

1. The meeting was resumed at 9:10 a.m. on 3.7.2024.
2. The following Members and the Secretary were present in the morning session:

Permanent Secretary for Development
(Planning and Lands)
Ms Doris P.L. Ho

Chairperson

Mr Stephen L.H. Liu

Vice-chairperson

Mr Daniel K.S. Lau

Professor Jonathan W.C. Wong

Professor Roger C.K. Chan

Dr Venus Y.H. Lun

Mr Ben S.S. Lui

Mr Timothy K.W. Ma

Professor Bernadette W.S. Tsui

Mr Daniel K.W. Chung

Mr Rocky L.K. Poon

Professor B.S. Tang

Professor Simon K.L. Wong

Mr Derrick S.M. Yip

Chief Traffic Engineer/New Territories West
Transport Department
Ms Carrie K.Y. Leung

Assistant Director (Environmental Assessment)
Environmental Protection Department
Mr Terence S.W. Tsang

Director of Planning
Mr Ivan M.K. Chung

Absent with Apologies

Ms Sandy H.Y. Wong

Mr Stanley T.S. Choi

Mr Ricky W.Y. Yu

Mrs Vivian K.F. Cheung

Mr Vincent K.Y. Ho

Dr C.M. Cheng

Dr Tony C.M. Ip

Mr Ryan M.K. Ip

Fanling, Sheung Shui and Yuen Long East District

Agenda Item 1 (continued)

[Open meeting (Presentation and Question Sessions only)]

Consideration of Representations in respect of the Draft San Tin Technopole Outline Zoning Plan No. S/STT/1, the Draft Mai Po and Fairview Park Outline Zoning Plan No. S/YL-MP/7 and the Draft Ngau Tam Mei Outline Zoning Plan No. S/YL-NTM/13

(TPB Paper No. 10973)

[The item was conducted in Cantonese and English]

3. The Chairperson said that the meeting was to continue the hearing of representations in respect of the draft San Tin Technopole Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/STT/1 (STT OZP), the draft Mai Po and Fairview Park OZP No. S/YL-MP/7 (MP OZP) and the draft Ngau Tam Mei OZP No. S/YL-NTM/13 (NTM OZP) (collectively the draft OZPs).

4. The Secretary reported that Members' declaration of interests had been made in the morning session of the hearing on 28.6.2024 and was recorded in the relevant minutes of meeting.

Presentation and Question Sessions

5. The following government representatives (including the consultants), representers and their representatives were invited to the meeting at this point:

Government Representatives

Development Bureau (DEVB)

- | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Mr Vic C.H. Yau | - | Director, Northern Metropolis Coordination Office (D of NMCO) |
| Mr Eric T.H. Chung | - | Assistant Secretary (Northern Metropolis) (AS(NM)) |

Environment and Ecology Bureau (EEB)

- Mr Desmond C.C. Wu - Principal Assistant Secretary for Environment and Ecology (Nature Conservation) (PAS(NC))
- Mr Simon S.W. Wang - Principal Manager (Conservation in Northern Metropolis) (PM(CNM))

Innovation, Technology and Industry Bureau (ITIB)

- Miss Kristy H.L. Chan - Senior Management Services Officer (Innovation, Technology and Industry) (SMSO(ITI))

PlanD

- Mr K.W. Ng - District Planning Officer/Fanling, Sheung Shui and Yuen Long East, and Acting Assistant Director of Planning/ New Territories (AD/NT)
- Mr Kimson P.H. Chiu - Senior Town Planner/Fanling, Sheung Shui and Yuen Long East (STP/FSYLE)
- Mr Timothy Y.M. Lui - Senior Town Planner/Studies and Research (STP/SR)
- Miss Karen K.Y. Chan] Town Planner/Fanling, Sheung Shui and Yuen Long East
- Mr Louis H.W. Cheung] (TP/FSYLE)

CEDD

- Mr Tony K.L. Cheung - Project Manager (North) (PM(N))
- Mr Gavin C.P. Wong - Chief Engineer/North (CE/N)
- Ms Teresa O.S. Ma - Senior Engineer/North (SE/N)

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)

Mr Simon K.F. Chan	-	Assistant Director (Conservation) (AD(C))
Mr Boris S.P. Kwan	-	Senior Nature Conservation Officer (North) (SNCO(N))
Mr Eric K.Y. Liu	-	Senior Conservation Officer (Technical Services) (SCO(TS))
Dr William H.L. Siu	-	Fisheries Officer (Technical Services) (FO(TS))

AECOM Asia Company Limited (AECOM)

Mr Martin M.T. Law]	
Ms Becky S.M. Wong]	
Ms H.L. Li]	
Ms Anna Y.M. Chung]	Consultants
Ms Avery T.Y. Lam]	
Mr K.B. Yim]	
Ms Hazel W.N. Yun]	
Mr C.L. Yuen]	

Representers and Representers' Representatives

R118 of STT OZP – Tam Siu Ying Iris

Ms Tam Siu Ying Iris - Representer

R805 of STT OZP and R607 of MP OZP – 符曦允

Ms Fu Hei Wan - Representer

R826 of STT OZP and R628 of MP OZP – Li Ying Wai

Mr Li Ying Wai - Representer

R868 of STT OZP and R673 of MP OZP – Chun Kin Chung

Mr Chun Kin Chung - Representer

R1405 of STT OZP – Cheng Chit Lung Stewart

Mr Cheng Chit Lung Stewart - Representer

R1440 of STT OZP – 謝世傑

Mr Tse Sai Kit - Representer

R1442 of STT OZP, R12 of MP OZP and R3 of NTM OZP – Mary Mulvihill

Ms Mary Mulvihill - Representer

R1447 of STT OZP – Hui Chung Hong

Mr Lau Shiu Keung Tobi - Representer's Representative

R1463 of STT OZP – Tam Raymond Chi Ho

R1492 of STT OZP – Red Citi Co. Ltd.

Mr Yuen Sing Hank - Representers' Representative

R1471 of STT OZP – 許志華

Mr Hui Chi Wah - Representer

R1484 of STT OZP and R1099 of MP OZP – Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden (KFBG)

Mr Nip Hin Ming - Representer's Representative

R1485 of STT OZP – World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong (WWF)

Mr Chan Pui Lok Bosco - Representer's Representative

R1486 of STT OZP – The Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects

Mr Chan Yin Lun Jeremy] Representer's Representatives

Ms Chan Tsz Wa]

R1487 of STT OZP and R1101 of MP OZP – 民主黨

Mr Ng Wing Fai Stanley] Representer's Representatives

Mr Lam Ho Yeung]

Mr Hau Yat Long]

R1489 of STT OZP and R1102 of MP OZP – Diocesan Commission for Integral Human Development (教區全人發展委員會)

Ms Law Pui Shan - Representer's Representative

6. The Chairperson extended a welcome and briefly explained the procedures of the hearing. The presentations made by the government representatives on 28.6.2024 and 2.7.2024 had been uploaded to the Town Planning Board (the Board/TPB)'s website for public viewing. To ensure efficient operation of the hearing, each representer and/or their representatives would be allotted 10 minutes for making presentation. There was a timer device to alert the representers and/or their representatives two minutes before the allotted time was to expire, and when the allotted time limit was up. A question and answer (Q&A) session would be held for each morning and afternoon session after the attending representers and/or their representatives had completed their oral submissions in the respective session on the day. Members could direct their questions to the government representatives (including the consultants), the representers and/or their representatives. After the Q&A session, the government representatives (including the consultants), the representers and their representatives would be invited to leave the meeting. After the hearing of all the oral submissions from the representers and their representatives, the Board would deliberate on the representations in closed meeting and would inform the representers of the Board's decision in due course.

7. The Chairperson invited the representers and/or their representatives to elaborate on their representations.

R118 of STT OZP – Tam Siu Ying Iris

8. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Ms Tam Siu Ying Iris made the following main points:

- (a) the San Tin Technopole (the Technopole) should ensure a unique and attractive design in order to attract talents and investors to the area. There was inadequate statutory control over major development parameters in the Notes of the STT OZP for the “Other Specified Uses” annotated “Innovation and Technology” (“OU(I&T)”) zone. The imposition of building height restriction (BHR) alone could not help achieve such an aspiration. The STT OZP should provide clear visions, certainty and transparency to all stakeholders instead of relying on the Government’s internal control;
- (b) with reference to the Lok Ma Chau Loop OZP, about 20% of the planning scheme area was designated as “Open Space” (“O”) zone. For the Cyberport in Pok Fu Lam OZP, all uses were Column 2 uses in the “Other Specified Uses” annotated “Cyber-Port” (“OU(Cyber-Port)”) zone and statutory controls on maximum gross floor area (GFA) and maximum building height (BH) were imposed for each sub-area. For the “OU(Cyber-Port(1))” zone, apart from gross floor area (GFA) and BHRs, additional requirements for the provision of not less than 5,000m² at-grade public open space and the submission of a layout plan to the Board were required. For the Technopole, the stipulation of 5.7 million m² GFA for 210 ha of land in the “OU(I&T)” zone in the Explanatory Statement (ES) of the STT OZP was too broad for any meaningful control. Each sub-area of the “OU(I&T)” zone should have maximum GFA control to reflect its special character;
- (c) the First Schedule of Building (Planning) Regulations, which provided control for individual building sites, was not relevant to sub-areas in the STT OZP. Lush open greenery should be planned for the innovation and technology (I&T) park which was not a normal urban development. It

was proposed to stipulate a maximum site coverage (SC) of 50% and a minimum at-grade greenery SC of 30% in each sub-area to reflect its special character and let nature infiltrate the built environment;

- (d) there should be more planning and design considerations with respect to the existing villages, in particular the village shrines and fung shui trees within the “OU(I&T)” zone. The villages, which had a vibrant culture, could add value to the I&T park and offer inspiration to the I&T talents. There should be a 30m-wide transitional area with a BHR of not more than 15m around the “Village Type Development” (“V”) zones; and
- (e) blue elements and vertical greenery should be highly encouraged in the I&T Park. The Clean Tech Park in Singapore had demonstrated that development could embrace nature and respect the existing uses (i.e. the Dragon Kiln) through appropriate design.

[Mr Rocky L.K. Poon joined the session of the meeting during the presentation of R118 of STT OZP.]

R1440 of STT OZP – 謝世傑

9. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Tse Sai Kit made the following main points:

- (a) he objected to the STT OZP. His areas of interest were ecology and land development, and he was a devout Christian. The Government of the previous term introduced the New Territories North New Town (NTN NT) with Sam Po Shue (SPS) designated as a Wetland Conservation Park (WCP) (i.e. SPS WCP). In 2023, the Government promulgated a new development proposal, which included the Technopole development but with some development areas intruding into the originally proposed SPS WCP. The justifications of the current proposal were questionable, albeit the development of the Technopole itself should not be opposed;

- (b) alternative locations avoiding the wetlands for I&T developments should be explored. The government representatives claimed that the area around San Tin/Lok Ma Chau (the STLMC area) was surrounded by mountains to the east and thus was not suitable for development. However, they should further elaborate on their arguments and provide supporting research to substantiate their position;
- (c) the 'Study on the Ecological Value of Fish Ponds and in the Deep Bay Area' (the Fish Pond Study) in 1997 established the ecological value of the fish ponds outside the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Site (the Ramsar Site), including the abandoned fish ponds. With reference to the results in the Fish Pond Study, a two-pronged approach to land use planning control through Wetland Conservation Area (WCA) and Wetland Buffer Area (WBA) had been proposed. Furthermore, the Town Planning Board Guidelines for Application for Development within Deep Bay Area under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance (TPB PG-No. 12C) also stipulated a 'precautionary approach' and 'no-net-loss in wetland' for guiding the developments in the ecologically valuable wetland area of Hong Kong. All planning applications had to fulfil and comply with those key principles so that the wetlands in the NTN NT would be safeguarded;
- (d) according to TPB PG-No. 12C, the 'no-net-loss in wetland' referred to both 'area' and 'function'. The Government had not provided any statistics on why the enhancement of 'function' could compensate for the reduction in wetland 'area'. The tactic to emphasise only the enhancement of 'function' would only circumvent the requirements laid down in TPB PG-No. 12C and hence downplay the ecological value and importance of the internationally-recognised Ramsar Site serving as a resting ground for wintering migratory birds;
- (e) the green groups had repeatedly pointed out the deficiencies of the environmental impact assessment (EIA), which might be subject to judicial

review. There were discrepancies in the wildlife habitat recorded in the EIA and by the green groups. The EIA failed to provide sufficient scientific evidence to support the claims in the ES of the STT OZP that the SPS WCP could compensate for the impacts on ecological and fisheries resources arising from the development at the STLMC area of the Technopole, in order to achieve no-net-loss in ecological function and capacity of the wetlands. Although mitigation measures were proposed, many of them did not have scientific support. Some of the measures such as restoration of fish ponds were in Mai Po, not in proximity to SPS;

- (f) the current development proposal deviated from the planning intention and development control of the then San Tin OZP No. S/YL-ST/8 which clearly stated in the ES that the fish pond areas in San Tin formed an integral part of the Deep Bay Area wetland ecosystem and had significant ecological value. In addition, the exemption clause for filling of land and ponds for the public works signified the downgrading of conservation initiatives in that the planning control in the STT OZP to allow flexibility for the developers would open the floodgate for further environmental degradation; and
- (g) the Technopole development had provided an opportunity to re-evaluate the necessity and impacts of such a large-scale project. The Government should carefully consider the appropriate scale and location of development, the effectiveness of mitigation measures, and adhere to the overarching principles of 'precautionary approach' and 'no-net-loss in wetland'.

R1442 of STT OZP, R12 of MP OZP and R3 of NTM OZP – Mary Mulvihill

10. With the aid of a visualiser, Ms Mary Mulvihill made the following main points:

STT OZP

- (a) she objected to the STT OZP as the public consultation was improper and the information available on TPB's website was inadequate;

- (b) there was no input from the Mainland experts in the EIA process. According to the 'Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area', it was necessary to strengthen the protection and restoration of wetlands in the region, in particular the key wetlands of international and national importance. The Governments should join hands to introduce measures to protect the cross-boundary wetland system. The climatic impact on the Technopole development would extend beyond Hong Kong, highlighting the need for a concerted effort to combat global warming. Furthermore, recent reports on flooding and landslips in Guangdong had brought attention to the need for an EIA that covered the Greater Bay Area (GBA);

- (c) the proposed developments in the STT OZP, which ignored the economic reality of NTN NT, were too ambitious and unachievable. The plan lacked a clear focus on any specific field of development. No research had been conducted on how the I&T industries would function and perform in reality. The destruction of hundreds of hectares (ha) of ecologically valuable wetlands and the felling of a huge number of trees were unacceptable given the uncertainty about the demand for the I&T facilities in Hong Kong. A more proven and thoughtful approach to town planning was required to avoid environmental destruction and formulate economically and financially viable development proposals;

- (d) the multi-storey buildings (MSBs) for relocating the affected brownfield operations initiated by the Government would take time to realise. The proposed "streamlining" approach, which allowed brownfield encroachment on the areas without brownfields before, would lead to the creation of new brownfield sites;

- (e) there would be a shortfall of community facilities in the proposed San Tin new town;

MP OZP

- (f) she objected to the amendments to the MP OZP and the designation of SPS WCP, as its public recreational nature would undermine the need for more stringent control under the current conservation zonings;
- (g) she doubted whether a conservation-oriented SPS WCP would be established, given the time needed for materialisation, the lack of information on the transitional period between construction and formal establishment, and the lack of public monitoring and gatekeeping from the town planning regime;
- (h) whether the time frame for the implementation of SPS WCP proposed by EEB and AFCD (i.e. first phase completed in 2031 and remaining phase completed by 2039) would be adhered to was in doubt;
- (i) there was a misalignment between the implementation of built development and the provision of the wetland reserve. There was no guarantee that the proposed wetland reserve would actually be provided amid the development needs;

NTM OZP

- (j) she objected to the amendments to the NTM OZP, in particular Amendment Item B regarding the redevelopment of an existing house for a proposed residential care home for the elderly (RCHE) under an approved section 12A (s.12A) application. Members of the Board had overlooked the fact that the proposed RCHE exceeded the BH requirement of 24m for RCHE, the proposed development would be located in an unfavourable location subject to air and noise nuisances and with poor air ventilation and natural lighting. The proposed RCHE did not provide enough outdoor recreational facilities and the roof garden at a height of 40m would be inaccessible to the elderly. It was doubtful if the developer was genuine

in providing the RCHE; and

- (k) the amendments to the Notes of the NTM OZP exempting the need to seek approval from the Board for filling of land and filling of ponds for public works co-ordinated or implemented by the Government was alarming. There would be a lack of control over works carried out by the Government. Moreover, there appeared to be no compelling reason to initiate conservation projects, as the Government could fill the concerned land if wished. She urged Members to closely monitor not only the private developers but also the government administration.

R1484 of STT OZP and R1099 of MP OZP – KFBG

11. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Nip Hin Ming made the following main points:

- (a) although the EIAs of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Hong Kong Boundary Crossing Facilities (HZMB BCF) and the Three Runway System of the Hong Kong International Airport projects demonstrated that there were no/minimal/acceptable residual impacts from the developments, research showed that there were large and appalling declines in the number of the Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphin (*Sousa chinensis*) (中華白海豚) over the decades. The Brothers Marine Park (BMP) recorded zero dolphin density in seven consecutive years from 2015 to 2022, and the occurrence of dolphins around the Brothers Islands remained extremely rare in recent years after the completion of most marine works associated with HZMB BCF and BMP;
- (b) the Technopole development should adhere to the national policy and the strategic directions of the Northern Metropolis Development Strategy (NMDS), including the construction of ecological civilisation and beautiful villages. The NMDS announced in 2021 clearly showed a continuous conservation area linking the northern area, the Hong Kong Wetland Park,

Mai Po Nature Reserve (MPNR) and the proposed WCPs. Under the NMDS, the Technopole was separated into conservation and development portions, with the extent of development smaller than the existing proposal. The extent of the Technopole development expanded over the years and intruded into the wetland areas, separating the continuous wetlands and ecological corridors and isolating the proposed Hoo Hok Wai WCP;

- (c) the abandoned fish ponds also had their ecological value. For example, Black-faced Spoonbills (*Platalea minor*) (黑臉琵鷺) could be found there. Not all wildlife species relied on fish as a food source. As such, the proposed ecological enhancement measures of stocking ponds with trash fish might not be applicable to all wildlife species in the area. He questioned how it could be assured that the existing ecosystem of the area would not be affected by the proposed development;
- (d) Eurasian Otter (*Lutra lutra*) (歐亞水獺), which was not identified in the EIA, was found in the area. It was the most endangered native terrestrial mammal in Hong Kong. The proposed wildlife corridor of 10m was not sufficient for the habitat of the Eurasian Otter. According to the report 'Otters and Development' published by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency, a minimum of a 10m buffer on both sides of a watercourse should be provided to protect otters from disturbance. As such, the proposed wildlife corridor of a minimum width of 20m should be provided and reflected on the STT OZP. Nonetheless, the pollution and disturbances generated from developments adjacent to the watercourse would adversely affect the wildlife corridor. A functioning ecological corridor, especially for terrestrial animals, should be provided. Taking into account the land uses surrounding the wildlife corridor, there was scope to further widen the wildlife corridor and the non-building areas (NBAs); and
- (e) the Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE) recommended that plantation of food crops, which might attract insects and birds to enrich the urban biodiversity, in the "O" zones within the project area should be

encouraged. However, agricultural use was not included in Column 1 in the Notes of the “O” zone of the STT OZP. The existing farmlands, which were habitats for many species, could not be replaced by a community garden at the corner of an urban park. Besides, farming elements should be incorporated in the “O” zone to form a wildlife corridor network and facilitate the open space function embracing the food garden concept.

