play an important role in serving the national enterprises in SZ to connect with the international market rather than just being a logistic center.

Environmental Considerations

- Environmental impacts of the proposed developments should be carefully assessed, and more information should be provided.
- Improvement of connectivity of waterfront at LFS from Tsim Bei Tsui to Pak Nai is encouraged, but the impacts of bringing visitors to sensitive ecological sites should be carefully assessed. Consideration should be given to keep hiking trails at a safe distance from the Sites of Scientific Interest.
- Similarly, proposing hotels for eco-tourism should be scientifically assessed whether they are appropriate. Business cases to support hotels may require a high turnover. Such should be balanced with environmental protection.
- Regulated water activities or other innovative use of the coastal site may be considered with proper EIA to enrich the coastal eco-tourism experience and innovative industries. The risks of leisure boat crossing the boundaries between Shenzhen and HK inadvertently should be carefully assessed and managed jointly by Government of two cities.
- Tree planting is encouraged to the green belt to improve slope safety and reduce fire and flooding risk to future proposed adjacent developments. It also improves microclimate and enhances biodiversity.

Urban Design and Transport Strategy

- Consider 'Building a Green, smart and resilient community' as the overriding planning goal. Most suitable for this location, - 'Green' due to the relatively undisturbed natural environment, high ecological value and natural scenery; 'Smart' due to actual needs of everyday life in this new era of information technology; and 'Resilient' due to low altitude sea shore community subjecting to sea level rising caused by global warming. Potential exemplar for many coastal human habitats and cities.

- Although it has a very long sea front, there seems to be no direct pedestrian access to the sea, thus depriving residents/visitors a chance to have access to a most scenic and attractive view of Pearl River Delta and Deep Bay (后海湾). Having noted improved accessibility, continuous hiking trails across the sensitive seafront should be avoided and the sea shore must be protected. With this consideration, access at long distance apart, say every 5 km., boardwalk/raised pier type structures cutting across the sea shore to reach out into the sea could humanize the environment. These features could also open up opportunities for boat and ferry activities in future.
- More urban design proposal is required for developing the center around the new train stations. Traditional TOD developments for high density urban centers would not be appropriate given the rural setting and adjacent village environ.
- Although not clarified in any of the consultation materials, it is expected that the connecting railway across Shenzhen Bay is via underground cross bay tunnels and not a bridge to minimize noise and light pollution impact to the sensitive environment.
- HKIA supports more pedestrian and bicycle friendly infrastructure and fewer roads to suit the context.