3 FORMULATION OF CONCEPT PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

3.1 Public Aspiration

Apart from the existing key issues and opportunities, public views collected through initial consultation with major stakeholders have all been taken into account in the formulation of the Draft Concept Plan. They can be broadly categorized into the following:

Strengthen Nature Conservation
- Preservation of rural landscape and ecosystem
- Designation of country park
- Provision of ecological link for animals in the Robin’s Nest area and birds in the wetland / fishponds area

Respect Indigenous Villagers’ Rights
- Reservation of sufficient land for village houses development

Promote Heritage and Eco-Tourism
- Promotion of cultural heritage and Eco-Tourism
- Promotion of adaptive re-use of structures with cultural heritage value
- Provision of facilities such as eco-hiking trail and ‘Eco-Lodge’

Enhance Investment Opportunity and Cross-Boundary Cooperation
- Open Storage and logistics facilities
- Hi-tech/value-added/ capital intensive production industries

Encourage Development
- Low-density residential development
- Commercial and business activities

Improve Local Transport Linkage & Infrastructural Provision
- Limited and substandard roads
- Inadequate infrastructures
- Inadequate public transport services

3.2 Strategic Context

Areas immediately adjacent to the Study Area in Shenzhen, including the core commercial and business areas in Futian and Luohu districts, are highly urbanized. In contrast, vast areas of the Study Area remain undisturbed and are ecologically and environmentally sensitive.

The strategic boundary location of the Study Areas should be capitalized in strengthening cooperation between Hong Kong and Shenzhen bringing mutual benefits to both cities.

The Study Area could function as a ‘Green Area’ between the two cities. While suitable developments to capitalize on the strategic boundary location could be concentrated in selected areas such as the vicinity of boundary control points, Lok Ma Chau Loop close to the Shenzhen Futian commercial area and the New Development Areas (NDAs) at Kwu Tung North, Fanling North and Ping Che / Ta Kwu Ling.
3.3 Visions of the Draft Concept Plan

Taking into consideration of the existing conditions of the Study Area and the public aspiration, a Vision Statement for the Study Area is formulated and as follows:

“A Belt of Conservation, Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Uses between Hong Kong and Shenzhen”

The vision will be realized through the following three themes:

Theme 1 - Strengthen Nature Conservation

The Study Area is endowed with rich natural resources worthy of conservation. The valuable woodland in the eastern portion and the fishponds/wetlands in the western portion of the Study Area, together with the built and cultural heritage found throughout the Study Area, form the longest strip of Conservation Belt in the northern part of Hong Kong.

Theme 2 - Conserve Cultural Heritage Resources

The natural and cultural heritage resources within the Study Area provide opportunities for cultural heritage and ecotourism development in a sustainable manner. These individual resources (Points) are scattered all over the Study Area, and could be linked up to form Lines. These Lines, when grouped together forming a Surface, further enhance the potential for development of cultural heritage and eco-tourism with a diversity of activities, including experiencing traditional village life, viewing the diversified rural landscape and the cultural heritage features, and appreciating the wetland/fishponds landscape. The Study Area will provide an ideal recreation outlet for locals and tourists alike.

Theme 3 - Promote Sustainable Uses

Developments of suitable scale that capitalizing on the boundary location and the nature and culture heritage resources should also be actively promoted.

- Identification of appropriate scale/form of development at suitable locations
- Integration of appropriate developments inside and outside the Study Area
- Improvement and enhancement of cross-boundary traffic movements
- Identification of suitable sites for sustainable and orderly village development
- Improvement of Infrastructural Provision
- Enhancement of Social Well-being

3.4 Draft Concept Plan

The formulation of the Draft Concept Plan is based on the above three themes and each of them comprises various land use concept in achieving the Vision of the Draft Concept Plan.

Strengthen Nature Conservation

The Study Area is endowed with rich natural resources worthy of conservation. The valuable woodland in the eastern portion and the fishponds/wetlands in the western portion of the Study Area, together with the built and cultural heritage found throughout the Study Area, form the longest strip of Conservation Belt in the northern part of Hong Kong.