R1486 of STT OZP – The Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects (HKILA)

12. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Chan Yin Lun, Jeremy made the following main points:

- (a) the planning principles of the Northern Metropolis (NM), including urban-rural integration, proactive conservation, high-quality outdoor eco-recreation/tourism outlets, optimised spatial planning for economic land, expanding development capacity and enhancing the efficiency, capacity and comfort level of cross-boundary travel, were supported. The overall planning vision and positioning of the Technopole were also supported. However, there were concerns about the direct loss of about 89 ha of wetlands with ecological values and the indirect disturbances to the surrounding wetlands and freshwater wetlands habitats;
- (b) HKILA had been closely collaborating with WWF to prepare an enhancement proposal to the Technopole with five key recommendations;
- (c) firstly, the habitat connectivity of the Technopole should be enhanced. Noting that the proposed development at the northwestern corner of the STT OZP would create a bottleneck and funnelling effect that would adversely affect the birds and terrestrial wildlife, it was recommended that the proposed 20m-wide NBA along the northwestern corner should be expanded to 200m. A multi-functional green space of about 12.7 ha connecting with the future SPS WCP could be provided for flood attenuation, cleansing run-off water and acting as an urban green lung; and

- (d) secondly, nature-based solutions should be adopted to increase the flood resilience in the Technopole and alleviate the risk of flooding. The watercourse system within the Technopole should be reviewed and the five existing watercourses should be preserved to divert overflow. The river parks alongside the San Tin Eastern and Western Main Drainages should be used as a floodable riparian zone to increase the flow capacity, as well as for recreational activities. The existing fishponds could be converted as flood retention ponds. As a result, about 195,000m³ flood storage capacity with landscape and amenity value could be created.

R1447 of STT OZP – Hui Chung Hong

13. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Lau Shiu Keung, Tobi made the following main points:

- (a) his presentation continued that of R1486 (i.e. HKILA);
- (b) the third recommendation was to promote agricultural landscape and diverse landscape typologies of open space. According to the EIA Report, over 10 ha of agricultural land within the Technopole would be lost permanently, which would create an irreversible loss of landscape features and culture element, and would have direct impacts on farmland-dependent species; and
- (c) recreational and community farming should be proposed in the Technopole. It was recommended that a community Argo-Park of about 9.23 ha could be incorporated into the proposed Cultural and Recreational Complex to provide outdoor recreation opportunities to complement its indoor facilities. Appropriate commercial farming activities, e.g. farm-to-table, could be introduced in the Argo-Park. The proposal aimed to foster urban-rural integration which enabled a diverse lifestyle and landscape in the new development area.

[Professor Bernadette W.S. Tsui joined this session of the meeting during the presentation of R1447 of STT OZP's representative.]

R1485 of STT OZP – WWF

14. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Chan Pui Lok, Bosco made the following main points:

- (a) his presentation continued that of R1447 and R1486 (i.e. HKILA);
- (b) the fourth recommendation was to improve the wildlife corridor for terrestrial mammals, especially Eurasian Otter (*Lutra lutra*) (歐亞水獺), near the Loop. The proposed wildlife corridor was along roads and next to developments, comprising aboveground and underground sections. It created obstacles for the movement of otters and other species, and was considered not optimal;
- (c) it was recommended to construct an 'eco-aqueduct' with depressed road sections to facilitate the movement of otters and other wildlife. The 'eco-aqueduct' with a depressed road section would be approximately 570m long and 10m wide, which would serve as an open-air aquatic corridor at the grade level. There were foreign examples for such an 'eco-aqueduct' design, and it should be technically feasible to construct such facilities;
- (d) lastly, it was recommended to enhance the flight corridor for birds. The proposed 70m-wide bird flight corridor formed by NBA in the "OU(I&T)" zone to the east of Planning Area 19C and connecting to the "O" zone of the Mai Po Lung Village (MPLV) Egrettry was unsatisfactory. The flight corridor immediately abutting areas which allowed a BH of 105 meters above Principal Datum (mPD) would be a narrow slit, and was unattractive to birds. It was proposed to widen the NBA at Planning Area 19C adjoining Road L11 to soften the physical and visual deterrence. A 35m

wide buffer zone with a maximum BH of 35m should be provided along both sides of the 70m-wide flight corridor. The proposed funnel-shaped flight corridor could also guide the birds to use the flight corridor; and

- (e) for the east-west birds' flight corridor near the Loop, the sudden increase of BH from 35m to 130m would create a sharp interface, undermining the function of the proposed 300m flight corridor. It was suggested to lower the maximum BH along the northern limit of Planning Area 19A from 130mPD or 105mPD to 75mPD, and create a stepped BH profile of 15mPD, 35mPD and 75mPD from the north to the south, so as to provide a harmonious height profile with the surrounding areas.

R1487 of STT OZP and R1101 of MP OZP – 民主黨

15. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Ng Wing Fai, Stanley made the following main points:

- (a) Democratic Party supported in principle the development of an I&T centre in NTN NT but was against the development intruding onto the ecologically valuable wetlands;
- (b) one of the national strategies was to protect wetlands, and the Ramsar Site was the most important wetlands that required protection under international conventions. Failure to preserve the integrity of the wetlands would be detrimental to the international status of Hong Kong;
- (c) the Ramsar Site fell within AFCD's List of Priority Sites for Enhanced Conservation, and developments therein should comply with TPB PG-No. 12C. There was a presumption against development in the ecologically sensitive areas, where the majority of the land was still active fish ponds. Some local villagers also worried that the proposed development might adversely affect the local fung shui and culture and cause flooding;

- (d) the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO) provided a framework for assessing the potential environmental impacts of designated projects in Hong Kong. Despite the stringent framework, the EIA Report prepared by the consultants, endorsed in April 2024, was so unprofessional that the Government had to make subsequent revisions to the report. He urged the Board to perform a proper gatekeeping role to conserve the wetlands which were recognised by international conventions;
- (e) it was questionable if such a large land area was required for the development of the Technopole. The Hong Kong Science Park with only about 22 ha of land for I&T uses, as compared to about 210 ha in the STLMC area of the Technopole, could yield the same number of jobs. In addition, there was already about 260 ha of land for I&T development in Hong Kong, including Hong Kong Science Park and Cyberport. Besides, an additional 192 ha of land had been earmarked for I&T development in new development areas, including Hung Shui Kiu, the Loop, Lau Fau Shan and Ma Liu Shui. Meanwhile, ITIB's consultancy study on the I&T industry development plan was still underway. The Government should justify the land requirement for the Technopole;
- (f) the proposed 70m-wide NBA adjacent to areas with BHRs of 105mPD to 115mPD (equivalent to approximately 30-storey buildings) to the north of the planned Road L11 would not be a suitable flight corridor for migratory birds. The proposed BHs in that area should be significantly reduced to create a stepped BH profile;
- (g) although it was appropriate to have some residential and commercial developments in areas adjoining the Loop, its development intensity and BH should be reduced to preserve the natural habitat and maintain a reasonable wildlife corridor and birds' flight path; and
- (h) high-density developments should be confined to the south of San Tin Highway, and a phased development should be implemented to reduce adverse ecological impacts. Consideration should also be given to

holistically reviewing the position of the other I&T development clusters in Hong Kong and the local infrastructure planning to achieve sustainable development for the Technopole.

R1489 of STT OZP and R1102 of MP OZP – Diocesan Commission for Integral Human Development (教區全人發展委員會)

16. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Ms Law Pui Shan made the following main points:

- (a) she briefly introduced the values and concerns of the Diocesan Commission for Integral Human Development, especially those on biodiversity, environment and humanity;
- (b) the Technopole development would disrupt the integrity of the wetlands and adversely affect the natural habitat. A comprehensive plan should be formulated to maintain the integrity of the wetlands and hence preserve the function and biodiversity of those wetlands;
- (c) there was a strong interdependency between nature and human beings, and therefore nature should be protected. The Technopole development would result in the fragmentation of the wetland system, thus reducing resilience for flooding prevention. The importance of the wetlands, which mitigated the adverse consequences brought about by extreme weather and climatic changes, should not be undermined; and
- (d) San Tin's local culture, history, and social network were evident, and the Technopole development should also aim to preserve those elements and nurture a sense of caring culture.

R1463 of STT OZP – Tam Raymond Chi Ho

R1492 of STT OZP – Red Citi Co. Ltd.

17. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Yuen Sing Hank made the

following main points:

- (a) Red Citi Co. Ltd was the owner of various lots (about 5,764 m² of land in total) in D.D. 105 in San Tin. Those lots were located to the north of San Tin Highway and the west of Tsing Lung Tsuen (青龍村);
- (b) the development pattern under the STT OZP failed to achieve efficient use of land resources, and the proposed “Other Specified Uses” annotated “Logistics, Storage and Workshop” (“OU(LSW)”) zone was incompatible with the entire Technopole development. The planned “OU(I&T)” zone to the south of the existing Castle Peak Road – San Tin was segregated, and the planned “O” zone for MPLV Egretty, which tended to cover land with fragmented ownership, would undermine the development potential in future. Worse still, the land zoned “O” was not connected with the blue-green corridor. Furthermore, the transportation network was not robust enough to cater for the needs of the future population;
- (c) In that connection, it was proposed to:
 - (i) enhance the effectiveness of the use of land resources and create design flexibility by readjusting the road alignments in the Technopole to avoid an “X” shape intersection. A comprehensive public transport network should be formulated to support the growth of the Technopole. Consideration should be given to adopting Environmentally Friendly Transport Services to strengthen the internal connectivity between the strategic nodes and the proposed San Tin Railway Station;
 - (ii) restructure the Castle Peak Road – San Tin with the deletion of the planned “X” shape road intersection and relocation of the San Tin Highway Interchange to form a closed-loop network as part of the primary distributor road connecting I&T Parks and the proposed San Tin Town Centre. The existing Shek Wu Wai Road to the east of the concerned area would be maintained with some sessions

connecting to the Castle Peak Road – San Tin which was proposed to be straightened and widened to serve the local residents;

- (iii) consolidate and optimise spatial layout for the additional supply of approximately 3 ha of I&T land, which was estimated to a contribution of \$5.8 billion in value;
 - (iv) re-organise the proposed “O” zone to achieve a seamless open space framework, thus improving the accessibility and creating a sizeable open space to cater for the recreation needs of future residents;
 - (v) encourage the participation of landowners by adopting the “Government-led development supplemented by private participation” under the Enhanced Conventional New Town Approach to provide concessionary land premium for in-situ land exchange; and
- (d) the above proposals could add about 3 ha of “OU(I&T)” land without reducing the land zoned for “O” and “Government, Institution or Community” uses. A more consolidated and optimised spatial layout and better integration with the Technopole would be envisaged to facilitate the development of various I&T industries.

[Ms Carrie K.Y. Leung left this session of the meeting temporarily at this point.]

R805 of STT OZP and R607 of MP OZP – 符曦允

18. With the aid of some photos and a PowerPoint presentation, Ms Fu Hei Wan made the following main points:

- (a) she was working in the field of environmental education. With reference to some photos of birds taken in San Tin, she expressed concerns about the destruction of the natural habitats and fish ponds that were home to those birds, and potential loss of habitat due to the Technopole;

- (b) the development area for the Technopole was significantly enlarged as shown in the EIA Report approved in May 2024. There was insufficient time for the public to comment on the proposal, especially when the proposal involved filling about 89 ha of fish ponds in WCA and WBA and intruding on 175 ha of the Ramsar Site, affecting about 117 protected species. In addition, it was unjustified not to require a new EIA, given that a slight change in the development area would necessitate a new EIA in the past. Hence, the Technopole development would set an undesirable precedent for the conservation of wetlands;
- (c) the credibility of the EIA Report was doubtful given that there were fundamental errors, such as the misidentification of bird species. However, the Government subsequently clarified that the errors were only editorial. Errors in the EIA Report were unacceptable as the report formed an important basis for the need to conserve wetlands and natural habitats and should have undergone scrutiny from various government departments and ACE. Furthermore, some common local bird species of particular concern, e.g. Brunniceps (*Cisticola juncidis*) (棕扇尾鶯), and bird species belonging to Class II of the Endangered Species of China, e.g. Siberian Rubythroat (*Calliope Calliope*) (紅喉歌鶇), were not recorded in the EIA Report;
- (d) the ecological value of the abandoned ponds was underestimated. In fact, those abandoned ponds could become habitats for some vulnerable species such as Common Pochard (*Aythya farina*) (紅頭潛鴨) and the endangered Eurasian Otter (*Lutra lutra*) (歐亞水獺) due to fewer interferences from human beings. While the Government proposed to convert those abandoned ponds back to active fish ponds, the ecological impacts from such a conversion were overlooked in the EIA;
- (e) it was doubtful if the wetland compensation could attain up to a 45% increase in functional value as suggested in the EIA by referring to the

wetland enhancement measures of other projects. Those reference projects, such as the Fung Lok Wai project, might not be comparable with the Technopole given the differences in scale and the lack of information on implementation effectiveness. Given that the land use framework on the STT OZP was based on the findings of the EIA, agreeing to the STT OZP would be tantamount to approving the unprofessional EIA Report;

- (f) a majority of land to the north of San Tin Highway was zoned “OU(I&T)”. According to the Notes of the STT OZP for the “OU(I&T)” zone, there were 44 always permitted uses, including hotel, industrial use, place of entertainment and private club, etc. Agreeing to the STT OZP would undoubtedly give the impression that wetlands and fish ponds were destroyed at the expense of I&T developments; and
- (g) finally, she shared the grievances and desperation expressed by several local villagers she met during a guided tour in San Tin. She emphasised the importance of preserving those wetlands and fish ponds to maintain the traditional way of life for those villagers, as well as to continue serving the purpose of outdoor educational activities.

[Professor Roger C.K. Chan joined this session of the meeting during the presentation of R805 of STT OZP and R607 of MP OZP.]

R826 of STT OZP and R628 of MP OZP – Li Ying Wai

- 19. With the aid of a plan, Mr Li Ying Wai made the following main points:
 - (a) he strongly opposed the current Technopole development proposal, which would involve massive pond filling as compared with the NMDS released in 2021, which had a more reasonable development scale and would not affect so many wetlands/fish ponds;

- (b) according to the ‘Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area’, the wetland system should be protected under a concerted effort. The loss of massive wetlands under the current proposal was not in line with the national policy objective;
- (c) ecological security was one of the key components contributing to national security and acted as a safety belt for economic growth. Wetlands and fish ponds in San Tin formed part of the ecological corridors of national importance, providing habitats for some endangered/protected species. There was a need to strike a balance between ecological security and development;
- (d) the impacts of pond filling were not comprehensively assessed in the EIA. Should the STT OZP be agreed, irreversible damage to the natural habitats would result. It was doubtful if the establishment of SPS WCP and the proposed compensatory measures would be sufficient to compensate for the substantial loss in the function of wetlands according to the “no-net-loss” principle; and
- (e) while acknowledging Hong Kong’s need for I&T developments, he stressed that such developments and environmental conservation could co-exist harmoniously. There was no inherent need to pursue developments at the expense of ecological degradation. He urged Members of the Board to listen to the voices of various representers and reassess the development proposal with due care.

R868 of STT OZP and R673 of MP OZP – Chun Kin Chung

20. Mr Chun Kin Chung made the following main points:

- (a) he opposed the Technopole development;
- (b) the development area for the Technopole had been substantially increased

during the EIA process, yet a new EIA was not conducted. This situation aroused serious concerns about procedural fairness, which the Government failed to dispel;

- (c) given the immense ecological value of the wetlands in San Tin (habitats for 205 bird species, including 35 species belonging to Class I or II of the Endangered Species of China and 19 endangered species of international concern), sufficient justifications were required for intruding into the wetlands. In addition, the necessity of development was questionable as there was still no concrete plan for the I&T industries to be developed on land formed by filling of ponds;
- (d) the effectiveness of compensatory measures for wetlands was doubtful. There were so many cases where developments had caused irreversible damage to habitats and/or precedents that the compensatory measures would fail, e.g. Green Turtles (綠海龜) not returning to Sham Wan, Lamma Island to nest; the disappearance of Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphins (*Sousa chinensis*) (中華白海豚) in the northern Lantau waters; and the reducing population of Black-faced Spoonbills (*Platalea minor*) (黑臉琵鷺) in the Deep Bay Area. Also, as filling of ponds would be carried out in WCA and WBA, there would be even more uncertainty about whether the compensatory measures could enhance ecological integrity. If Hong Kong claimed to be an international city, the wetlands in San Tin, which were of international importance, should be cherished. Therefore, the Government should adopt a more proactive conservation approach, not to 'destroy first and conserve later'; and
- (e) it was essential to create urban voids for a liveable city. Developments should not saturate every piece of land. Some of the lands, such as abandoned fish ponds, possessed unique ecological functions and intrinsic value warranting conservation. Some representers argued that if Hong Kong could not keep pace with development, it would become a backward place. Nevertheless, Hong Kong still deserved to maintain some vital

urban voids with a sense of backwardness, as those areas provided crucial breathing spaces, and recreation and eco-tourism opportunities.

[Ms Carrie K.Y. Leung rejoined this session of the meeting during the presentation of R868 of STT OZP and R673 of MP OZP.]

R1405 of STT OZP – Cheng Chit Lung Stewart

21. With the aid of a plan, Mr Cheng Chit Lung Stewart made the following main points:

- (a) he opposed the Technopole development due to its enormous adverse impacts on the community and environment;
- (b) the necessity and justification for the proposed I&T development in San Tin should be further substantiated. It was unreasonable to simply expand the area zoned “OU(I&T)” from about 200 ha to 300 ha, solely to make it comparable in size to the Shenzhen’s I&T Zone, in the hope of creating asynergy effect. In fact, there were already other proposed development nodes in Hong Kong, e.g. Ma Lui Shui and Lo Wu Sandy Ridge, with lands earmarked for I&T development. Furthermore, Mainland’s leading I&T enterprises would prefer to set up their companies in Shenzhen where more land resources were available;
- (c) the Technopole development would cause irreversible damage to the environment. The wetlands, which were important in regulating the climate and facilitating the water cycle, would be destroyed. The reduction in the area of SPS WCP would contradict the overall objective of increasing the environmental carrying capacity and biodiversity of fish ponds, making the effectiveness of conservation uncertain. Also, such a reduction would be unfavourable to serve the education and eco-tourism purposes of the park. In addition, the Technopole development would involve massive felling of trees, but no details on the affected trees were provided. Although the National Forestry and Grassland Administration

(國家林業和草原局) raised no objection to the Technopole development from conservation perspective, they did not publicly support the proposal;

- (d) there would be insufficient non-I&T related jobs in the Technopole for the future residents, especially for those living in the public housing. If they could not find jobs in the future community, they would have to commute to other districts for work, exacerbating traffic congestion issues in the nearby areas of Tin Shui Wai North and Queen's Hill;
- (e) the Technopole development also contravened the overarching planning principle of urban-rural integration. The proposed development would alter the social context and fabric of the local villages, particularly the non-indigenous villages such as Ki Lun Tsuen (麒麟村). This would jeopardise the unique history and culture of the villagers, stifling their established means of living. Likewise, some local villagers making a living from various brownfield operations would be affected as the operations had to be discontinued to give way for the Technopole development. Worse still, there was no information on the rehousing arrangement for the affected villagers;
- (f) given the possible delay in the completion of the Northern Link (NOL) Main Line by 2034, the transport infrastructure might not keep pace with population/business intake;
- (g) the implementation mode of the Technopole was problematic. The Government planned to allow in-situ land exchange for some sites earmarked for private development, and this would encourage land hoarding, as witnessed in the cases of Ma Shi Po and Kwu Tung. More importantly, the start-ups would not benefit from the land disposal arrangement that was not open and transparent, nor subject to public scrutiny; and

- (h) he urged the Government to review the decision-making process to ensure transparency, fairness and inclusiveness.

