



HKIS's Views on San Tin Technopole

The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors ("HKIS") welcomes the Government land use proposal for the San Tin Technopole ("Technopole"), inclusive of Innovation & Technology Park, Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation & Technology Park and San Tin Town Centre.

Hong Kong is going to be an international innovation & technology ("I&T") city and the Northern Metropolis ("NM") is set to be one of the two growth engines (alongside with the CBD as a financial hub) and driver of our city's future development. We are delighted to see that the Hong Kong Government is now prioritizing the development of the Technopole in the NM and released the land use proposal and the Recommended Outline Development Plan ("RODP") for the Technopole for public engagement in June 2023.

Including the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation & Technology Park, which is currently under development, the Technopole will provide a total of 300 hectare of I&T land and over 70 million sq. ft. gross floor area of I&T facilities upon full development. This is set to be the flagship I&T project in Hong Kong and the GBA. We believe this mega development is vital for the long-term development of Hong Kong's I&T industry and our economy as a whole.

The strategic geographical location of the Technopole will definitely facilitate further collaborations between Hong Kong and Shenzhen while enhancing integration of Hong Kong into the GBA through complementary development with the Mainland.

While we generally welcome the Government's initiatives to create sufficient land supply to foster the development of our I&T industry, we would like to convey our views as follows:

- I. ***To know the strengths of our peers in the region and learn from them.*** While planning the Technopole, we suggest that Hong Kong could learn from its regional competitors' I&T land developments. Shenzhen, Guangzhou and Singapore already have created significant I&T space, for example Shenzhen and Guangzhou have over 4,000 ha of land for I&T and other related industrial uses. Their land administration practices including short to medium term land tenure (30 to 50 years), land disposal arrangement and selection criteria of industries are worth reviewing. Furthermore, with reference to other I&T parks in the world, there should have at least one university research centre nearby to support the Technopole.
- II. ***Competitive land price is key to attract investment.*** The government should adopt a land policy conducive for creation of I&T space and consider granting land

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with competitive price level on the regional/global arena so that international leading I&T enterprises and unicorns would be attracted to Hong Kong.

- III. ***Innovation and flexibility in land use planning and land grant are needed.*** Taking into consideration the large scale of the Technopole and constantly changing nature of the I&T industry, innovation and flexibility in land use planning and land grant conditions are keys to smarter and swifter development in the Technopole. It is important to promote the creation of a vibrant and sustainable I&T community in the Technopole.
- IV. ***More direct and integrated transport infrastructure at the Technopole is needed to foster cross-boundary travel.*** The development of the Technopole and the NM has strategic importance to promote high-quality economic co-operation between Hong Kong and Shenzhen, as well as the GBA under the “Twin Cities, Three Circles” framework. A more direct and integrated transport infrastructure with existing domestic and cross-border railway networks is important to facilitate further development integration of the two cities.

Additionally, we would also like to put forward the following points for the development of the Technopole and the NM for Government consideration:

1. **Be proactive in facilitating implementation and development of the Technopole / the NM** – Direct land grant is one option considered by Ms. Bernadette Linn, Secretary for Development. If this land disposal arrangement is to be adopted, clear policy statement should be provided for the selection of relevant industries and how land premium is to be assessed. The land premium would need to be meaningful to the I&T players which HK wishes to attract them to come. One of the considerations would be to reduce the length of the land leases. Another consideration could be paying an annualised land premium throughout the lease term to minimise an upfront capital payment.
2. **Wider user for the I&T industry under planning and land grant regimes** – The government has already advised that they will include talent accommodation. By drawing upon Mainland and overseas examples, such ancillary supporting users like shops and services, recreational use and hotel would be essential to create a world-class I&T community with critical mass and human-centric theme.
3. **Simple planning and land lease conditions for I&T** – avoid imposing excessive burden on developers/ investors/ enterprises on providing GIC and/or public facilities.
4. **Embrace private sector involvement** – Increase of private sector participation would have many benefits, including leveraging the private sector capital and



expertise, reducing pressure on public finances and a better allocation of risk between the public and private sectors. We have seen meaningful results of private sector participation in the form of in-situ land exchange in New Development Areas. It would be good if the government can announce the policy and practice arrangement as soon as possible.

5. **Establish an assessment panel or body to advise the CE in Council for private treaty grant and land premium with certainty** – Similar to HKSTP and HSITP, there will be a need for a body to evaluate the proposals from the I& T players in terms of their economic contribution to Hong Kong and business plan and subsequently to monitor their ongoing performance.
6. **Establish a transparent framework to facilitate land resumption including explanation of Government assessment of statutory compensation** – it would be good if the Government can speed up the settlement of compensation to affected owners and occupiers by including such measures as: imposing a time frame for Government surveyors through administrative means to respond to compensation claims made by affected owners/occupiers with rationale and comparables for compensation assessment.

We hope that the above comments and opinions are helpful.

Submitted by
The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors
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