- Protection of Areas with High Ecological Value – conservation of one of Hong Kong’s largest colonies of egrets in Ho Sheung Heung Egretry;
- Protection of Areas with High Quality Landscape – designation of Robin’s Nest as Country Park to conserve its ecological and landscape resources including woodland;
• **Protection of Fish Ponds/Wetlands** – enhance conservation of fish ponds/wetlands through new measures, viz. management agreements with landowners and public-private partnership, promulgated under the New Nature Conservation Policy (NNPC);

• **Protection of Agricultural Land** – encouragement of environmentally friendly farming/horticulture on abandoned agricultural land;

• **Protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest** – e.g. Lin Ma Hang Lead Mines SSSI and Lin Ma Hang Stream SSSI;

• **Hiking Trails** - provide opportunity for the community to appreciate natural landscape in the Area; Trails linking: Cheung Shan Kwu Ts (Declared Monument) and Lin Ma Hang via Robin’s Nest; and Tai Shek Mo with Lok Ma Chau via Hoo Hok Wai;

• **Bicycle Routes** – western section: facilitate appreciation of natural and rural landscape, fishponds and wetlands between Lok Ma Chau and Lo Wu Ma Tso Lung via the existing boundary patrol road to be excised from the FCA and eastern section: facilitate appreciation of natural and rural landscape between Wang Lek and Ping Che Road along Lin Ma Hang Road;

• **Lookout Points** - provide visual amenity for visitors. These include hilltops from which inspiring panoramas can be seen on the cross-boundary areas; hillsides, hilltops and valleys, etc. These Lookout Points could be provided at the tophills at Tai Shek Mo and Robin’s Nest.

**Conserve Cultural Heritage Resources**

The natural and cultural heritage resources within the Study Area provide opportunities for cultural heritage and eco-tourism development in a sustainable manner. These individual resources (Points) are scattered all over the Study Area, and could be linked up to form Lines. These Lines, when grouped together forming a Surface, further enhance the potential for development of cultural heritage and eco-tourism with a diversity of activities, including experiencing traditional village life, viewing the diversified rural landscape and the cultural heritage features, and appreciating the wetland/fishponds landscape. The Study Area will provide an ideal recreation outlet for locals and tourists alike.

A “Point-Line-Surface” Approach is adopted to bring social vibrancy and boost the local economy in a sustainable manner.

• **Revitalizing individual POINTS** (i.e. individual built heritage) of cultural heritage attraction:
  - Provide incentives for preservation of building/structures with cultural/heritage value
  - Encourage the grouping of features with cultural heritage value for adaptive re-use to add vibrancy to villages and boost the local economy
  - Provide incentive to non-governmental organizations for refurbishing vacant houses and disused schools, such as holiday camps, village life experience centres, retirement villages
  - Encourage re-cultivation of fallow agricultural land around villages

• **Developing LINES** (i.e. a trail) to link up points within a cultural heritage cluster
  - Provision of hiking trails to lead visitors from one cultural heritage point to another
  - Provision of lookout points for visual appreciation of cultural heritage points from different directions and angles

• **Extending lines to form a SURFACE** (i.e. an Area) with several cultural heritage clusters
- Groups of points and lines would form an overall setting of cultural heritage attractions

Promote Sustainable Uses

To capitalize on the boundary location as well as the natural and cultural heritage resources, appropriate scale/form of development will be identified.

- **Eco-lodge**: Clearing existing ruined structures in Ma Tso Lung for Eco-Lodge as places for appreciation of natural features, fish ponds/wetlands and rural landscape

- **Low density residential development at Kong Nga Po**: A new community to showcase green architecture and sustainable living concepts such as energy-saving building materials

- **Integration of appropriate developments inside and outside the Study Area**
  - Development Corridor along Lok Ma Chau BCP and its connecting roads linking Futian, Lok Ma Chau Loop and North Western New Territories
  - Possibility for provision of land for high value-added/hi-tech production activities and tertiary education facilities
  - New Development Areas at Kwu Tung North and Fanling North to accommodate future population growth
  - New Development Areas at Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling as reception area for displaced open storage uses and special industries to meet the territorial demand

- **Improvement and enhancement of cross-boundary traffic movements**
  - Measures to improve and enhance cross-boundary traffic at existing crossings would be examined
  - Due consideration will be given to the Liantang Control Point Proposal

- **Identification of suitable sites for sustainable and orderly village development**
  - Respect rights and interests of indigenous villagers
  - Promote orderly village expansion in line with the existing village settings

- **Improvement of Infrastructural Provision**
  - Upgrade existing local roads in terms of widening of carriageway and pavement, provision of lay-bys, improvement of gradient, curvature and junction design, and construction of access roads to support traffic demand
  - Improve sewerage infrastructure such as sewage treatment works, local treatment works of septic tanks
  - Drainage improvement works, in addition to the current study, are being proposed as part of the recommendations under various studies; upgrading of these works, where necessary, will be investigated
  - Encourage improvement of gas & water supply to serve local residents

- **Enhancement of Social Well-being**
  - Improvement of infrastructure for villages including water pipes, drainage, access roads, provision of public facilities, etc. will help satisfy villagers’ daily needs and improve their living conditions
  - Proposals such as Village Life Experiences, Cultural and Heritage Trail, Holiday Camp, Retirement Village and Environmentally Friendly Farming will help revitalize the local economy and bring job opportunities
The foregoing proposals under the Three Themes, namely, Strengthen Nature Conservation, Conserve Cultural Heritage Resources, and Promote Sustainable Uses, have been integrated into the Draft Concept Plan. These land use proposals are complementary in the formulation of an envisioned ‘Conservation, Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development Belt’ between Hong Kong and Shenzhen.