R1471 of STT OZP – 許志華

22. Mr Hui Chi Wah made the following main points:

- (a) he expressed concerns about the enlargement of the development area under the current Technopole development compared to the proposal under the NMDS in 2021. In particular, the expanded development was close to the Ramsar Site in Mai Po. He queried if the planning of Technopole had taken into account the need for conservation; and
- (b) the necessity of the Technopole development was questionable, as I&T institutions could be established elsewhere, like Cyberport and Hong Kong Science Park, not to mention those in Shenzhen. Therefore, the need for the proposed Technopole development in San Tin, which might create adverse impacts on the internationally significant wetlands, should be further justified.

[The meeting was adjourned for a 5-minute break.]

23. As the presentations of the representers and/or their representatives had been completed, the meeting proceeded to the Q&A session. The Chairperson explained that Members would raise questions and the Chairperson would invite the representers, their representatives and/or the government representatives (including the consultants) to answer. The Q&A session should not be taken as an occasion for the attendees to direct questions to the Board or for cross-examination between parties. The Chairperson then invited questions from Members.

Development Control

24. The Chairperson and a Member raised the following questions:

- (a) noting the concerns that the development control with only BHRs for the “OU(I&T)” zone on the STT OZP was too loose, the reasons for not imposing GFA/plot ratio (PR) restrictions and/or other control for individual sites;
- (b) details of the Planning and Design Brief (PDB) and how it could justify not imposing statutory control on the STT OZP; and
- (c) the reason for not consulting the Board on the Master Plans to be prepared for individual development sites within the “OU(I&T)” zone.

25. In response, Mr Vic C.H. Yau, D of NMCO, DEVB and Mr K.W. Ng, AD/NT, PlanD, with the aid of the PowerPoint slides, made the following main points:

- (a) as detailed use of the “OU(I&T)” zones had not been confirmed, it would be difficult to subdivide the “OU(I&T)” sites at the current stage. On the other hand, there was a need to allow flexibility to cater for the needs of different players in the I&T industry and allow the development of different I&T fields at different stages of I&T value chain. Although no GFA/PR restriction for individual sites was stipulated in the Notes of the “OU(I&T)” zone on the STT OZP, the ES stated that the total GFA for all “OU(I&T)” sites was about 5.7 million m². Besides, BHRs and/or NBAs had been stipulated/designated on the STT OZP, taking into account, amongst others, the ecological concerns and ecological mitigation/enhancement measures proposed in the approved EIA Report to preserve birds’ flight paths and wildlife corridors;
- (b) a three-level control was recommended for the implementation arrangement of the “OU(I&T)” zone under the STT OZP, namely (i) stipulation of key development parameters on the OZP; (ii) preparation of a PDB for concerned I&T sites to guide the future development; and (iii) the requirement on the submissions of Master Plans for the proposed developments on the concerned sites. The PDB would take into account

factors including but not limited to (i) the development restrictions/requirements under the STT OZP; (ii) approval conditions and recommendations imposed under the Director of Environmental Protection (DEP)'s approval of the EIA Report (e.g. submission of a Bird-friendly Design Guideline, etc.); (iii) mitigation/enhancement measures adopted in the EIA and other technical assessments (e.g. provision of wildlife corridors and breezeways, as well as measures to promote urban-rural integration, etc.); (iv) urban design, engineering and infrastructure requirements, and green, sustainable and resilient building design/measures recommended under the 'First Phase Development of New Territories North – San Tin/Lok Ma Chau Development Node – Investigation' (the Investigation Study) and to be worked out at the detailed design stage (e.g. access arrangement of the I&T sites, future drainage facilities and networks, etc.); and (v) relevant recommendations to be suggested under ITIB's consultancy study on the I&T industry development plan for the STLMC area. In particular, the interface between the I&T sites and the future SPS WCP to the north and existing "V" zones across the STT OZP would be dealt with under the PDB. Different suggestions and proposals from the representers, including stepped BH profile, building setbacks, NBA, greening and landscaping, wildlife corridor for Eurasian Otters (*Lutra lutra*) (歐亞水獺), sub-division sites for "OU(I&T)" zones, GFA distribution among individual I&T sites would be further studied and elaborated in the PDB. The Board would be consulted on the PDB before it was finalised. The PDB would provide a framework setting out the planning and design requirements to facilitate the project proponents of individual I&T sites to prepare Master Plans with pertinent information such as layout, design and major development parameters. The Master Plans would be considered by a designated committee to be set up under the Northern Metropolis Coordination Office (NMCO), DEVB, which was tasked to oversee the overall implementation of the NM. The requirement for the submission of Master Plan would also be stipulated in the future leases governing the concerned sites where appropriate, in particular for sites with substantial size. The finalised PDB would also be attached to an Outline

Development Plan prepared for the STLMC area and made available for public reference once adopted; and

- (c) given the vast number of sites would possibly be subdivided for the “OU(I&T)” zones, there might be a large number of Master Plan submissions. To allow a certain extent of flexibility and facilitate timely development of I&T land in the Technopole, it was considered that the Board would be consulted on the PDB while the Master Plans would be considered by a designated committee to be set up under the NMCO, DEVB.

26. Mr Ivan M.K. Chung, Director of Planning, supplemented that the planning of the Technopole had adopted a new concept, with the aim of creating a dynamic and liveable community for promoting the concept of ‘work-live-play’, which would feature vibrant activities not only during daytime but also in the evenings and on weekends. This similar planning concept had been adopted in many existing I&T developments/parks in other GBA cities. Therefore, it was necessary to provide more flexibility in the “OU(I&T)” zone on the STT OZP, including allowing a wider range of Column 1 uses for both I&T uses and non-I&T complementary and supporting uses. However, the need to ensure appropriate development controls would not be compromised for the sake of flexibility. According to the proposed planning control framework for the “OU(I&T)” zone, the planning intention and key development restrictions (including the BHRs and NBAs) had been stipulated/designated on the OZP, with the ES elaborating detailed requirements on urban design, landscape, traffic, open space/pedestrian/cycle track networks, etc., with illustrations on the plans attached to the ES. To go further, a PDB would be prepared, consolidating various considerations and factors, so as to provide a framework and guidance for the preparation of Master Plans for the concerned sites, and the Board would be consulted on the PDB before its finalisation. As the Master Plans would be considered by a designated committee to be set up under the NMCO, DEVB, they would be scrutinised by relevant government bureaux/departments with relevant and sufficient expertise.

Environment and Ecology

Environmental Survey and Assessment

27. In response to a Member's question on whether the EIA procedures and requirements had been strictly followed and complied with, Mr Terence S.W. Tsang, AD(EA), EPD said that the EIA strictly adhered to all statutory requirements under the EIAO and had responded to all views from ACE and the public during the public inspection period. The approved EIA Report and the relevant technical assessments conducted under the Investigation Study demonstrated that the proposed developments in the STLMC area, with the recommended mitigation measures, would be technically feasible and environmentally (including ecologically) acceptable, and would not impose insurmountable impacts on the environment. Moreover, a mechanism to monitor the effectiveness of the implementation of the proposed ecological mitigation/enhancement measure would be set up.

28. Some Members raised the following questions:

- (a) whether the Technopole development would breach the Ramsar Convention;
- (b) how the avoidance approach was realised in the planning of the Technopole;
- (c) any baseline survey had been carried out, in particular for the abandoned fish ponds;
- (d) how the pond habitat loss in terms of quantity and quality could be compensated; and
- (e) whether the Technopole development adhered to the 'precautionary approach' and 'no-net-loss in wetland' principles under TPB PG-No. 12C.

29. In response, Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM(N), CEDD and Mr Simon K.F. Chan, AD(C), AFCD and Mr K.W. Ng, AD/NT, PlanD with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, made the following main points:

- (a) the Ramsar Site would be left untouched in its totality under the proposed developments in the STLMC area. According to the approved EIA Report, with the proposed mitigation measures, including the SPS WCP, there would be no change in the ecological characters of the Ramsar Site. The development of the STLMC area would not have direct significant impact on the Ramsar Site. Violation of the Ramsar Convention was out of the question;

- (b) the Government had been adopting an avoidance approach in the planning of the Technopole. With the aim to provide 300 ha I&T land in the Technopole (including the Loop and the STLMC area) and considering the proximity to Shenzhen's I&T Zone and the HSITP at the Loop, it was logical and appropriate to provide the I&T land to the north of San Tin Highway under the STT OZP, while the area to the south of San Tin Highway would be developed as the major neighbourhoods to complement the I&T developments. Owing to geographical constraints (e.g. the STLMC area was surrounded by mountains to the east and south, as well as the future SPS WCP to the north and west), some fish ponds/wetlands would inevitably be included in the development area so as to create a critical mass of I&T developments. It was also elaborated in the previous responses that the mountainous area located at the northeastern part of the STT OZP was considered not desirable for the development of I&T land, which would not only require extensive slope cutting and site formation works, but also affect the existing permitted burial grounds and Lok Ma Chau Police Station (i.e. a Grade II historic building). In addition, to mitigate the adverse impacts of the proposed development, the EIA strictly followed the principle in the order of 'avoidance', 'minimisation' and 'compensation' in accordance with the Technical Memorandum on Environmental Impact Assessment Process (the TM). Through the avoidance approach, the development proposal aimed to mitigate impacts

on the Ramsar Site, MPLV Egrettry and Mai Po Village (MPV) Egrettry, the flight corridors/paths of birds, and the nature woodland habitat near Pang Loon Tei;

- (c) the approved EIA Report was supported by a comprehensive baseline survey. A 12-month ecological field survey covering the assessment area was conducted between November 2021 and October 2022. The field survey covered flora, fauna and other habitats/species of conservation importance. Targeted mitigation and enhancement measures would be implemented for the specific habitats and species identified as being impacted. A similar approach was undertaken for the Long Valley Nature Park project. Besides, reference had been made to the five years monthly waterbird count data of the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society (HKBWS);
- (d) as for compensation and enhancement measures, 253 ha of ‘ecologically enhanced fish ponds’ were planned to compensate for the pond habitat loss. It was the target to enhance the functional value of the ponds in the ecologically enhanced fish ponds by at least 45% upon implementation of the ecological enhancement measures, which was sufficient to compensate for the loss in the concerned wetlands caused by the proposed development in the STLMC area; and
- (e) the TPB PG-No. 12C as connoted by its title should be applicable to planning applications within the WCA and WBA only. It did not apply to amendments to the OZPs. Having said that, in conducting the Ecological Impact Assessment under the EIA, the principle of ‘no-net-loss in wetland’ required under the Guidelines had also been adopted. Amendments to the TPB PG-No. 12C would not be considered until the completion of the statutory planning procedures for relevant OZPs of the Technopole.

SPS WCP

30. Some Members raised the following questions:

- (a) measures to conserve and compensate for the habitats loss caused by the development of the Technopole, including the habitats of the non-fish-eating birds;
- (b) how the development of SPS WCP would tie in with the Technopole development;
- (c) the future management party for the SPS WCP; and
- (d) whether the proposed Hoo Hok Wai WCP would be connected with SPS WCP to optimise the function of the eco-corridor.

31. In response, Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM(N), CEDD and Mr Simon K.F. Chan, AD(C), AFCD, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, made the following main points:

- (a) the proposed SPS WCP was about 338 ha, within which the ecological function and capacity of the existing wetlands and the fisheries resources of the existing fish ponds would be enhanced through active conservation management (288 ha) and modernised aquaculture (40 ha) respectively. Furthermore, amongst the 288 ha area for implementation of enhancement measures on ecological function, 253 ha would be ‘ecologically enhanced fish ponds’ compensating for the pond habitat loss, while the remaining 35 ha would be ‘freshwater wetland habitat’ compensating for other freshwater wetland habitat loss, which could create a habitat for non-fish-eating birds. Apart from the SPS WCP, there were other mitigation measures recommended in the approved EIA Report, such as preservation of birds’ flight corridors/paths and establishment of wildlife corridors;
- (b) with respect to the implementation timeline for the ecological mitigation/enhancement measures, as proposed in the approved EIA Report, the Government aimed to complete the development of SPS WCP by 2039 to tie in with the full operation of the STLMC area of the Technopole. CEDD would also carry out wetland enhancement measures in Mai Po and

other interim wetland enhancement measures before the construction of SPS WCP;

- (c) management options for the SPS WCP would be explored during the next stage of study by CEDD. The Government might cooperate with non-governmental organisations/green groups/professional bodies. Considering that sustainable development of aquaculture was one of the crucial components proposed, participation of the pond fish culture industry in the future operation of part of the SPS WCP was also welcome; and
- (d) SPS WCP, Hoo Hok Wai and the Deep Bay Area wetlands would be connected by preserving the 300m-wide flight corridor. SPS WCP would enable the protection of the flight path for waterbirds as a matter of priority, while creating synergy with the existing conservation areas, thereby conserving the wetland ecosystem in the Deep Bay Area more effectively. Details of the Hoo Hok Wai WCP would be studied at a later stage.

Birds and Other Wildlife Species

32. Some Members raised the following questions:

- (a) whether the design of the birds' flight paths could accommodate the needs of big-sized birds, and whether the maximum BH of the developments adjacent to the birds' flight paths could be reduced;
- (b) whether the 10m-wide wildlife corridor was adequate for the terrestrial animals, in particular the Eurasian Otter (*Lutra lutra*) (歐亞水獺), and whether there was any scope to widen the wildlife corridor;
- (c) views on the construction of a depressed road to enhance the wildlife corridor as suggested by HKILA; and

- (d) whether there was any existing habitat that needed to be temporarily relocated due to the proposed development and the arrangement.

33. In response, Mr K.W. Ng, AD/NT, PlanD, Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM(N), CEDD and Mr Simon K.F. Chan, AD(C), AFCD, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, made the following main points:

- (a) the MPLV Egretty mainly supported breeding Chinese Pond Heron (*Ardeola bacchus*) (池鷺) and Little Egrets (*Egretta garzetta*) (小白鷺), which were small in size and their tolerance towards human disturbance was high. Suitable design including greening and water features in the future open space covering the Egretty would encourage its use by the birds. The 300m-wide birds' flight corridor in east-west direction on the northern part of the STT OZP was preserved by designation of NBA and imposition of stringent BHR of 15mPD. Developments in the "OU(I&T)" zones adjacent to the 300m-wide birds' flight corridor to the north and south were restricted to a BHR of 35mPD. The possibility to reduce the BHR of 105mPD of the "OU(I&T)" sites would be further explored during the preparation of the PDB. In fact, the BHRs stipulated on the OZP were only the maximum BHs for the proposed developments;
- (b) according to the booklet 'Otters and Development' published by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency, a 10m-wide buffer against development was recommended on both sides of a watercourse rather than provisioning of a wildlife corridor under the current proposal. The existing wildlife corridor at Lok Ma Chau (LMC) was only about 1m wide. As the Eurasian Otter (*Lutra lutra*) (歐亞水獺) was small in size, the proposed 10m-wide wildlife corridors were considered sufficient. Barriers would be provided on the sides of the corridors to minimise the light and noise nuisances generated by human-beings and vehicles;
- (c) regarding the suggestion of constructing a depressed road underneath the wildlife corridor, while noting its benefit, it also posed many constraints in

planning and design. In particular, the depressed road would interfere with the culvert and drainage systems, which relied on gravity to function. The consultants had been invited to explore the feasibility of converting Roads D6, L22, L24 and part of the existing LMC Road to depressed roads. It was found that implementing such proposals would reduce the overall developable land area and pose constraints for the land designated as “OU(I&T)” zone, as well as the design of the culvert and drainage system. In contrast, depressed road projects overseas were usually for the reason of water-borne logistics, and therefore, enormous investment could be afforded. The additional works for the depressed roads, including realignment of culverts and drainages, would involve a huge cost in the order of \$2 billion. The suggestion was therefore not financially justified; and

- (d) two night roosts near San Tin Western Main Drainage Channel (STWMDC) and Ha Wan Tsuen (下灣村) would be directly affected by the Technopole, which were proposed to be relocated under the approved EIA Report. To ensure the night roosts could be relocated before commencement of relevant construction works, suitable and mature tree species would be planted at the relocation sites in advance. There was also a series of interim enhancement measures in Mai Po, which would be carried out before the commencement of the developments.

Filling of Ponds, Drainage and Flooding Facilities

34. The Chairperson and some Members raised the following questions:
- (a) whether the watercourse between San Tin Eastern Main Drainage Channel (STEMDC) and STWMDC would be preserved;
 - (b) whether the suggestion of using fish ponds as flood attenuation facilities would be considered, and the details of the flood attenuation facilities; and

- (c) details of the drainage system and its relation with the Shenzhen River.

35. In response, Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM(N), CEDD and Mr Gavin C.P. Wong, CE/N, CEDD, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, made the following main points:

- (a) the existing watercourse between STEMDC and STWMDC was the outlet of the polder scheme serving the seven recognised villages of San Tin located in the “V” zone in Planning Area 22 through the San Tin Polder which discharged into the Shenzhen River. There was no plan to remove this existing watercourse and it would be retained instead. The future treatment of the watercourse, for example, decking-over or leaving it open-air, would be reviewed at the detailed design stage;
- (b) the Technopole development would raise the ground level by about 2m. A sustainable drainage system would be provided to avoid flooding in the downstream low-lying areas. The drainage systems comprised flood retention facilities to enhance climate resilience in the STLMC area. The existing drainage system in the rural area was designed to withstand heavy rainstorms of up to 50-year return period, while the proposed flood retention facilities in the STLMC area would have sufficient capacity to withstand heavy rainstorms of up to 200-year return period. The fish ponds were located downstream of the most populated areas and flood storage was not their intended function. Rather, an engineering drainage system should be provided to safeguard those fish ponds and the proposed fisheries research centre in the fish pond area against flooding during the wet season; and
- (c) enhancement measures like straightening the river channel in the Loop and dredging the Shenzhen River were previously carried out to enhance flood resilience. The effectiveness of those measures had been demonstrated by the absence of extensive flooding along the river notwithstanding the water discharge from Shenzhen Reservoir during the exceptionally heavy rainstorm last September. Under the Investigation Study, CEDD had devised a drainage plan, covering the revitalised STEMDC and STWMDC

with the provision of flood retention facilities, including storage tanks, retention and integrated ponds. To address the concern of flood risk of the existing villages in low-lying terrains, such as Shek Wu Wai (石湖圍), a comprehensive drainage system with flood retention facilities would be provided to divert surface runoff from entering the villages, which could enhance the flood resilience of the villages.

Planning and Urban Design

36. Some Members raised the following questions:

- (a) the employment opportunities generated by the Technopole development;
- (b) noting that there were existing villages within the Technopole, how the new developments could better integrate with those villages;
- (c) details of the blue-green network and how it could benefit the future residents and workers;
- (d) instead of removing all the existing natural resources (e.g. farmlands and fish ponds) for development, whether the Government would explore the feasibility of preserving and integrating those natural resources into future developments; and
- (e) making reference to the national wetland park development in Hangzhou, whether the 50 ha of area zoned “O” on the STT OZP could be integrated with the existing fish ponds/wetlands/watercourses, such that the natural habitat could be conserved and parks with distinctive features could be created for public enjoyment.

37. In response, Mr Vic C.H. Yau, D of NMCO, DEVB, Mr K.W. Ng, AD/NT, PlanD and Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM(N), CEDD, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, made the following main points:

- (a) the Technopole, in addition to the Loop, would generate more than 165,000 jobs, with more than 120,000 related to the I&T developments. In comparison to the total planned population of the STT OZP (i.e. about 165,600), the employment-to-population ratio was about 1:1. On top of the above, another 50,000 jobs would also be provided at the HSITP at the Loop. All these were in line with the vision of the Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030 (Hong Kong 2030+) of creating new employment nodes in the New Territories for achieving a balanced spatial distribution of homes and jobs in the territory;

- (b) the concept of embracing urban-rural integration was also adopted in the planning of the Technopole. The existing recognised villages in the STT OZP would be retained and benefit from the comprehensively planned government, institution and community (GIC) facilities, open space networks and the improved infrastructure services to be brought about by the developments in the STLMC area. In particular, improvement to the drainage system would reduce the flood risk of the villages. On the software side, existing cultural heritages of the villages would be preserved while the traditional characteristics of the villages would be promoted, with a view to improving the local economy. For example, the Government had funded the preservation of historic buildings and could set up heritage trails. Details of those improvements would be followed up by relevant government departments. In terms of urban design, breezeways and view corridors, in the form of NBA(s) and/or road/open space networks, were also proposed to facilitate wind penetration and preserve the vista between the villages and the surrounding wetlands and mountain backdrop. A comprehensive pedestrian and cycle network would be provided connecting various parts of the STLMC area, and an improved strategic road and railway network would connect the area to the rest of the territory. Given the above, the quality of living of the villagers would be improved through enhanced urban-rural integration;

- (c) the STLMC area was planned with two railway stations (including the proposed San Tin Station on NOL Main Line and the proposed railway station near Chau Tau (洲頭) on NOL Spur Line), which would be connected to various parts of the Technopole through a comprehensive cycle track network and pedestrian walkway system, as well as green transit system. The main residential areas would be located to the south of San Tin Highway on the STT OZP, near the proposed San Tin Station. Apart from the major I&T land located to the north of San Tin Highway, there were also some I&T lands located at the southeastern part of the STT OZP. A Cultural and Community Complex was planned in Planning Area 7 with an area of about 15 ha complemented by the adjoining planned open space. There would be a performance arts venue, a major library, a swimming pool complex and flexible public/event spaces within the complex serving the needs of the residential and working population of the Technopole and beyond. The portions of STEMDC and STWMDC located to the south of San Tin Highway would also serve as recreation space for local residents. The northern and southern parts of the STT OZP would also be connected through a number of existing and planned footbridges as well as a proposed landscaped deck. The ‘sponge city’ concept was also adopted with initiatives to incorporate blue-green infrastructure features, such as revitalising the existing drainage channel systems to include floodable landscape and flood attenuation facilities to enhance flood protection and climate resilience in the STLMC area. Those features could also provide leisure facilities for residents and create habitats for plant and wildlife species;
- (d) measures to integrate natural resources, such as farmlands, into the developments of STLMC area would be further studied in the detailed design. In order to allow agricultural use within the “O” zone, the Board revised the Definition of Terms for the “O” zone in April 2024 to include urban farms co-ordinated or implemented by the Government, which adopted commercial technology-based crop production with the intention of providing the community with leisure farming opportunities, education

activities and fresh agricultural products. As such, urban farms within the “O” zones of the STLMC area were always permitted and did not require planning permission from the Board; and

- (e) it was noted that the national wetland park in Hangzhou was created by optimising land resources for economic development while conserving selected wetlands for recreational purposes. Opportunities to integrate the existing fish ponds/wetlands/watercourses with the Technopole development, including the “OU(I&T)” zones, would be explored at the detailed design stage during the preparation of the PDB.

38. Mr Vic C.H. Yau, D of NMCO, DEVB supplemented that EEB was carrying out a study on Agricultural Priority Areas, which intended to identify quality agricultural land for active agricultural use in the long run. EEB had also established the Agricultural Park Phase 1 to promote agriculture, while the Government sought to develop selected parts of the New Territories.

Brownfield Operations and MSBs

39. In response to a Member’s question on whether any land was reserved within the STLMC area for brownfield operations or construction of MSBs, Mr K.W. Ng, AD/NT, PlanD said that three sites with a total area of about 17 ha in Planning Areas 13B, 14A and 21 of the STT OZP were zoned “OU(LSW)” intended primarily for logistics, storage and workshop uses. The sites could be used for the development of MSBs for modern industries, which might also accommodate brownfield operations affected by government projects. Open-air operations were also allowed to suit the operational needs of various logistics, storage and workshop uses. One of the “OU(LSW)” sites was located at Planning Area 13B which would be in close proximity to the future NM Highway, hence the possible traffic impact created by the brownfield operation on the surrounding neighbourhood in the San Tin Town Centre could be minimised. Besides, with future implementation of the “East-in East-out, West-in West-out” cross-boundary strategy by Shenzhen, it was anticipated that the demand for logistic and port back-up uses in the STLMC area would be decreased. DEVB would continue to provide assistance to the affected business operators through a number of measures, such as providing one-stop facilitation services to help

affected operators to relocate their brownfield business.

Public Engagement (PE)

40. In response to a Member's question on whether any public consultation had been conducted to inform the affected stakeholders on the Technopole proposal, Mr K.W. Ng, AD/NT, PlanD, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, explained that in the PE for the Hong Kong 2030+ undertaken from October 2016 to April 2017, NTN NT (including the San Tin/ Lok Ma Chau Development Node) was proposed as one of the two strategic growth areas for meeting the long-term outstanding land requirement in the territory. The NMDS released in October 2021 put forward the proposal to develop the NM into an international I&T centre and called for planning of the Technopole. Hence, CEDD and PlanD commissioned the Investigation Study with a view to formulating a Recommended Outline Development Plan (RODP) for the STLMC area. A two-month PE was conducted from June to August 2023 to consult on the RODP prepared under the Investigation Study. In December 2023, the EIA Report was submitted for approval under the EIAO, and it went through the statutory procedures, including exhibition of the EIA Report for public inspection from February to March 2024. In the plan-making process, the three draft OZPs were also exhibited for two months for public inspection under section 5 of the Town Planning Ordinance from March to May 2024.

Others

41. In response to a Member enquiry on whether the design of the proposed RCHE in Ngau Tam Mei (i.e. Amendment Item B in the draft Ngau Tam Mei OZP) was considered acceptable, Mr K.W. NG, AD/NT, PlanD said that the proposed RCHE development mentioned by a representer was the subject of a s.12A application No. Y/YL-NTM/9 agreed by the Rural and New Town Planning Committee of the Board on 8.12.2023. According to the indicative scheme submitted by the applicant, some of the ancillary facilities of the RCHE would be situated at a height over 24m of the future development. The future operator would be obliged to seek approval from the Director of Social Welfare for the RCHE licensing.

42. A Member asked Mr Yuen Sing Hank (the representative of R1463 and R1492 of STT OZP) if the comments/proposals were given based on the development aspiration of the concerned land owners. Mr Yuen Sing Hank replied that while R1492 was the owner of various lots in San Tin, they had reviewed the overall planning of the STLMC area in coming up with comments and proposals. He reiterated his agreement to the principles of the Technopole development. Their proposals aimed to optimise the proposed zonings to increase the total area designated as “OU(I&T)” zone by 3.2 ha, with a view to delivering greater economic benefits and returns. At the invitation of the Chairperson, Mr K.W. Ng, AD/NT, PlanD, with the aid of a PowerPoint slide, supplemented that the concerned land lots mentioned by Mr Yuen Sing Hank were within the “O” zone for MPLV Egretty. The representers’ proposal to rezone the concerned area from “O” to “OU(I&T)” was not agreed by PlanD as it would adversely affect the MPLV Egretty.

[Dr Venus Y.H. Lun, Professor Bernadette W.S. Tsui, Messrs Daniel K.S. Lau, Rocky L.K. Poon and Simon Y.S. Wong left this session of the meeting during the Q&A session.]

43. As Members did not have further question to raise on the representers and/or their representatives, the Chairperson said that the Q&A session for the morning session of the hearing on the day was completed. She thanked the representers, their representatives and the government representatives (including the consultants) for attending the meeting. The Board would deliberate on the representations in closed meeting after all the hearing sessions were completed and would inform the representers of the Board’s decision in due course. The representers, their representatives and the government representatives (including the consultants) left the meeting at this point.

44. The Chairperson said that the meeting would adjourn for lunch break.

[The meeting was adjourned for lunch break at 2:00 p.m.]

45. The meeting was resumed at 2:30 p.m.

46. The following Members and the Secretary were present in the afternoon session:

Permanent Secretary for Development
(Planning and Lands)
Ms Doris P.L. Ho

Chairperson

Mr Stephen L.H. Liu

Vice-chairperson

Mr K.W. Leung

Professor Jonathan W.C. Wong

Professor Roger C.K. Chan

Mr Ben S.S. Lui

Mr Timothy K.W. Ma

Professor Bernadette W.S. Tsui

Ms Kelly Y.S. Chan

Mr Daniel K.W. Chung

Mr Rocky L.K. Poon

Professor B.S. Tang

Mr Simon Y.S. Wong

Mr Derrick S.M. Yip

Chief Traffic Engineer/New Territories West
Transport Department
Ms Carrie K.Y. Leung

Assistant Director (Environmental Assessment)
Environmental Protection Department
Mr Terence S.W. Tsang

Director of Planning
Mr Ivan M.K. Chung

Presentation and Question Sessions

47. The following government representatives (including the consultants), representers and their representatives were invited to the meeting at this point:

Government Representatives

DEVB

Mr Vic C.H. Yau - D of NMCO
Mr Eric T.H. Chung - AS(NM)

EEB

Mr Desmond C.C. Wu - PAS(NC)
Mr Simon S.W. Wang - PM(CNM)

ITIB

Miss Kristy H.L. Chan - SMSO(ITI)

PlanD

Mr K.W. Ng - AD/NT
Mr Kimson P.H. Chiu - STP/FSYLE
Mr Timothy Y.M. Lui - STP/SR
Ms Karen K.Y. Chan] TP/FSYLE
Mr Louis H.W. Cheung]

CEDD

Mr Tony K.L. Cheung - PM(N)
Mr Gavin C.P. Wong - CE/N
Ms Teresa O.S. Ma - SE/N

AFCD

Mr Simon K.F. Chan - AD(C)
Mr Boris S.P. Kwan - SNCO(N)

Mr Eric K.Y. Liu - SCO(TS)
Dr William H.L. Siu - FO(TS)

AECOM

Mr Martin M.T. Law]
Ms Becky S.M. Wong]
Ms H.L. Li]
Ms Anna Y.M. Chung] Consultants
Ms Avery T.Y. Lam]
Mr K.B. Yim]
Ms Hazel W.N. Yun]
Mr C.L. Yuen]

Representers and Representers' Representatives

R136 of STT OZP and R36 of MP OZP – Wong Lai Man Isabel

Ms Wong Lai Man Isabel - Representer

R467 of STT OZP and R364 of MP OZP – Sit Long Ping

Mr Sit Long Ping - Representer

R482 of STT OZP and R902 of MP OZP – Yeung Ting

Ms Yeung Ting - Representer

R870 of STT OZP and R675 of MP OZP – Lui Ka Yee Carie

Ms Lui Ka Yee Carie - Representer

R875 of STT OZP and R767 of MP OZP – 郭子祈

Mr Kwok Tsz Ki - Representer

R885 of STT OZP and R991 of MP OZP – 劉善鵬

Mr Lau Jin Pan - Representer

R909 of STT OZP and R679 of MP OZP – Chiu Sze Man

Ms Chiu Sze Man - Representor

R940 of STT OZP and R710 of MP OZP – 潘惠敏

Ms Cynthia Pon - Representor

R950 of STT OZP and R720 of MP OZP – Yu Cheong Hang

Mr Yu Cheong Hang - Representor

R998 of STT OZP and R783 of MP OZP – 張心玥

Ms Cheung Sum Yuet - Representor

R1032 of STT OZP and R817 of MP OZP – Poon Po Yan Ambrose

Mr Poon Po Yan Ambrose - Representor

R1040 of STT OZP and R825 of MP OZP – Ng Ka Lun

Mr Ng Ka Lun - Representor

R1054 of STT OZP and R838 of MP OZP – 周翠珊

Ms Chow Tsui Shan - Representor

Mr 梁雋謙 - Representor's Representative

R1108 of STT OZP and R864 of MP OZP – 劉泳欣

Mr Chan Long Hei - Representor's Representative

R1134 of STT OZP and R1024 of MP OZP – Lam Kwo Wai

Ms Lam Kwo Wai - Representor

R1164 of STT OZP and R1080 of MP OZP – Au Wing Hay

Ms Au Wing Hay - Representor

R1169 of STT OZP and R1083 of MP OZP – Yeung Yat Fai

Mr Yeung Yat Fai - Representor

R1174 of STT OZP and R1089 of MP OZP – Tsang Ling Hei

Mr Tsang Ling Hei - Representor
Ms Chow Oi Chuen - Representor's Representative

R1184 of STT OZP – 黃遂心

Ms Wong Sui Xin Daphne - Representor

R1326 of STT OZP, R10 of MP OZP and R2 of NTM OZP – Fung Kam Lam

Mr Fung Kam Lam - Representor

R1332 of STT OZP – Ng Cheuk Nam Daniel

Mr Ng Cheuk Nam Daniel - Representor

R1390 of STT OZP – 周佩詩

Ms Chau Pui Sze - Representor

R1401 of STT OZP and R13 of MP OZP – 孫敏瓊

Mr Chung Yun Tak - Representor's Representative

R1420 of STT OZP – Cheng Tak Yiu Eureka

Mr Cheng Tak Yiu Eureka - Representor

R1425 of STT OZP – Wong Chi Chun

Mr Wong Chi Chun - Representor

R1429 of STT OZP – Wong Lun Cheong

Mr Wong Lun Cheong - Representor

R1438 of STT OZP and R772 of MP OZP – 唐靖雅

Ms Tong Ching Nga - Representor

R1439 of STT OZP and R14 of MP OZP – Woo Ming Chuan

Ms Woo Ming Chuan - Representor

R1448 of STT OZP – 鄭旭洋

Mr Zheng Yuk Yeung Laughing - Representor

R1479 of STT OZP – Cheuk Fung Lau

Mr Lau Cheuk Fung - Representor

R1484 of STT OZP and R1099 of MP OZP – Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden Corporation

Mr Nip Hin Ming Tony - Representor's Representative

R1536 of STT OZP – John McCorkindale

Mr John McCorkindale - Representor

R1542 of STT OZP – 蔡秀青 Choi Sau Ching

Ms Choi Sau Ching - Representor

48. The Chairperson extended a welcome and invited the representors and/or their representatives to elaborate on their representations.

R870 of STT OZP and R675 of MP OZP – Lui Ka Yee Carie

49. Ms Lui Ka Yee Carie made the following main points:

- (a) she had been living near the wetland area for more than 20 years and she opposed the development of the Technopole, in particular the filling of about 90 ha of fish ponds/wetlands;
- (b) she noticed that fewer migratory birds and fireflies were observed in the city in recent years as increasing developments and human activities had driven them away, taking up their living environment. The development of the Technopole would even worsen the situation;

- (c) it was learnt last year that the Government intended to enlarge the development area of the Technopole by filling of 90 ha of fish ponds and wetlands, and about 250 ha of WBA and WCA were rezoned to make way for I&T developments of the Technopole. However, the EIA was conducted without fully taking into account such increase in the development area of the Technopole and the approved EIA Report was considered not up-to-standard with numerous editorial errors and even the avifauna species were wrongly identified;
- (d) the encroachment of the development of the Technopole onto the WBA and WCA in the Deep Bay Area was not justified. Those wetlands were ecologically valuable and provided crucial natural habitats for migratory birds, such as Baer's Pochard (*Aythya baeri*) (青頭潛鴨) and Black-faced Spoonbill (*Platalea minor*) (黑臉琵鷺), and should be preserved as far as possible; and
- (e) it was doubted if it was genuinely impossible to leave those WCA/WBA aside in taking forward the Technopole development and she urged the Board to reconsider the proposal in this regard.

[Ms Kelly Y.S. Chan joined this session of the meeting during the presentation of R870 of STT OZP and R675 of MP OZP.]

R875 of STT OZP and R767 of MP OZP – 郭子祈

50. With the aid of a visualiser, Mr Kwok Tsz Ki made the following main points:
- (a) he was a local nature documentary producer, an educator on nature conservation and a villager of Ha Wan Tsuen, and he studied biology and environmental science. He opposed the development of the Technopole;
 - (b) he disagreed with Government's responses in the earlier session, claiming that the ecological value of the dried ponds was low. He showed some pictures of different kinds of birds he previously observed at the dried ponds,

pond banks and surrounding areas and considered that those areas were also important in providing habitats for migratory birds and other avifauna species;

- (c) while the EIA Report approved by the DEP might have complied with all the statutory standards and requirements, its credibility was in question given the numerous editorial errors. The findings of the EIA were also not comprehensive, particularly in underestimating the ecological and environmental impacts on the birds and wildlife species that depended on the existing fish ponds and agricultural land for habitats and food sources arising from the development of the Technopole;
- (d) he disagreed with the argument that it was costly to provide wider wildlife corridors, i.e. beyond 10m as proposed, for protecting the Eurasian Otters (*Lutra lutra*) (歐亞水獺). The ecological and environmental impacts arising from the proposed development and the mitigation measures required should be factored into the development costs; and
- (e) there should be appropriate mitigation measures for nature conservation. As for the case for Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphin (*Sousa chinensis*) (中華白海豚), even with designated sea area intended for their habitation, they were less commonly found in Hong Kong nowadays.

R1438 of STT OZP and R772 of MP OZP – 唐靖雅

51. With the aid of a visualiser, Ms Tong Ching Nga made the following main points:

- (a) while acknowledging the potential economic benefits of I&T development, she opposed the development of the Technopole as it would lead to the loss of about 90ha of wetlands, and at this juncture, there were inadequate details regarding its implementation and operational framework for the future I&T industry and its adverse impacts;

- (b) the rationale for and credibility of the increased development area and density of the Technopole was questionable, as no relevant technical assessments, including EIA, had been conducted to support such intensification and the feasibility of the compensation/mitigation proposals;
- (c) the effectiveness of the proposed 35m-wide NBA along the western boundary of the Technopole facing the proposed SPS WCP was questionable. The area would be susceptible to potential light and air pollution, adverse sewage and solid waste impacts and potential risk of chemical leakage from the future I&T uses. The area was also prone to flooding and the future I&T developments might worsen the situation;
- (d) with reference to the guidelines promulgated by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency, a minimum of 10m-wide buffer on both sides of a watercourse was necessary to protect otters from disturbance, as opposed to the 3m-wide buffer proposed by CEDD for the wildlife corridors at the Technopole. There were also concerns about the effectiveness of the proposed wildlife corridors for Eurasian Otters (*Lutra lutra*) (歐亞水獺) in between I&T development sites, given the potential adverse ecological and environmental impacts arising from different aspects such as noise, air, waste, etc. from the I&T developments and human activities;
- (e) noting low altitude economy, which involved the use of manned and unmanned aircraft for goods transport, had gained widespread attention in recent years, such industry in the Technopole would negatively affect the flight path of birds including the ardeids. The proposed 70m-wide NBA in the eastern part of Planning Area 19C for preserving birds' flight path was also considered ineffective; and
- (f) without details on the PDB at this stage and a comprehensive EIA covering the entire development of the Technopole, approving the concerned OZPs at this juncture was considered premature and could lead to irreversible environmental consequences.

[Mr Simon Y.S. Wong joined the meeting during the presentation of R1438 of STT OZP and R772 of MP OZP.]