3.5 Recommended Concept Plan

The Draft Concept Plan was put forward to consult the public during the Stage 1 Community Engagement Activities. After incorporating the public comments, the Draft Concept Plan was refined to develop the Recommended Concept Plan. The Recommended Concept Plan is mainly divided into three portions.

3.5.1 Western Portion

The Western Portion of the Study Area is endowed with wetland and fishponds of ecological value and hilly terrain. The plan will promote conservation through the retention of key environmental features such as the Mai Po and HHW Wetlands/Fishponds, protection of the Ho Sheung Heung Egretary, the scenic hilly landscape as well as the rural setting. The inclusion of an eco-lodge will promote eco-tourism.

3.5.2 Middle Portion

The planning intention is to protect and enhance the ecologically and landscape significant areas within the area. This will maintain the rural character, promote sustainable and organic agricultural activities with supporting tourism and possible logistics land uses, promote agri-tourism and possible recreation facilities to enhance the local economy and maintain a desirable rural setting. In this respect, there is a focus on rehabilitating unused/degraded agricultural lands for agricultural and recreational uses. The plan will also create new sustainable living opportunities at Kong Nga Po and accommodate the proposed new Boundary Control Point which is subject to investigation under a separate study.

3.5.3 Eastern Portion

The Eastern Portion of the Study Area is predominately hilly terrain. The planning intention is to protect the natural setting, biological diversity and rural setting of the area. It will promote nature conservation through the protection of key environmental features such as existing SSSIs and designation of the Robin’s Nest Country Park.

3.6 Draft Development Plan

After the formulation of the Recommended Concept Plan, broad technical and strategic environmental assessments will be carried out to ascertain its technical feasibility. With the proposed refinements feeding back into the plan, the Recommended Concept Plan will be further refined to develop the Draft Development Plan. Principles of environmental conservation, heritage conservation and sustainable development have been adhered to in the formulation of proposals in the Draft Development Plan. After the formulation of the Draft Development Plan, it will then be put forward to the Stage 2 Community Engagement Activities to collect public comments on the plan. Similar to the Draft Concept Plan, the main three themes for the Draft Development Plan are as follows:

Theme 1: Strengthen Nature Conservation

Considering the key vision of conservation and that the majority of the study area is currently wetland/fishpond, agricultural and hilly terrain, the primary land use framework has been focused on conservation, protection and enhancement of these areas. Relevant proposals and land use decisions in relation to the protection and enhancement of the environmental value of the Study Area include the designation of a Country Park at Robin’s Nest which will enhance the ecological linkage between Wutongshan National Forest Park to Pat Sin Leng Country Park to protect and enhance the ecological linkage with
Wutongshan National Forest Park, Guangdong, protection of the Hoo Hok Wai (HHW) wetlands/fishponds, protection of the Ho Sheung Heung Egretry, protection and enhancement of the Lok Ma Chau (LMC) ecological corridor, protection of existing Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), appropriate protection for the identified fung shui woodlands (FSW) and protection of agricultural land.

**Theme 2: Conserve Cultural Heritage Resources**

The Study has adopted a “point-line-surface” approach to conserve heritage features within the Study Area. The key land use proposal to promote heritage conservation and appreciation of the visual and ecological value of the Study Area is the provision of a hiking trail (with integrated heritage trails) to provide a sustainable mode of access to the key features of the Study Area. A potential hiking trail utilizing the existing trails/footpaths across the length of the existing FCA is proposed including options for a cycle tracks to connect with the existing and proposed networks within Hong Kong. The hiking trail will also be promoted as a heritage trail with various heritage components to link (line) up the conserved heritage items (point) and clusters (surfaces) within the Study Area.

**Theme 3: Promote Sustainable Uses**

Keeping in mind the overall conservation objectives, a number of sustainable development proposals were identified under the DDP. The key land use proposals under this theme are the Kong Nga Po comprehensive development area, Hung Lung Hang residential area, proposed eco-lodge at Ma Tso Lung, development corridors in Man Kam To and Lok Ma Chau, recreational areas in Ta Kwu Ling, Pak Fu Shan and Tong To as well as the sustainable and orderly village development.

### 3.7 Recommended Development Plan

In response to the public comments received in the Stage 2 Community Engagement Activities, the Draft Development Plan had been further refined to formulate the RDP. The broad technical assessment and environmental assessment would also be carried out again to certain the technical feasibility of the land use proposals recommended in the RDP.