R1439 of STT OZP and R14 of MP OZP – Woo Ming Chuan

52. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Ms Woo Ming Chuan made the following main points:

- (a) she studied environmental science and ecology. She opposed the filling of wetlands for development of the Technopole and doubted whether the Technopole could help Hong Kong leverage its unique role in the GBA and whether wetlands should be compromised for I&T development;
- (b) to effectively leverage the unique role of the Technopole in the GBA in taking forward the national strategy of ‘Outline of 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development of the PRC and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035’ (the National 14th Five-Year Plan), instead of competing with Shenzhen and other cities in the GBA, Hong Kong should identify and utilise its own strengths and advantages, i.e. the natural resources;
- (c) while noting that a comparable amount of land for I&T development was proposed in the Technopole to match with the I&T developments in Shenzhen (with a total area of about 300 ha), I&T land of such area was considered way smaller than those in other GBA cities as revealed by a news article on development of the Loop. Together with the high land price and high living costs of Hong Kong, it was considered pointless to blindly compete with other GBA cities in terms of the land size for promoting I&T development;
- (d) the land use control imposed for the proposed “OU(I&T)” zones was too loose comparing with that of the similar zonings for areas in the Loop and Hong Kong Science Park and there was concern that it would be difficult to

regulate the land uses in the Technopole in the future. For instance, some of the Column 1 uses such as those related to Mass Transit Railway and ‘Off-course Betting Centre’ were considered irrelevant to I&T development;

- (e) with reference to some aerial photos of the area, the vast area of wetlands in Mai Po of high ecological and environmental value should be considered an advantage of Hong Kong. Noting that the Guangdong Shenzhen Futian Mangrove Wetlands had been included as part of the Ramsar Site in 2022, which was ecologically linked with the Ramsar Site, both formed integral parts of the Deep Bay ecosystem. The wetlands, mudflats and fish ponds in the vicinity of the Ramsar Site should be preserved as far as possible, and any possible adverse ecological impacts on the area should be avoided;
- (f) the development of the Technopole would encroach onto areas designated as WCA and WBA, causing adverse impacts on the areas, and should be avoided;
- (g) the EIA Report was not scientifically sound as detailed design and budget of the wetland compensation strategy were missing, leaving the feasibility of such compensation uncertain. Approving the concerned OZPs based on the EIA Report at this juncture was considered inappropriate;
- (h) the development of the Technopole was not environmentally friendly without any nature-based solutions proposed, which was not in tandem with the national and global trend of promoting ecological civilisation and co-existence with the Mother Nature. Without respecting the natural environment, the I&T enterprises interested in establishing a foothold in the Technopole would have reservation as they might have the social obligations to fulfil environment, social and governance (ESG), corporate social responsibility (CSR), and other similar requirements; and
- (i) she urged the Board to adhere to its obligation of promoting “health, safety, convenience and general welfare of the community” as laid down in the Town Planning Ordinance.

[Professor Bernadette W.S. Tsui joined this session of the meeting during the presentation of R1439 of STT OZP and R14 of MP OZP.]

R909 of STT OZP and R679 of MP OZP – Chiu Sze Man

53. With the aid of a visualiser and a video clip, Ms Chiu Sze Man made the following main points:

- (a) while it was noted that the Technopole development was already laid down in the planning of the NM in 2021, it could not be understood why the development area of the Technopole was enlarged in 2023 with extensive filling of fish ponds;
- (b) she questioned the reason behind the increased development area and density of the development of the Technopole and opined that abandoned farmlands and existing brownfield sites in the rural areas, and vacant industrial and commercial buildings in urban areas could be utilised for I&T developments, instead of compromising the natural resources such as wetlands and fish ponds;
- (c) it was not understood why there was urgency for I&T developments for youngsters in Hong Kong I&T developments locating in urban areas that were accessible and well-connected with the existing community would be more attractive for young talents;
- (d) during her visit to San Tin, she observed many different species of birds and insects. The traditional culture, the people and the efforts they made for their livelihood were also treasurable. The Technopole development would not only affect the wildlife but also the local people currently living and working in San Tin; and
- (e) the unique and rich cultural and natural resources of Hong Kong should be preserved as far as possible for the future generations.

R940 of STT OZP and R710 of MP OZP – 潘惠敏

54. Ms Cynthia Pon made the following main points:

- (a) by quoting a book related to nature conservation and the rich biodiversity resources of Hong Kong, she highlighted the positive experience of nature conservation in Hong Kong, especially wetland conservation, which was considered a role model for conservations works in Taiwan as mentioned in the book. In fact, conservation works in Taiwan had been progressing and had reached an international level in recent years;
- (b) with abundant migratory birds and other wildlife species currently residing in area proposed for the Technopole, human activities and developments should not override the rights of other species in the environment. All species should have their own dignity and be respected;
- (c) she disagreed with the concept of isolating wildlife species with human beings through imposing ecological corridors as both human beings and wildlife species were part of the environment and reliant upon each other; and
- (d) instead of adopting an anthropocentric point of view and analysing problems just from the economic perspective, Mother Nature should be respected and preserved to for Hong Kong people's home and future generations.

R950 of STT OZP and R720 of MP OZP – Yu Cheong Hang

55. Mr Yu Cheong Hang made the following main points:

- (a) he was an educator on nature conservation and he opposed the development of the Technopole, especially the disruption of the existing wetlands and fish ponds which had been providing important natural habitats to a number of wildlife species;

- (b) the EIA Report was considered not up to standard. The methodology adopted was unclear and not scientifically sound, and the ecological mitigation and enhancement measures for preserving the biodiversity and natural resources proposed were questionable. For instance, the adequacy of the 300m-wide birds' flight corridor proposed was not supported by quantitative analysis. The EIA Report was not credible as there was a lack of sufficient information on all the relevant species in the area;
- (c) while the EIA Report recommended translocation for preserving flora and fauna species of conservation importance that were with low mobility (e.g. some amphibian and freshwater species, and roosting, breeding and/or nesting behaviour of some avifauna species such as Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) (翠鳥) and Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius*) (金眶鸻)), it did not clearly define low mobility. There was no sufficient information to prove the effectiveness of the proposed translocation and mitigation/compensatory measures for the loss of wetland habitats; and
- (d) instead of competing with Shenzhen on I&T developments that were supported with plenty of resources and incentives provided by the local government, Hong Kong should play its unique role by nurturing more young talents to work in the I&T industries in the other cities in the GBA. On the other hand, Hong Kong should focus more on supporting the local traditional agriculture and aquaculture and creating a sustainable development with wetland conservation through I&T initiatives.

R998 of STT OZP and R783 of MP OZP – 張心玥

56. With the aid of a visualiser, Ms Cheung Sum Yuet made the following main points:

- (a) she was a policy researcher in social innovation. She opposed the development of the Technopole and queried about whether the development

of the Technopole could effectively promote I&T development in Hong Kong;

- (b) the Technopole was considered unjustified as its development scale was not comparable with Shenzhen's I&T Zone and its development was undertaken at the expense of the existing internationally renowned wetland;
- (c) the Government put too much emphasis on I&T development. With the lack of funding and resources for the development of other scientific research, technological breakthroughs would indeed be hindered and fewer opportunities could be provided to attract talents to stay in Hong Kong;
- (d) according to the Audit Commission's 2019 statistics on the Hong Kong Productivity Council (the Council), a small amount of I&T projects applied for patents and amongst which, only 3% produced revenue of about \$1.5 million for the Council, while the annual expense of the Council was more than \$600 million. The figures highlighted the imbalance between investment and return in I&T development;
- (e) the overall management of I&T development in Hong Kong was considered poor. Apart from providing land and funding support, the Government should also establish an effective I&T monitoring system and take the lead in conducting more research on market demand and macro-economic development trend, and should not solely rely on the market to decide the trend of industrial developments in Hong Kong;
- (f) according to the recently published annual environmental report of Google, the development of Artificial Intelligence within I&T sector had increased the company's carbon emission by 13%; I&T development would generate a large amount of carbon emissions during the research and development (R&D) and manufacturing stages, which might not be favourable for attracting investment given the tightened sustainability auditing requirements and carbon emission targets in recent years;

- (g) given the abundance of sites with high ecological and special scientific values, as well as strong investment support for ESG development, it would be viable to promote nature-based solutions in Hong Kong by preserving the natural environment and leveraging the abundant natural resources to attract talents and investors to invest in ESG instead of I&T development. It was also considered suitable to explore the possibility of establishing a carbon exchange market in Hong Kong for achieving the carbon neutrality target and for assisting other GBA cities to meet their carbon emission targets; and
- (h) existing urban areas like Kwun Tong and Kai Tak could offer ample vacant spaces for I&T development. The second core business district, with its positioning and the presence of numerous smart, green and resilient initiatives, was also considered favourable for I&T development.

R1040 of STT OZP and R825 of MP OZP – Ng Ka Lun

57. With the aid of a visualiser, Mr Ng Ka Lun made the following main points;

- (a) he was an environmental educator, a birdwatcher and a family member of affected villagers living in Hop Shing Wai (合盛圍);
- (b) the EIA Report was incomplete in that a number of avifauna species, which were neither waterbirds nor residential generalist species but with high ecological value, such as Black-browed Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus bistrigiceps*) (黑眉葦鶯), Yellow-breasted Bunting (*Emberiza aureola*) (黃胸鵪), Citrine Wagtail (*Motacilla citreola*) (黃頭鵪鶉), Eastern Imperial Eagle (*Aquila heliaca*) (白肩雕), etc., were missing from the EIA Report, rendering its findings incomprehensive and incredible;
- (c) the regular appearance of Red-throated Pipit (*Anthus cervinus*) (紅喉鵪), a kind of migratory bird, in San Tin area since 2022 demonstrated that birds intended to stay in their usual habitats, and the development of the

Technopole would have adverse impact on them. There was also concern about the close proximity of the future I&T developments to the Ramsar Site;

- (d) the development of the Technopole did not respect the existing village environment. Hop Shing Wai, located at the western end of the Technopole and adjacent to the Ramsar Site, would be bisected by the STT OZP boundary into two portions, with the eastern portion included in the Technopole, but not the western portion;
- (e) for the local villagers who had been living in Hop Shing Wai for more than 50 years, only one meeting had been conducted in San Tin last year since the announcement of the development of the Technopole. Before that, no local consultation or engagement had been conducted to gauge their views. As Hop Shing Wai was not a recognised village and without a village office or village representative for gathering information, villagers could not obtain sufficient information, such as details of land resumption plan and development programme. As such, they had no channel to express their views. Public engagement was insufficient. The development of the Technopole would destroy the social network of Hop Shing Wai built up over the past few decades; and
- (f) local villagers also expressed concerns on the potential increase in flooding due to the filling of fish ponds, the potential noise and air impacts, as well as security issue as more outsiders would come into the village during the construction stage.

R1420 of STT OZP – Cheng Tak Yiu Eureka

58. With the aid of a visualiser and some photos, Mr Cheng Tak Yiu Eureka made the following main points:

- (a) he was a town planner and an estate surveyor. He opposed the development of the Technopole in general;

- (b) while he supported I&T development in Hong Kong, the BHR and development intensity of the “OU(I&T)” zones were considered unjustified. There was insufficient information to ascertain the actual amount of land required for future I&T development, and such information was still subject to the consultancy study to be completed by ITIB by the end of this year. With the permissible BHs of over 100mPD extending up to 170mPD, the floodgate of high-rise developments, which could damage the appropriate spatial form and pattern required by a successful and functional I&T development such as Hong Kong Science Park, might be opened. Market research should be conducted in parallel to support the detailed planning of development;
- (c) there might be potential mismatch in the demand and supply of labour due to the 70:30 public to private housing ratio. The I&T talents would unlikely be eligible for public housing, while suitable employment opportunities would not be available to those eligible for public housing. The increased population would also bring about extra burden to the existing transport infrastructures; and
- (d) there was inadequate infrastructure, especially mass transit, to support the development of the Technopole as the proposed NOL Main Line and San Tin Station would only be in place in 2034.

R1032 of STT OZP and R817 of MP OZP – Poon Po Yan Ambrose

59. Mr Poon Po Yan Ambrose made the following main points:

- (a) the development of the Technopole would affect the internationally-recognised Ramsar Site and the nearby protection and buffer zones, which did not align with the national and regional policies on ecological security;
- (b) existing fish ponds in the Technopole provided crucial habitats for ecologically important species, such as Black-faced Spoonbill (*Platalea*

minor) (黑臉琵鷺) and Eurasian Otters (*Lutra lutra*) (歐亞水獺), and should not be destroyed;

- (c) from his bird-watching experience in San Tin earlier this year, more than 40 types of birds, including the endangered Black-faced Spoonbill (*Platalea minor*) (黑臉琵鷺), could be observed within just two hours. The rich ecological resources in the area should not be harmed;
- (d) the existing fish ponds, wetlands and other natural resources, which were considered essential for promoting nature-based solution, should be preserved as far as possible with a view to combating climate change and extreme weather. Destroying them would cause irreversible impacts on the environment and climate. To follow the global trend, the Government should invest more in developments that were climate-resilient instead of sacrificing the existing natural environment;
- (e) the EIA Report was not up to standard with numerous editorial errors. The process of the EIA lacked transparency and the credibility of its findings was questionable; and
- (f) he concurred with the views expressed by Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden Corporation in the morning session regarding the preservation of Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphin (*Sousa chinensis*) (中華白海豚). The ineffective compensation and remedial measures for Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphin diminished the Government's credibility in respect of protection of the natural environment and ecological resources.

[Professor Jonathan W.C. Wong left this session of the meeting at this point.]

R1054 of STT OZP and R838 of MP OZP – 周翠珊

60. With aid of a visualiser, Ms Chow Tsui Shan and Mr 梁雋謙, son of Ms Chow, made the following main points:

- (a) they opposed the development of the Technopole and considered the development unsustainable for future generations, and that the scale of development should be reduced to preserve wetlands and the location of development should be adjusted;
- (b) based on AFCD's information, the species of bird recorded in Hong Kong represented about 35% of the species recorded in the Mainland, amongst which about 65% were related to the wetlands in the San Tin area. Preserving the internationally recognised wetlands in the San Tin area was indeed another good story of Hong Kong to tell;
- (c) during visits to areas in Kam Tin, Nam Sang Wai and San Tin the day before and two weeks ago, more than 30 birds and different types of butterflies and dragonflies could be observed. The Ramsar Site, together with the nearby areas in San Tin with abundant reeds and fish ponds, formed a wider natural habitat for numerous species, including migratory birds, which should be preserved as a whole; and
- (d) while acknowledging that I&T developments were important and might provide many opportunities for the younger generations, the Government ought to place greater emphasis on the environment and conserve the nature, as this would also benefit the younger generations while aligning with the global trend.

R467 of STT OZP and R364 of MP OZP – Sit Long Ping

61. With the aid of some photos, Mr Sit Long Ping made the following main points:

- (a) while he supported the development of the Technopole, he opposed the development encroaching into the WCA where about 150 ha of wetland would be affected;

- (b) the national strategy on wetland protection promulgated in 2022 clearly stated that development should avoid wetland areas as far as possible. There were also other overseas examples with policies emphasising the importance of ‘no-net-loss’ or ‘zero-net-loss’ in wetlands, which were different from the approach of ‘develop first, compensate later’ adopted in the current development proposal; and
- (c) more than 90% of the representations objected to the STT OZP. The public concerns on the potential adverse impacts of the Technopole development as well as the concerns and adverse comments raised by green groups on the EIA Report had not been suitably addressed.

R1108 of STT OZP and R864 of MP OZP – 劉泳欣

62. With the aid of a video clip, Mr Chan Long Hei made the following main points:

- (a) he was a student representative of the Ecology and Biodiversity Society of The University of Hong Kong. He had reservation on the development of the Technopole and opposed the development encroaching into the WCA where about 150 ha of wetland would be affected;
- (b) the San Tin area was rich in biodiversity in terms of bird species, which was considered ecologically and scientifically important. According to the statistics by HKBWS, at least 205 bird species, including a number of globally threatened and protected species, had been recorded in the wetland areas of San Tin. Notably, during his visit to the Deep Bay Area in December last year, a number of bird species such as Greater Spotted Eagle (*Clanga clanga*) (烏鶡) and Zitting cisticola (*Cisticola juncidis*) (棕扇尾鶯) were observed. Over 20 Black-faced Spoonbills (*Platalea minor*) (黑臉琵鶯) were also observed within just three hours, demonstrating that the area was an irreplaceable flight path for different avifauna and any development involving erecting buildings in the wetland areas should be carefully planned;

- (c) destroying the existing wetlands would adversely affect the food chain, which might also harmfully impact the entire ecosystem, including human beings. Migratory birds visiting San Tin came from various parts of the world. Disrupting their habitats might have ripple effects on the global ecosystems, and should be avoided. Conserving the biodiversity was crucial to avoid disrupting the delicate balance of the ecosystem;
- (d) developing San Tin for I&T purposes at the expense of the ecologically valuable wetlands was not justified. The EIA Report was incomplete and not up to standard, with numerous errors that undermined its credibility. The absence of a completed wetland management plan to support the establishment of SPS WCP would also weaken the credibility of the current proposal; and
- (e) the wetlands in San Tin, being the largest in the GBA, should be preserved as far as possible. The extent of filling of fish ponds in San Tin and the WCA should be reduced, and the ecological corridors should be suitably designed.

R136 of STT OZP and R36 of MP OZP – Wong Lai Man Isabel

63. Ms Wong Lai Man Isabel made the following main points:

- (a) she opposed the development of the Technopole and considered that sacrificing the ecologically valuable wetlands for the development was short-sighted and unsustainable;
- (b) ESG and sustainable development had been the hot topics in recent years and stakeholders' opinions were crucial under ESG. Noting that a number of stakeholders, including green groups, consultants and university students, raised concerns on the proposed development, especially the proposed filling of fish ponds, wetland conservation and the EIA Report, the Government should suitably respond to those concerns. Pursuing the Technopole development in view of numerous uncertainties at the current stage was questionable; and

- (c) when comparing with other cities in the GBA, even with limited land resources, Hong Kong should better utilise the existing unique natural resources.

R1134 of STT OZP and R1024 of MP OZP – Lam Kwo Wai

64. With the aid of a visualiser, some photos and video clips, Ms Lam Kwo Wai made the following main points:

- (a) she was an environmental management student. She opposed the development of the Technopole;
- (b) referring to PlanD's responses to the major grounds/views of Item E9 opposing the introduction of modernised aquaculture at the expense of the ecological function and value of conventionally managed fish ponds, while PlanD insisted on the effectiveness of the proposed SPS WCP, there was insufficient information on the detailed implementation arrangement of the SPS WCP;
- (c) she disagreed with Government's responses in the earlier session, claiming that the ecological value of the dried ponds was low. She shared that numerous species such as insects and birds could be observed at the fish ponds during her visit with HKBWS to the wetland areas earlier this year;
- (d) traditional fishpond farming was a kind of intangible heritage with great social and cultural values, as well as providing indirect benefits for wildlife species, including the endangered Black-faced Spoonbill (*Platalea minor*) (黑臉琵鷺), when the water level was low during winter, and therefore should be preserved;
- (e) she disagreed with PlanD's responses to the major grounds of Item C4 stating that the ecological function of those abandoned/inactive fish ponds was relatively

low, and shared that a large number of Great Egret (*Ardea alba*) (大白鷺), Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*) (小白鷺) and Black-faced Spoonbill (*Platalea minor*) (黑臉琵鷺) were observed during her visit to the abandoned/inactive fish ponds in San Tin earlier this year. Those ponds, together with gei wai (基圍) and mangroves, also provided food sources to many bird species, including migratory birds;

- (f) according to some literature and published documents, the fish pond habitat in the San Tin area supported at least half the number of waterbirds stayed in the Mai Po Marshes. Filling the fish ponds would cause irreversible impact on the natural environment and result in a reduction of bird usage of the fish ponds; and
- (g) the EIA Report only included 37 types of dragonflies, but there were also other dragonflies species that could be observed in the vicinity of fish ponds, such as Sapphire Flutterer (*Rhyothemis triangularis*) (三角麗翅蜻) and Black-banded Gossamerwing (*Euphaea decorata*) (方帶幽總), which should be included in the EIA Report.

R1164 of STT OZP and R1080 of MP OZP – Au Wing Hay

65. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Ms Au Wing Hay made the following main points:

- (a) by telling a story how one of her friends denied an impractical proposal to renovate her friend's holiday resort, she metamorphosed the possible deterioration of the living condition that the Hong Kong migratory birds would face as a result of the proposed Technopole development;
- (b) she studied geography and philosophy at university, and acquired EIA knowledge from Professor Ng Cho-nam who had made good for Long Valley and Lung Mei Beach; and

- (c) the environmental philosophy by Laozi and Zhuangzi contained a lot of wisdom for nature conservation:
- (i) 《老子·道德經》「人法地，地法天，天法道，道法自然」 meant that human beings should follow the example of all things in the world, discover the “natural” way contained in them through observation and understanding of all things in the world, and use it as the fundamental principle (自然根本) to guide human behaviour;
 - (ii) 《莊子·養生主》「澤雉十步一啄，百步一飲，不斲畜乎樊中。神雖王，不善也」 meant that a pheasant of the marshes had to take 10 steps to pick up a mouthful of food and 30 steps to get a drink, but it would not seek to be nourished in a coop. Though its spirit there would enjoy abundance, it would not think such confinement good for itself;
 - (iii) 《莊子·知北遊》「天地有大美而不言，四時有明法而不議，萬物有成理而不說」 meant that heaven and earth possessed the utmost beauty without saying a thing about it; the four seasons followed the natural laws without discussing about it; everything on earth had its distinctive constitutions without saying a word about it. Like the birds, they would not express how those proposed flight paths were beneficial to them;
 - (iv) 《莊子·齊物論》「物固有所然，物固有所可。無物不然，無物不可」 meant that things had their way of being so and their way to be admissible;
 - (v) 《莊子·秋水》「以道觀之，物無貴賤；以物觀之，自貴而相賤；以俗觀之，貴賤不在己」 meant that from the perspective of nature, all things in the world were equal; from the perspective of an individual, one would perceive the status of oneself the most noble while others

were inferior; from a secular point of view, whether one was noble or inferior was up to others and not up to oneself. Just like that only four indicator species were assessed in the EIA report, while others were not;

- (vi) 《莊子•應帝王篇》「南海之帝為儵，北海之帝為忽，中央之帝為渾沌。儵與忽時相與遇於渾沌之地，渾沌待之甚善。儵與忽謀報渾沌之德，曰：「人皆有七竅，以視聽食息，此獨無有，嘗試鑿之。」日鑿一竅，七日而渾沌死」 was to say, if it violated the original, it might not be a good thing for the thing itself. Everything in the world actually had its own nature. So now, the human beings created problems and the nature fought back, as evidenced by the 500-year torrential rain;
- (vii) 《莊子•人間世》「人皆知有用之用，而莫知無用之用也」 was related to pond dragging (鏟塘). People who treasured only things with practical value often ignored their potential greater value. Those things considered “useless” might have intrinsic value beyond practicality. Therefore, those things being considered “useless” might be of exceptional values if they were properly used; and
- (viii) 《老子•道德經》「以輔萬物之自然，而不敢為」 meant that a true saint would not try to change the nature nor did whatever he would like to do, because things resulting from unnatural origins would harm the nature of all things. Hence, the Board should consider if the EIA Report was good enough for its purpose, and if not, it should be better prepared to convince the public.

[Mr Stephen L.H. Liu left this session of the meeting at this point]

[The meeting was adjourned for a 15-minute break.]

R1390 of STT OZP – 周佩詩

66. With the aid of some photos and voice clips, Ms Chau Pui Sze made the following main points:

- (a) with reference to some photographs taken with her family in Ma Tso Lung, she introduced the beautiful fish ponds, a small eco-park, a blue house and a mural with a poem 「暴雨狂風襲陌阡，家園水淹可撐船，經年謀劃無良策，有待高人助庶民」 written in 2021, which seemed to reflect the future of the fish ponds in the area;
- (b) if the fish ponds in San Tin were filled, the status of the Ramsar Site would no longer be maintained. In 2003, the WWF of Hong Kong and Singapore, AFCD and the National Parks Board of Singapore signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the World Migratory Bird Day that the parties jointly worked on protecting the wetlands for the East Asian-Australasian Flyway of the migratory birds. When many overseas conservation organisations wanted to learn from Hong Kong's experiences in wetland conservation, Hong Kong should not start destroying its own wetlands;
- (c) Hong Kong already had Cyberport and Hong Kong Science Park. It was doubtful if there was a need for another I&T park, and there was concern that the Technopole might end up as another residential development; and
- (d) she played some voice clips of her friends who urged for respecting and preserving the nature for future generations. While not opposing the development of the Technopole, she asked if such large-scale development could be planned in other locations.

R1174 of STT OZP and R1089 of MP OZP – Tsang Ling Hei

67. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Tsang Ling Hei and Ms Chow Oi Chuen made the following main points:

- (a) it was questioned what benefits the Technopole development could bring and why an unreasonable EIA could have been approved. The content of the EIA Report was unqualified and the procedures to approve it were unjust;
- (b) as shown in a flowchart for a normal EIA process, there should be two public consultations, one for 14 days when a project profile was submitted and the other for 30 days when the applicant submitted the EIA Report. However, when the public was first consulted on the project profile, it actually covered a smaller project area. Subsequently, when the public was consulted on the EIA Report, it covered a larger project area with 90 ha of pond filling added. While the EIA process should be restarted given the enlargement of the project area, EPD considered that the project profile covering a smaller project area was still valid and there was no need to restart the entire EIA process. EPD's decision had misled the Board and the public consultation for the Technopole was incomplete.
- (c) the proposal for the filing of about 90 ha of fish ponds was added in May 2023 when the EIA Report was halfway through. However, according to the schedule of ecological surveys, most of the surveys undertaken based on a smaller project area had already been completed by that time. Members might wish to question whether surveys had been taken for the additional project area or whether third party data were adopted;
- (d) for the private development at Fung Lok Wai, the study area for EIA covered the development area and compensation wetland, and a buffer area of 500m. For the Technopole, however, EPD responded in other sessions of the meeting that EIA Report did not cover a buffer area of 500m from SPS WCP. If such a buffer area was included in the EIA Report, the study area should cover the area up to Mai Po;
- (e) in May 2023, EPD received a written notice from CEDD for amendment to the scope of the study, and in June 2023, EPD considered that the EIA Study being undertaken by CEDD could still cover the revised scope. However, in

August 2023, some environmental groups unveiled that part of the Technopole overlapped with the Ramsar Site, and in December 2023, DEVB admitted that 0.1 ha of the Technopole would encroach onto the Ramsar Site and such area would be taken out from the Technopole. Members might wish to follow up on whether EPD had noted the overlapping issue when the project area was enlarged in June 2023 and why it was considered unnecessary to re-conduct the EIA;

- (f) EPD explained at the previous session of the meeting on 2.7.2024 that the EIA was required to be retaken if there was a change to the study scope or the nature of designated project. Paragraph 1.5.1.3 of the EIA Report stated that, “some portions of the project area are located within Conservation Area (CA) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Construction involving earthworks and building works within CA and SSSI would fall into the category of Item Q.1, Part I, Schedule 2 of EIAO. However, as the concerned zonings of the CA and SSSI are subject to change before commencement of construction works in the future, areas within the Project boundary that are currently within CA and SSSI zone would no longer be zoned as CA and SSSI respectively. As such, they are not considered as a Schedule 2 DP.” It was unsound to make such a judgement based on some changes in the future and doubtful whether such changes should be considered as a change in the designated project;
- (g) PlanD claimed that the maximum BH designated on the OZP might not be fully realised in the future. If there was foreseeable problem concerning the BH, the Board should recommend lowering the BH at the present stage, rather than expecting that the future I&T enterprises would not optimise the maximum permissible BH. The Board should not give up its gatekeeping function;
- (h) in the absence of the Habitat Creation and Management Plan (HCMP) for SPS WCP, information on the I&T enterprises to be established, the PDB and Master Plans for “OU(I&T)” sites, it was unreasonable to ask the Board to approve the OZPs. The reasons given by PlanD’s representative, such as

that I&T enterprises were not planning and development professionals and imposing too many development restrictions for the I&T sites would diminish the attractiveness of the Technopole, and that the Master Plan for individual I&T sites would be scrutinised internally without involvement of the Board or the public, were unsound and illogical. Such arrangement would indeed bypass the Board and the public in order to proceed with the development in such an ecologically sensitive area unimpeded; and

- (i) while the Government claimed that the conservation cost of about \$2 billion was substantial, it was indeed minimal as compared with the \$48.2 billion for land resumption for the Technopole.

R1184 of STT OZP – 黃遂心

68. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation and video clips, Ms Wong Sui Xin Daphne made the following main points:

- (a) she was an photographer and a film director on ecology. Sharing a pamphlet published by WWF in 2009 for public education on the importance of conservation of fish ponds, cultural heritage and habitats in the Deep Bay Area, she urged everyone there to realise that Hong Kong's nature and biodiversity should continue to be conserved, especially the Deep Bay Area, a wetland of international importance;
- (b) about 60,000 migratory birds visited San Tin every year. Apart from using the mud pits outside Mai Po, they would also visit the fish ponds, even the so-called abandoned fish ponds, in San Tin for food and rest. As shown in the video clips, there were different types of water birds, such as Back-faced Spoonbill (黑臉琵鷺), Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*) (蒼鷺), Great Egret (*Ardea alba*) (大白鷺), Intermediate Egret (*Ardea intermedia*) (中白鷺) and Black-Winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*) (黑翅長腳鷗), etc. resting and foraging in the abandoned fish ponds in San Tin. The ecological functions of those abandoned fish ponds, whether they were in the states of active,

drained-down or dried, should not be ignored as they were where a number of wild animals of conservation value foraged, rested and bred;

- (c) the clumps of reeds next to the fish ponds created another micro-habitat for wildlife, e.g. Yellow-bellied Prinia (*Prinia flaviventris*) (黃腹山鷓鴣), to tweet, courtship and nest in summer. However, there was no record nor assessment on the common birds in open fields (開闊原野常見雀鳥), e.g. Fan-tailed Warbler (*Basileuterus lachrymosus*) (棕扇尾鶯) in the EIA Report. While the EIA mechanism should be a defensive line for ecological and environmental protection within Hong Kong and from national perspective, the authenticity and accuracy of the EIA Report were questionable;
- (d) she filmed a documentary about Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphin (*Sousa chinensis*) (中華白海豚) in Hong Kong a few years ago. After the completion of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HKZMB) and during the construction of Three Runway System, it was obvious that there were no Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphins habituating at the Marine Parks, which were meant for mitigating the impacts on the Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphins. The total number of Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphin in Hong Kong continued to decline and their range of activities had also been shrinking. The effectiveness of the mitigation measures or wetland compensation proposed in the EIA Report was uncertain;
- (e) there were other ongoing development projects in the NM. If the EIA for those projects were conducted separately and the development intensities of those developments could be intensified at any time, it was doubted whether the EIA mechanism could still function to protect the environment;
- (f) with climate changes and increased chances of flooding, it was questioned why the Government insisted on developing the Technopole in the low-lying area of San Tin, thereby destroying the wetland system in the Deep Bay Area; and

- (g) Hong Kong was a unique place where one could visit wetlands or country parks within an hour's drive, and many foreigners visited Hong Kong for eco-tourism. However, the Government was planning to destroy the internationally important wetlands in San Tin. The proposed development of the Technopole was unsustainable, and she wished the Government to revisit the development plan, especially considering that the EIA Report was neither qualified nor acceptable.

R1326 of STT OZP, R10 of MP OZP and R2 of NTM OZP – Fung Kam Lam

69. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Fung Kam Lam made the following main points:

- (a) it was uncertain why part of the MPV Egretty zoned “SSSI” would be rezoned as mentioned in the EIA Report, but was not included in the OZP amendment;
- (b) the Wuhan Declaration of the 14th Meeting of Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetland stated that “strong will and practical actions were needed to promote the conservation, restoration, management, wise and sustainable use of all types of wetlands and to prevent and/or to mitigate the systematic risks arising from the continuing loss and degradation of wetlands worldwide.”. However, there was currently no legislation or regulation to oversee and manage the wetland conservation parks;
- (c) according to footnote (2) of the Paper, “the final recommendations of the WCP Study were expected to be submitted to the Government in the first half of 2024 upon further analysis and consideration of the public’s opinions. The Government would take into account the outcomes of the study to take forward the establishment of the SPS WCP, including conducting further detailed studies on the investigation, design and construction in the next stage, and review in due course the study work of the other proposed WCPs, with

reference to the experience of planning and establishing the SPS WCP.”. However, it was uncertain if the details of the SPS WCP were ready by then;

- (d) unlike the OZP covering Fanling Golf Course (i.e. Fanling/Sheung Shui Extension Area OZP), details on the development control for the sub-areas had not been specified in the Notes or ES of the STT OZP;
- (e) no EIA was required for the development of the proposed SPS WCP as the WCP was not listed in Schedule 2 of the EIAO. It was doubted why EIA was required for the previous “CA” zoning, but not for “Other Specified Use” annotated “Wetland Conservation Park” (“OU(WCP)”) as currently rezoned on the MP OZP;
- (f) the “OU(WCP)” zone was not mentioned in paragraphs (8) and (9) of the covering Notes of the MP OZP. It was uncertain whether the provision of bus/public light bus stop or lay-by, cycle track, taxi rank, etc. would be always permitted on the “OU(WCP)” zone and whether no planning permission would be required for installation of lamp poles; and
- (g) the exception clause for any filling of land/pond or excavation of land for “CA” zone was different from that for “OU(WCP)” zone. For “CA” zone, it was stated as “except public works co-ordinated or implemented by Government, and maintenance, repair or rebuilding works” whereas in “OU(WCP)” zone, it was stated as “except all works as required/co-ordinated/implemented by the Government”. The control was even looser.

[Professor Bernadette W.S. Tsui left this session of the meeting at this point.]

R1332 of STT OZP – Ng Cheuk Nam Daniel

70. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Ng Cheuk Nam Daniel made the following main points:

- (a) he was a resident living next to Hoo Hok Wai Ma Tso Lung;
- (b) the proposed 300m-wide east-west birds' flight corridor near the Lok Ma Chau Boundary Control Point was insufficient. It ignored the birds flying from Hoo Hok Wai along the Shenzhen River branch passing through the Loop. He suggested that similar treatment as for the Kwu Tung North New Development Area (KTN NDA) to designate a "Green Belt" ("GB") zone along the flight path should be adopted for the STT OZP (Drawing H-4 of the Paper). The BHRs of the "OU(I&T)" zones in Planning Areas 16A and 19A should be reduced from 130mPD/105mPD to 75mPD, and Planning Areas 16A, 17, 18 and 19A at the northern part of STT OZP should be rezoned to "GB" or the BHRs be reduced from 130mPD to 15 to 35mPD (Plan H-4b of the Paper);
- (c) according to Figure 10.6C of the EIA Report, about 15% of birds fled via flight path "E". He wondered if further reduction of the BHRs could also be applied to this area or the area could simply be spared from development. There was no elaboration on the remaining 30% of birds' flight in paragraph 9.2.5.7 of the Environmental Monitoring and Audit in the EIA Report. While it might not be feasible to widen the birds' flight corridor to 1,200m, there should still be scope to further increase its width;
- (d) control measures should be imposed for buildings along the 300m-wide birds' flight corridor to minimise the risk of bird collisions, such as avoiding locating buildings too close to trees and water sources, applying dot stickers to make the glass visible to birds, etc. Relevant guidelines should be prepared by AFCD and EPD, instead of the developers; and
- (e) he supported I&T developments for the young generations, but wished that the Government, the public and relevant professionals could work together to fine-tune the EIA Report for a better plan for the Technopole and a better future for Hong Kong's next generations.

R1169 of STT OZP and R1083 of MP OZP – Yeung Yat Fai

71. Mr Yeung Yat Fai made the following main points:

- (a) he was a citizen who cared about the future development of Hong Kong;
- (b) he opposed the OZPs, not because of the I&T development, but for that the proposed development would destroy the three core values of Hong Kong. Firstly, the land requirement was merely a guesstimate, which made the planning system ineffective; secondly, it silenced the public voice and ignored the procedural justice; and thirdly, it would destroy the fish ponds and wetlands and hence their international status. If the draft OZPs would be forcibly approved, there would be trauma (創傷), not I&T (創科) for Hong Kong;
- (c) the Government had not properly responded to the questions raised by different parties that whether it was intended to sidestep the Board in order to speed up the development process. For instance, even if the Government would go to the Board later to explain the so-called guidelines (i.e. the PDB), it was no longer a statutory plan-making process and the public would not be consulted anymore.
- (d) he did not disagree to the need for I&T land. However, as a tax payer, he was more concerned about the situation where the Government, in the face of a financial shortage, might need to issue bonds to borrow money to survive. Given the plan to reclaim 60 ha of land in Ma Liu Shui for I&T purpose and the availability of I&T land in the Loop, etc., it was not clear why the additional 300 ha of I&T land in the Technopole was needed, what types of I&T uses this land were intended for, and why the 90 ha of fish ponds should be filled for development. Under Hong Kong 2030+, PlanD first estimated that about 180 ha of land was required for I&T purpose. However, the requirement was subsequently claimed to be nearly doubled (340 ha) due to the National 14th Five-Year Plan. One should not forget the fourth phase of

Hong Kong Science Park for I&T talents which had been turned into a luxury real estate project;

- (e) procedural fairness was another problem. After the public consultation in the first phase of the EIA process, it was suddenly announced that the project area would be doubled, including filling of 90 ha of fish ponds. However, the project proponent was not required to redo the EIA Report, and there was no additional round of public consultation in relation to the filling of fish ponds. Such arrangement deprived the public of their right to know about and provide comments on the project. The EIA, which costed hundreds of millions of public funds, was full of errors and omissions, and the effectiveness of compensatory measures was exaggerated. If the development was subject to judicial review due to procedural unfairness, and impeded consequently, it was the Government's own fault; and
- (f) rashly filling the fish ponds for development was actually an act destroying the decades of achievements in conservation. Some international media such as the National Geographic had reported how the Technopole would destroy the wetlands and how it would violate the national policies. ITIB was recently asked about the public concerns on the destruction of wetlands, but they responded that there could be a balance between development and conservation, and that they would actively introduce more companies of green technology in the future. It was doubtful what kind of green technology companies could bring the destroyed wetlands back to life and what I&T enterprises would be even willing to establish in Hong Kong for they might be accused of destroying the wetlands. I&T development and the protection of wetlands needed not be antagonistic, and there should be other places in the NM that could be used for I&T development.

[Mr Simon Y.S. Wong left this session of the meeting during the presentation of R1169 of STT OZP and R1083 of MP OZP.]

R1401 of STT OZP and R13 of MP OZP – 孫敏瓊

72. Mr Chung Yun Tak made the following main points:

- (a) he was a citizen who had regularly visited fish ponds for bird watching for about 10 years;
- (b) he knew that there was Hong Kong Fish Ponds Conservation Scheme funded by HKBWS and some conservation plans funded by the Environment and Conservation Fund to improve conservation facilities of fish ponds in the North West New Territories. According to the information on the internet, the government-funded project took more than 10 years to establish the ecological value and functions of fish ponds, and recorded 260 bird species, which represented almost half of the bird species in Hong Kong. There were over 200 bird species in San Tin. It had also been demonstrated that draining fish ponds could attract a large number of waterbirds foraging for food (more than 10 times before draining);
- (c) HKBWS had also initiated the first GPS-tracking research of egrets at fish ponds in Hong Kong, which demonstrated that the fish ponds in Hong Kong benefited both resident and migratory Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*) (小白鷺). It was only after the green groups had expressed their views in the later stage that Little Egret was included in the EIA Report and the number of indicator species increased from four to eight. However, another 190 bird species recorded in San Tin were not recorded. It was also ridiculous to say that dried fish ponds, which only lasted for two to three months every two years, had no ecological value;
- (d) it was also uncertain how the increase in wetland capacity by 45% as stated in the EIA Report could be achieved. The Government quoted the 2009 EIA report for Fung Lok Wai development which involved pond filling and claimed that the ecological function could be improved by 45%. However, the scale of development of Fung Lok Wai was much smaller than the

Technopole and hence, the effectiveness of the mitigation measures would not be comparable. Also, for the Fung Lok Wai development, the approach was to compensate first and develop after implementing mitigation measures. It was not about filling and destroying the ponds first;

- (e) the planning intentions for Long Valley Nature Park and SPS WCP were different. For Long Valley Nature Park, the planning intention was to discourage new development and such intention was not mentioned for the SPS WCP; and
- (f) regarding the proposed 300m-wide east-west birds' flight corridor, it was uncertain what flight data of the Black-faced Spoonbill (*Platalea minor*) (黑臉琵鷺) had been reviewed to derive that a width of 300m was sufficient.

R1425 of STT OZP – Wong Chi Chun

73. Mr Wong Chi Chun made the following main points:

- (a) he was the vice-chairman of HKBWS, but he would identify himself as a nature lover, a citizen who loved Hong Kong and a father who cared about the future development of Hong Kong in this meeting;
- (b) some 20 years ago, he had several years of bird watching experience and recommended himself to HKBWS to be a waterbird investigator. As Mai Po was the core area of a wetland of international importance, he was sent to visit the fish ponds in San Tin. He found that the ecological value of fish ponds in San Tin was undeniable. He suggested that the Government should make reference to their data and reports instead of hiring a consultant to produce such a low-quality ecological report;
- (c) in the last bird season, he took some friends to San Tin to watch birds. One of them was a British, who had done extensive work in various wetlands

world-wide, was so impressed by the environment of San Tin and hoped that the fish ponds in San Tin could be preserved;

- (d) he also met a young lady who was the second generation of a fisherman. Although her fish ponds were abandoned, she worked with HKBWS to merge two small fish ponds into one large fish pond. She maintained the fish pond in good quality without adding fish as some waterbirds did not have to eat fish. Last year, the pond attracted more than 100 duck visits;
- (e) he believed that as a responsible Government and for sustainable urban planning, it could use the 2021 plan instead of adding 90 ha with the filling of fish ponds if the development of the Technopole was really required; and
- (f) he thought people were so arrogant, e.g. using engineering design and technology to control the ecology, teaching birds to fly through the proposed 300m-wide corridor and otters to pass through the proposed 10m-wide wildlife corridor, etc. He doubted if those mitigation measures really worked and whether pond filling would really have no impact on the environment or environment of the area would become even better with the compensatory measures. There was no reason not to learn cherishing the creatures created by God.

R1429 of STT OZP – Wong Lun Cheong

74. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Wong Lun Cheong made the following main points:

- (a) he had been involved in wetland birds related ecological studies in the Deep Bay Area for more than 20 years. He had over 24 years' experience in the EIA sector and over 14 years' experience in managing private wetlands in Hong Kong. During his spare time, he monitored nesting colonies of egrets and herons in Hong Kong;

- (b) in the 1980s, a large area of fishponds along Castle Peak Road was filled as open carparks and storage, and also for the new town developments at Tin Shui Wai/Yuen Long Industrial area. In the early 1990s, a number of developments were proposed in the Deep Bay fish pond area, e.g. Nam Sang Wai, Lin Ban Tsuen, Wing Kei Tsuen, San Tin, Pak Hok Chau and Fung Lok Wai. It was expected that about 40% of Deep Bay fish ponds would be lost;
- (c) following the decision of Privy Council on the Nam Sang Wai development in 1996, PlanD commissioned the Fish Pond Study which was completed in 1997. According to the LegCo Paper No. CB(2)1011/99-00(01), the Fish Pond Study confirmed the “fish ponds contiguous to Deep Bay and Mai Po Marshes have intrinsic ecological value in terms of species richness and abundance. They provide food and roosting ground for a wide range of bird species on a seasonal pattern and form a particularly important habitat for herons/egrets.” He did not agree with EPD’s classification of fish ponds as active or abundant only, and considered that abundant fish ponds had no value;
- (d) since the promulgation of TPB PG-No. 12C, there had been few applications and pond filling activities in Deep Bay;
- (e) the New Nature Conservation Policy 2004 also recognised Deep Bay fish ponds as an ecologically important site, i.e. Deep Bay Wetland Outside Ramsar Site (Rank 9th of 12 – score 1.90);
- (f) those effective approaches had provided protection to the Deep Bay fish ponds for over 20 years until today that the Technopole development would incur a loss of 100 ha of wetlands. He did not understand why hi-tech had to take place on filled wetlands in San Tin and why the proposed wetland park could compensate the 100 ha wetland loss in the absence of formal habitat drawing or layout. The EIA Report was also not up to standard;
- (g) to echo CEDD/EPD’s views on nesting colonies of egrets and herons, nesting sites of egrets and herons must not be surrounded by tall trees or man-made

structures. They were very sensitive to degradation of feeding habitats within 2 km of their colonies (in other words, enhancement beyond 2 km was useless). Thus, the MPLV would definitely be abandoned;

- (h) the proposed wetland compensation was unsustainable (importation of fish), unscientific (longer period of drain down) and even worse than before (merging ponds into a large pond, e.g. the Hong Kong Wetland Park – very low use by waterbirds);
- (i) based on the Government's habitat management works in Long Valley in 2022-24, it was expected the running cost for SPS WCP would be about \$187 million per annum; and
- (j) in conclusion, from wetland conservation point of view, if the OZPs were approved, it would be like retrogression from "Roman times" back to "Black Middle Ages".

R885 of STT OZP and R991 of MP OZP – 劉善鵬

75. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Lau Jin Pan made the following main points:

- (a) he was an ecology teacher. 80% of birds were migratory birds that visited Hong Kong in winter. They first visited Siberia and flew to different places in the Mainland, then spent the winter in Hong Kong;
- (b) planting trees would destroy the landscape and ecology of the wetland;
- (c) when there were tidal changes in the Deep Bay Area, birds would fly to the nearby fish ponds, including those in San Tin, for rest and food. There was about a 100m-wide ecological corridor along the Loop composed of reed beds and fish ponds allowing the birds to fly to Hoo Hok Wai wetlands and further to Long Valley Nature Park. The 300m-wide birds' flight corridor

proposed in the Technopole, however, would not be a green corridor with fish ponds, but of low-rise buildings and flood-lit. It was worried whether the birds would use such a corridor;

- (d) there was no assessment on the ecological function of SPS WCP as the EIA Report did not cover that area;
- (e) there were about 10,000 Shorebirds (鸕鶿) (including Common Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*) (青脚鸕鶿) and Nordmann's Greenshank (*Tringa guttifer*) (小青脚鸕鶿)) living in the Deep Bay Area. Nordmann's Greenshank was an endangered species, with only about 2,500 living in the world, but they chose to stop over in Hong Kong in winter. However, this Shorebirds species was not listed as a sensitive species in the EIA Report;
- (f) the number of Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*) (鸕鶿) in the Deep Bay Area was decreasing. While it was difficult to find Ruff (*Calidris pugnax*) (流蘇鸕鶿) and Long-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*) (长咀鸕鶿), the last seen of Ruff was in San Tin. The more endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper (*Calidris pygmaea*) (勺咀鸕鶿) had not been observed since last year;
- (g) there were probably more than 570 bird species in Hong Kong, but little was mentioned about the number of species being lost. According to the recent record of the Ramsar Site, the number of waterbird counts in winter dropped to the lowest in the past 20 years. This was a warning sign;
- (h) the living environment of the birds was enclosed by tall buildings, e.g. Wetland Season Park next to Hong Kong Wetland Park, developments in Shenzhen next to Mai Po and Deep Bay, light pollution at Nam Sang Wai and Fung Lok Wai, etc. This might be the reason why the number of birds had been declining in recent years; and

- (i) he hoped that San Tin could become the next Long Valley Nature Park, an ecological reserve, to leave wetlands to the beloved birds. As for the future generations, Hong Kong should continue to train the young hopefuls who were familiar with the natural environment and would work together to build a better Hong Kong. He sincerely asked the Board to take good care of the land.

R1448 of STT OZP – 鄭旭洋

76. Mr Zheng Yuk Yeung Laughing made the following main points:

- (a) he was a student of R885 of STT OZP. He took a group of secondary school students to San Tin last year, and the students were surprised to see ducks fly. This made him realise that the living environment was diminishing and the next generations might have no chance to get in touch with the nature;
- (b) as compared with Mai Po, the ecological value of San Tin was not low indeed, and the place was more accessible to the public without the need for a permit; and
- (c) most of his students would be unhappy if the fish ponds in San Tin were filled, as the birds would be affected. He hoped that the Board could hear their voices and decided to retain the fish ponds for the next generations or reduce the scale of development.

R1479 of STT OZP – Cheuk Fung Lau

77. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr Lau Cheuk Fung made the following main points:

- (a) he was a student studying urban planning and had reservation on the proposals in the OZP;

- (b) he had two suggestions on spatial planning with a view to achieving a balance between conservation and development. The first suggestion was to retain part of the active agricultural land in Planning Areas 7 and 2G for urban farming. The second suggestion was to retain the wetland in the west of the Technopole as a buffer for the important wetlands in Mai Po and increase the number of I&T sites in the centre of the Technopole. Both suggestions actually echoed the planning principles of the Technopole;
- (c) in Planning Area 2G, there were two hobby farms named Hung Yat Farm (鴻日農場) and Shun Shum Yuen (信芯園農莊). For the former, the farm would use food waste collected from restaurants to make their food waste enzymes for growing agricultural products like beetroots. For the latter, the farm planted a variety of flowers to create a colourful palette of flower scenes, which was a popular form of agri-cultural tourism;
- (d) apart from retaining the farms, he also suggested further straightening the river channel and moving it eastwards to minimise the impact on the existing agricultural land. The site to the east could be used for urban farms to echo the urban-rural integration, while the site to the west could be used for a cultural, recreational and agricultural hub; and
- (e) his second suggestion could help relieve the bottleneck effect for the birds flying between Mai Po and SPS WCP. It was also proposed to enlarge the NBA in Planning Area 19C to enable the egrets to easily fly to/from MPLV Egretry. Consideration could also be given to reshuffling the land uses between Planning Areas 13B and 13C and Planning Area 13A and turn the area into a technology valley established with large leading I&T enterprises. By consolidating the land uses, a balance between fish pond conservation and I&T development could be achieved.

R1536 of STT OZP – John McCorkindale

78. With the aid of some photos, Mr John McCorkindale made the following main points:

- (a) he worked for a multinational technology company in Nanshan, Shenzhen for about 30 years and was a member of WWF and HKBWS;
- (b) he shared a story published on 24.6.2024 in China about the protection of bird migration routes, “China has pledged intensified efforts to protect the flyways of migratory birds, the country’s National Development and Reform Commission said Monday. China aims to place 90 percent of important habitats along bird migration routes in the country under effective protection by 2030, according to an action plan made by the commission along with other departments. The country is home to more than 1,500 bird species, or 13 percent of the world’s total, and over 800 of them are migratory. Four out of nine main flyways of bird migration on the planet pass through China. To improve the protection of 821 important habitats along the four routes, efforts would be ratcheted up to rein in pollution, curb invasive alien species, optimise data collection, and promote harmony between humans and birds.”; and
- (c) the San Tin area was part of the bird migratory route under protection. He urged the Board to ensure that Hong Kong did not let the protection plan down.

R1542 of STT OZP – 蔡秀青 Choi Sau Ching

79. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Ms Choi Sau Ching made the following main points:

- (a) she attended as a Hong Kong citizen and wanted to express her voice personally;

- (b) she supported the development of I&T with reference to the world's top I&T enterprises, such as Apple's headquarters at Silicon Valley with a green and zero-carbon environment, and Google's headquarters where a green and zero-carbon environment was created, with surrounding hills, lakes and ponds protected;
- (c) the planning for the Technopole, however, was not innovative at all, as many fish ponds and wetlands would be destroyed. The Government did not take the opportunity to develop a world-leading I&T park with emphasis on nature conservation. It was uncertain why the development needed to take up the wetlands and its buffer zones. Felling of about 56,000 trees, which was the oxygen source, was unacceptable;
- (d) it was noted that on the STT OZP, land reserved for residential development was about 44 ha, accounting for 4.46% of the total area, whereas road use would take up about 108 ha of land. In view of the shortage of land for housing, it was uncertain why the percentage of land for housing was less than half of road use on the STT OZP. With reference to the figures for the whole of Hong Kong, there was about 7% of residential land and only 5% of roads;
- (e) it was noted that about 1,500 private car parking spaces would be provided, and it was uncertain if such provision was sufficient in view of the need for frequent communications with the Mainland and if electronic vehicles charging facilities would be provided;
- (f) it was noted that eight primary schools and six secondary schools would be provided. Based on Hong Kong's population projections and the declining birth rate, it was uncertain why so many schools were needed. Considerations could be given to converting those sites for I&T developments so as to minimise the impacts on wetlands;

- (g) there was no detail on the less environmentally-friendly construction processes involved for the I&T developments in Planning Area 13A; and
- (h) there should be a balance between conservation and development in order to create a world-class I&T park in Hong Kong.

R482 of STT OZP and R902 of MP OZP – Yeung Ting

80. With the aid of a visualiser, Ms Yeung Ting made the following main points:

- (a) she was a Hong Kong citizen who worked in environmental education. She opposed the filling of fish ponds in San Tin;
- (b) she believed that when the last tree was felled, the last river was polluted and the last fish died, the human beings would then realise that they could not survive only with money;
- (c) it was not understandable why destructing public property was called vandalism, while destroying the nature was called development;
- (d) people should learn from history. The construction of the Three Runway System and the HKZMB had imposed significant impacts on Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphin (*Sousa chinensis*) (中華白海豚). Even with the establishment of a Marine Park for protecting the Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphin, the dolphins had already abandoned the concerned marine habitat because of disturbance from those projects;
- (e) migratory birds would not be able to fly across the Technopole to the Deep Bay Area in the future. No matter how beautiful and well-planned the buildings would be, the potential pollution and disturbance caused by the developments would scare the birds away;

- (f) there was a record of 78 Black-faced Spoonbills (*Platalea minor*) (黑臉琵鷺) observed at the same time in San Tin. This was a significant number, representing one-third and 1% of the population of this species in Hong Kong and in the world respectively, demonstrating that the San Tin area comprised wetlands of international importance;
- (g) San Tin was a low-lying area susceptible to adverse conditions brought by extreme weather, and development in this area would be subject to challenge like severe flooding. The situation would be even worse as most of the fish ponds were already filled; and
- (h) competing in the world of I&T industries at the expense of the environment would eventually lead to the loss of the high ecological resource endowments. One should take note of this environmental motto 「綠水青山、是金山銀山」 (i.e. the natural environment was Hong Kong's treasure).

81. As the presentations of the representers and/or their representatives in this session had been completed, the meeting proceeded to the Q&A session. The Chairperson explained that Members would raise questions and the Chairperson would invite the representers, their representatives and/or the government representatives (including the consultants) to answer. The Q&A session should not be taken as an occasion for the attendees to direct question to the Board or for cross-examination between parties. The Chairperson then invited questions from Members.

Land Use Planning and Design

82. Some Members raised the following questions:

- (a) whether alternative options had been explored to minimise land resumption and pond filling, e.g. by setting the development zones further back from the fish ponds in the north and/or allowing higher building heights for developments in the south; and

- (b) whether a more cautious approach, innovative ideas and blue-green infrastructure network would be adopted in land production given the abundance of fish ponds in the area.

83. With the aid of some PowerPoint slides, Mr K.W. Ng, AD/NT, PlanD made the following main points:

- (a) the land use proposals for the STLMC area under the STT OZP were formulated based on several objectives, including (1) the provision of about 210 ha of I&T land; (2) a balanced, vibrant and liveable community based on the concept of ‘work-live-learn-play’; and (3) retaining the existing recognised villages to promote urban-rural integration. The proposed developments planned under the OZP were proven technically and environmentally feasible by various technical assessments including the statutory EIA, and were therefore considered appropriate. An alternative site had already been explored under the Investigation Study, viz. the “GB” zone in Planning Area 30 at the northeastern part of the OZP, but was considered undesirable as elaborated in the earlier sessions. In addition, if more I&T sites were planned to the south of San Tin Highway, the scale of the planned residential neighbourhood for the STLMC area including the supporting community facilities would need to be reduced, bearing in mind that the target for the provision of I&T land in the whole Technopole (including the HSITP at the Loop) was about 300 ha; and
- (b) concerning the ratio of land reserved for residential use and road on the STT OZP, a representer claimed that such ratio skewing towards road area (i.e. 4.46% for residential use vs. 10.79% for road) was unreasonable given the persistent housing shortage. In fact, in the planning of new development areas (NDAs), a land reserve of about 10% for road area was not on the high side. For example, the percentage of road area planned in the Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen (HSK/HT) NDA was more than 16% while that planned in the Kwu Tung North (KTN) NDA was about 10%. In order to achieve such a relatively low ratio (about 10%) for road area in the STLMC area, the planned neighbourhood had to be compact with the support of comprehensive

pedestrian and cycling track networks as well as convenient public transport services. For the percentage of housing land, it would vary with the positioning of a development area (such as whether it was intended to be residential-oriented or economic-oriented). In general, the combined proportion for housing and economic land in an NDA would normally fall within the range of 20% to 30%, such as over 30% for the HSK/HT NDA and nearly 20% for the KTN NDA. For the STT OZP, the corresponding percentage was nearly 30%. Given the above, the percentages of land reserved for the road area and the combined housing and economic land under the STT OZP were similar to those of other NDAs.

84. Mr Vic C.H. Yau, D of NMCO, DEVB said that I&T parks were often low-rise in nature. Setting back developments from the wetland in the north would lead to further increase in BH for the I&T developments in the south if the same gross floor area for the I&T developments was maintained. The project team would make the proposed development in harmony with the surrounding wetland setting by innovative and cautious approaches (e.g. incorporating eco-interface with the SPS WCP, stepped building height profile and natural streams into the proposed I&T development). A case of relevance was the Alibaba's headquarters in Xixi (西溪), Hangzhou, which incorporated wetland habitat and ecosystem within its premises. To fine-tune the land use layout, the project team would prepare a PDB to detail the urban design requirements for concerned sites.

85. Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM(N), CEDD said that nature-based solutions were adopted in formulating the blue-green infrastructure network, incorporating natural features into the proposed development, taking into account the land use proposals.

86. A Member asked whether the existing agricultural farms located in the proposed San Tin Town Centre could be retained as urban farm. In response, Mr K.W. Ng, AD/NT, PlanD, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, made the following main points:

- (a) there were currently some existing active farmlands in Planning Area 7 which was designated for a proposed Cultural and Recreational Complex at the future San Tin Town Centre with a railway station to the southwest. If the

existing farmlands were retained, they would be adjacent to the future railway station, and such land use layout was considered not desirable from planning perspective;

- (b) the proposed Cultural and Recreational Complex would serve as a landmark accommodating a major performing arts venue, a major museum, a major library, a swimming pool complex and flexible public/event spaces for serving the needs of the local residents and/or wider district. The Complex, together with the adjoining proposed River Valley Park under “O” zone, would form a civic node for the whole STLMC area; and
- (c) in April 2024, the Board had revised the Definition of Terms for ‘Open Space’ to include urban farm, which adopted commercial technology-based crop production with intention of providing the community with leisure farming, education activities and fresh agricultural products, for use by the general public co-ordinated or implemented by Government. To facilitate the development of urban farming in the STLMC area, consideration could be given to accommodating the existing active farms in the form of urban farms in the sizable “O” zone such as the above-mentioned River Valley Park proposed in Planning Area 7.

Urban-Rural Integration

87. A Member asked whether consideration could be given for integration of non-indigenous village settlements with the new developments at the Technopole in the future. In response, Mr Vic C.H. Yau, D of NMCO, DEVB said that some non-indigenous village settlements (e.g. Ha Wan Tsuen) were situated at strategic locations for I&T development. Resumption of these lands would be inevitable. The Government would endeavour to assist the affectees in accordance with the prevailing policies and established mechanism, especially when the Government had enhanced the compensation and rehousing arrangement for those affected by government clearance exercises, and community liaison and service team would explain to the affectees about the options available to them.

88. A Member enquired how Hop Shing Wai would be affected by the Technopole development. In response, with the aid of some PowerPoint slides, Mr K.W. Ng, AD/NT, PlanD said that Hop Shing Wai was not an indigenous village nor located in areas zoned “V” on the OZP. It straddled the Ramsar Site and the northwestern corner of Planning Area 19C on the STT OZP. From a holistic planning of view, the land use zones in Planning Area 19C were delineated on the STT OZP to avoid encroaching onto the Ramsar Site while maintaining a reasonable amount of I&T land for the STLMC area. As such, part of Hop Shing Wai would inevitably be affected. To supplement, Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM(N), CEDD said that the remaining part of Hop Shing Wai would be located within the SPS WCP.

I&T Development

89. The Chairperson and some Members raised the following questions:

- (a) the rationale and data to support the land requirement for I&T development;
- (b) whether the I&T land at the Technopole was intended for office-type development or whether manufacturing or production uses would also be involved;
- (c) whether the I&T developments intended at the Technopole could be accommodated in traditional industrial areas, e.g. Kwun Tong; and
- (d) the positioning and spatial planning of the different I&T Parks at the Technopole, Cyberport and Hong Kong Science Park.

90. With the aid of some PowerPoint slides, Mr K.W. Ng, AD/NT, PlanD made the following main points:

- (a) to forecast the long-term land requirement for various land uses in Hong Kong, PlanD had undertaken various assessments during the study process of Hong Kong 2030+. The estimated requirement for I&T land had evolved

over the years taking into account the latest national policies and planning circumstances (including those for the GBA);

- (b) according to the consolidated land requirement and supply analysis undertaken in 2016 for the public engagement for the Hong Kong 2030+, it was estimated that the long-term land requirement for Hong Kong would be about 4,800 ha and that upon discounting the committed land supply of about 3,600 ha, there was an estimated land shortfall of about 1,200 ha (including about 183 ha for the science, innovation and technology-related industries). In 2018/19, the Task Force on Land Supply, appointed by the Chief Executive to take an overview of land supply options in Hong Kong, concluded that the estimated land shortfall of about 1,200 ha was grossly conservative and the actual figure should be far more than 1,200 ha;
- (c) taking into account the promulgation of the National 14th Five-Year Plan in March 2021 which supported Hong Kong to develop “eight centres”, including international I&T centre, the final recommendations of the Hong Kong 2030+ released in October 2021 estimated that the overall demand of land in Hong Kong would be about 6,200 ha and after discounting the committed land supply of about 3,200 ha, there would be an updated land shortfall estimate of about 3,000 ha (higher than the previous estimate of 1,200 ha identified in 2016), and the demand for science, innovation and technology-related industries had increased substantially, reaching about 340 ha;
- (d) the land demand of 340 ha for science, innovation and technology-related industries was expected to be mainly met by the proposed I&T developments in the STLMC area, Sandy Ridge, Ma Liu Shui reclamation and the Land Use Review Study of Lau Fau Shan (noting that the HSITP at the Loop was already counted as committed land supply). Comparing with the I&T parks around the world including those in the Mainland, the I&T land supply of about 300 ha for the Technopole to support a full I&T value chain (including research, prototyping, pilot testing and mass production) and various I&T industries was considered not large in terms of scale; and

- (e) the I&T land was intended to support the development of a complete I&T ecosystem by providing different facilities including office, co-working space, laboratory, training centre, talent accommodation, etc. Taking the concept of “Science and Technology Ecological Park” in the Mainland as an example, different I&T uses and non-I&T supporting and complementary uses should be provided to support the development of a complete I&T value chain. Those I&T parks would also provide various services and facilities, such as shared laboratory spaces, co-working spaces for start-ups, related government services (e.g. new company and patent registrations), etc. Besides, many of those I&T parks were located near universities to facilitate easy communications between the I&T firms and the related R&D institutes in the universities. For the more developed I&T companies, those I&T parks would be able to offer sizeable land parcels so that the companies could develop dedicated buildings to accommodate their own needs, e.g. offices, marketing, R&D facilities, prototyping, etc. In some cases, the dedicated buildings could also accommodate the company’s own production and manufacturing floor spaces so as to safeguard the sensitive commercial information. At the same time, those more developed companies also required the support from various smaller companies during their R&D process, and hence spatial agglomeration of different related companies was crucial to the success of an I&T park. In that regard, it was considered difficult to develop a healthy I&T ecosystem by scattering different related companies in the existing industrial buildings located in various districts.

91. Mr Vic C.H. Yau, D of NMCO, DEVB made the following main points:

- (a) land demand, especially demand for industrial land, had to be assessed in a forward-looking and visionary manner. Such an assessment was more a qualitative than a quantitative process. The operations of the I&T midstream and downstream processes were more land extensive. The lack of this type of land was reflected in the high rental cost in the market and the high occupancy rates in Cyberport and Hong Kong Science Park, creating a bottleneck that had inhibited the growth of a full I&T value chain.

Sufficient land should be provided to facilitate industrial agglomeration and healthy growth of the complete I&T industry chain. Through agglomeration, related I&T enterprises and supporting facilities would concentrate in a specific geographical area to reinforce inter-industry linkages and achieve economy of scale;

- (b) to identify land suitable for such purpose, the Technopole was considered appropriate for its strategic location, relatively large size and capability of enabling I&T park-like development; whereas the traditional industrial areas (e.g. Kwun Tong) offering only premises floor space in a piecemeal manner could not create an agglomeration effect. For example, the Shenzhen's I&T Zone (about 300 ha) and Singapore One-north (新加坡緯壹) (about 200-300 ha) were cases comparable to the Technopole in the context of Hong Kong, though there existed larger parks such as Guangming Science City (光明科学城) (about 3,100 ha) in Shenzhen and Zhangjiang Science City (張江科学城) (about 7,500 ha) in Shanghai. The size of the I&T land of the proposed development was based on Hong Kong's own circumstances; and
- (c) it would not be possible to produce land based on exact demand for I&T land confirmed by, say, agreements reached with individual I&T enterprises, because land production took significant time. Having regard to the dynamic nature of the growing I&T sector in Hong Kong, it would be necessary to estimate the land requirement based on reasonable assumptions and assessment, and proceed to land production and recruit I&T enterprises in parallel.

92. Miss Kristy H.L. Chan, SMSO(ITI), ITIB elaborated from the I&T development policy perspective:

- (a) a comprehensive I&T ecosystem encompassed the upstream, midstream and downstream processes. According to the 'Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint' promulgated in December 2022, the limited supply of I&T land had been identified as one of the factors restricting

the I&T development in Hong Kong. One of the four broad development directions formulated in the ‘Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Development Blueprint’ was to enhance the I&T ecosystem. Whilst Hong Kong had robust R&D capability and performed well in the upstream R&D sector, the development of the midstream and downstream sectors had encountered various challenges. As reflected by some of the I&T sector stakeholders, supply of more I&T land could help cope with their operational needs in carrying out midstream and downstream processes, which would involve prototyping, pilot testing, transformation and commercialisation of upstream R&D outcomes, and mass production. However, there was a lack of suitable sites in Hong Kong to carry out the above processes currently. The Technopole offered opportunities to cope with the I&T sector’s demand and help achieve the Blueprint’s objective of enhancing the I&T ecosystem; and

- (b) in terms of the future I&T overall development pattern in Hong Kong, a “south-central-north” pattern would be followed. The Cyberport located in the southern part of the territory would mainly promote digital technologies, while the Hong Kong Science Park located in the middle part of the territory would mainly focus on supporting R&D, product design and start-up development. The Technopole, coupled with the Loop, located in the northern part of the territory could offer relatively large land parcels, had potential to develop into an industry-academic-research collaboration platform, and possibly allow I&T companies to carry out midstream and downstream activities which were typically land extensive operations (e.g. prototyping, pilot testing and mass production, etc.). The strategic location of the Technopole in close proximity to the HSITP in the Loop and the Shenzhen’s I&T Zone could create a conglomerate that would create synergy effect to facilitate the I&T development.

The EIA Report and Proposed Ecological Mitigation Measures

93. Noting that most representers were not satisfied with the EIA process for the STLMC project under the EIAO, a Member asked if the government representatives could

give further explanation. With the aid of some PowerPoint slides, Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM(N), CEDD made the following main points:

- (a) in December 2023, an EIA Report to assess the environmental impacts of the proposed developments under the Revised RODP for the STLMC area was submitted for approval by DEP under the EIAO. Upon DEP's advice in end January 2024 that the EIA Report was suitable for publication, CEDD had made the EIA Report and related documents available for public inspection under the EIAO from 2.2.2024 to 2.3.2024. During the inspection period, a total of 50 public comments had been received. Since the publication of the EIA Report, CEDD had held four workshops/briefing session with relevant green groups who had expressed concerns on various issues, including the completeness of assessment, the effectiveness of mitigation measures, etc. On 18.3.2024, the EIA Sub-committee of ACE considered the EIA Report together with the public comments received and agreed that, among others, CEDD was required to submit an outline of HCMP and calculate the functional values for four additional bird species for ACE's consideration in response to public comments received. The HCMP was not "missed out", given the fact that the 'Strategic Feasibility Study on the Development of the Wetland Conservation Parks System under the Northern Metropolis Development Strategy', which covered SPS WCP, was still in progress, and the details of HCMP which relied much on SPS WCP design could only be determined at a later stage. It should be clarified that it was not an omission for not including the HCMP in the EIA Report. What was submitted to ACE was an outline of key components to be included in the HCMP in response to the request by the EIA Sub-committee of ACE. On 22.4.2024, the EIA Report, together with the said additional information CEDD submitted, was endorsed with conditions and recommendations by the ACE and was then approved with conditions by the DEP on 17.5.2024; and

94. Regarding the processing of the EIA, Mr Terence S.W. Tsang, AD(EA), EPD supplemented the following main points:

- (a) on the EIA Study Brief (SB), some representers claimed that the EIA SB should be revised under the EIAO as a result of the expanded project area from about 340 ha in 2021 to about 610 ha in 2023. In that regard, it should be noted that the EIA SB was still considered applicable for the expanded project area, considering that (i) all the potential environmental issues which needed to be assessed in the EIA had already been covered in the EIA SB; (ii) the study approach and details of the methodology still remained valid; and (iii) the ecological assessment area in the EIA SB was defined as 500m from the project boundary and which would be expanded accordingly with the increase in project area. EPD and AFCD had checked and accepted the relevant documentation in that regard. In fact, it was not uncommon for some project proponents to conduct ecological baseline surveys covering an area larger than that required in the EIA SB to accommodate any potential changes in the project area for avoiding the need to conduct the survey afresh due to such changes;
- (b) on indicator species in the EIA Report, four larger wetland avifauna species (including Great Egret (*Ardea alba*) (大白鷺)) were used as indicators in the EIA Report to estimate the compensation requirement for fish pond habitats as they regularly occurred in fish pond habitats and were comparatively more sensitive to human disturbance. It was assumed that if mitigation targets could be achieved for those larger and disturbance-sensitive species, similar or higher levels of enhancement could be achieved for other less disturbance-sensitive species. In response to the comments from the ACE and some green groups, further review covering another four target species (including some non-fish-eating avifauna) had been conducted and the results re-affirmed the findings of CEDD's EIA Report that Great Egret was the most representative in determining the enhancement area. Nonetheless, the list of target species to be monitored in the future HCMP which covered a wider range of both avifauna and non-avifauna species and other species of conservation interests, e.g. dragonflies, Eurasian Otters (*Lutra lutra*) (歐亞水獺), etc. would be worked out in consultation with the Environmental Committee (EC) to be set up and the ACE; and

- (c) in considering and approving an EIA Report, reference must be made to the requirements set out in the EIA SB and the TM. Some representers held that it might be intentional to rezone areas of ecologically-sensitive habitats to non-conservation zonings on the OZPs in order to obviate the need for an EIA under the EIAO. In that regard, it should be clarified that the need for an EIA under the EIAO depended on whether the proposed development would constitute a designated project (DP), which was determined by a host of factors including but not limited to the land use zonings of statutory town plans. If the project itself constituted a DP, even if it was not related to conservation zoning, EIA and Environmental Permit (EP) were still required and any works of such project could not commence without an EP.

95. Noting that most representers objected to the increase in filling of pond area for the Technopole development, instead of the opposing the original STLMC area itself, and considered the EIA Report inadequate in particular on the effectiveness of the mitigation measures, with reference to the undesirable results on conservation of Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphin (*Sousa chinensis*) (中華白海豚) under the project of the Three Runway System, as quoted by some representers, a Member asked how the Government could ensure that the proposed mitigation/enhancement measures could achieve the intended mitigation/enhancement targets without unintended consequences.

96. In response, Mr Tony K.L. Cheung, PM(N), CEDD said that CEDD was abided by the EIAO to comply with the approval conditions imposed by DEP upon approval of the EIA Report in that CEDD was required to submit various detailed designs and implementation plans to implement the recommended ecological mitigation/enhancement measures, including the submission of HCMP. The HCMP would be furnished with the findings of the Investigation Study of the SPS WCP, which was due to commence in the second half of 2024, and later submitted to EPD and consulted with the soon-to-be-set-up EC with representatives from relevant Government departments, green groups and academics. The HCMP would provide details on performance of the mitigation/enhancement measures, monitoring and reporting requirements, action plan to implement contingency measures for additional enhancement, etc. Fluctuations of bird counts were inevitable in the number of

migratory birds in Hong Kong due to climate change or developments in other countries, but there would be monitoring mechanism under HCMP, and CEDD would regularly monitor and investigate the situation, and take follow-up actions, if required.

97. The Member further asked if such monitoring mechanism under HCMP was applied for protection of Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphin (*Sousa chinensis*) (中華白海豚) under the Three Runway System. In response, Mr Terence S.W. Tsang, AD(EA), EPD said that similar monitoring mechanism was applied for the mitigations under the Three Runway System. Yet, the kind of mitigation measure for protection of Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphin (*Sousa chinensis*) (中華白海豚) under the Three Runway System, i.e. designation of a Marine Park, was quite different from fishpond enhancement at SPS WCP. The former would require more time for Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphin to return to the enhanced habitat and it was relatively difficult to devise additional contingency measures. Indeed, the effect of the establishment of SPS WCP as a compensation/mitigation measure for the proposed development of the STLMC area could be more apparent and there were proven and readily available contingency enhancement measures (e.g. fish-stocking method) to be implemented if needed.

98. In response to a Member's question, Mr Nip Hin Ming (Representative of R1484 of STT OZP and R1099 of MP OZP) supplemented the following points:

- (a) regarding Planning Area 30, the Government claimed that it was not suitable for development given the presence of extensive woodland and substantial cost for construction on steep terrain. However, the Board should note that Planning Area 30 was covered by grassland and shrubland (instead of woodland) and would be more preferable over fish ponds for development from the conservation point of view;
- (b) under normal circumstances, for a large-scale development on wetlands like the Technopole, a comprehensive HCMP should have been submitted as part of the EIA Report. The proposed residential development in Nam Sang Wai wetland was a case in point. However, for the subject EIA Report, HCMP was not submitted until upon request by EIA Sub-committee of ACE amid

green groups' repeated requests. Worse still, the submitted HCMP was merely an outline instead of a standard one with full details and this was considered far from satisfactory;

- (c) regarding the PDB, it was not sure if the document would be made available for public consultation and suitably revised to incorporate public views;
- (d) regarding urban farming in the proposed River Valley Park, there was no detailed information about the farming practice (e.g. hydroponics, container farming as in Sai Sha, etc.) to be undertaken thereat; and
- (e) regarding the wildlife corridors, the Government had kept saying that detailed information (e.g. the design and width of the wildlife corridors, the neighbouring building height profile, etc.) was not available at this juncture and further studies would be required at the next stage. Instead of withholding the details, the Government should better provide clear information to the public to avoid unnecessary conjecture.

99. In response to a Member's enquiry, Ms Au Wing Hay (R1164 of STT OZP and R1080 of MP OZP) explained that her oral representation in simpler terms meant that human beings and all other creatures of Mother Nature were all equal. As such, instead of focusing on only four major species identified for assessment, a comprehensive EIA Report should cover and assess all other species that could be found within the assessment area.

SPS WCP

100. A Member asked about the effectiveness of the nature conservation management agreement practice, which was a kind of public-private partnership, in the past and whether such practice would be adopted for the SPS WCP in the future. In response, Mr Simon K.F. Chan, AD(C), AFCD made the following main points:

- (a) the Nature Conservation Management Agreement (MA) Scheme was introduced in 2004 under the New Nature Conservation Policy (NNCP) to enhance the conservation of ecologically important sites, in particular those

lands under private ownership. Under the MA Scheme, the Government provided funding support to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) for entering into management agreements with landowners of the 12 ecologically important sites identified as priority sites for enhanced conservation under NNCP. The funding support had previously been sourced from the Environment and Conservation Fund under the management of EPD and later from the Countryside Conservation Funding Scheme under the management of Countryside Conservation Office since 2018. At present, there were seven ongoing MA projects; and

- (b) the proposed ecological and fisheries enhancement measures to compensate for the loss resulted from the proposed development in the STLMC area would be implemented through the proposed SPS WCP. The SPS WCP covered a relatively large area and diverse habitats under fragmented private land ownership. To better manage the fish ponds in a comprehensive manner, the SPS WCP would be established on Government-controlled land (including resumed private land), following a similar approach in establishing the Long Valley Nature Park. Also, a multi-pronged approach would be adopted to manage the SPS WCP. For example, while the Government could manage part of the SPS WCP, it could be further explored to engage NGOs and operators with experience in management of eco-friendly fish ponds for habitat management and provision of environmental education to the public in part of the SPS WCP.

Traffic and Transport

101. A Member raised the following questions:

- (a) the provision of car parking facilities in the proposed development;
- (b) the transport network to serve the proposed development; and
- (c) the interface between the implementation programme of the transport network and the development programme of the STLMC project.

102. With the aid of some PowerPoint slides, Mr K.W. Ng, AD/NT, PlanD made the following main points:

- (a) in principle, the provision of car parking spaces would be in accordance with the requirements of the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG), and such provision would not be stipulated in the OZP. The specific car parking provision in each development site would be determined at the detailed design stage;
- (b) the STLMC area would be served by a comprehensive transport network (as illustrated by the Transport Network plan on Figure 7 attached to the ES of the STT OZP):
 - (i) on railway network, the NOL Main Line with an intermediate station in the southern part of the STLMC area would be tentatively completed in 2034. The NOL Spur Line with a possible intermediate station near Chau Tau would be a cross-boundary link connecting the STLMC area and the new Huanggang Port in Shenzhen via the HSITP at the Loop to facilitate the I&T workers in the Technopole travelling to and from Shenzhen;
 - (ii) on road network, the STLMC area would be served by strategic road links including the existing San Tin Highway/Fanling Highway leading to Yuen Long to the west and Kwu Tung and Sheung Shui to the east, and a possible connection to the future NM Highway in the southeast. Local road network in the future I&T sites in the area would also be drawn up at the next stage when the proposed developments proceeded. That said, major ingress/egress points for the future I&T sites had already been properly planned under the Investigation Study; and
 - (iii) on pedestrian and cycling network, a total of seven existing and planned pedestrian/cycle crossings would be provided across the San Tin Highway/Fanling Highway at various locations to enhance the

pedestrian and cycling connectivity between the two future railway stations and various parts of the STLMC area. Of the seven crossings, one was the proposed landscaped deck over San Tin Highway to facilitate pedestrian connections from the railway station and I&T developments to the north and the proposed open space network to the south. The pedestrian and cycling connections between the STLMC area and the SPS WCP would also be further studied; and

- (c) whilst there would be a time gap between the first population and employment intake in 2031 and the commencement of operation of the NOL Main Line in 2034, the traffic demand generated during the interim period could be met by the nearby railway stations (e.g. the Kwu Tung Station on the NOL Main Line and the Lok Ma Chau Station on the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line) with feeder services.

103. As Members had no further question to raise, the Chairperson said that the afternoon session of the hearing on the day was completed. She thanked the representers, their representatives and the government representatives (including the consultants) for attending the meeting. The Board would deliberate on the representations in closed meeting after all the hearing sessions were completed and would inform the representers of the Board's decision in due course. The representers, their representatives and the government representatives (including the consultants) left the meeting at this point.

104. This session of the meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m.