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**ACE-EIA Paper 3 /2025**  
***For advice on 5 December 2025***

**Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap. 499)**  
**Environmental Impact Assessment Report**

**Development at Ngau Tam Mei Area**

**PURPOSE**

This paper presents the key findings and recommendations of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report for the “Development at Ngau Tam Mei Area” (“the Project”) submitted under Section 6(2) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO) (Application No. EIA-316/2025). The Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) (“the Applicant”) and their consultant will present the EIA report at the meeting of the EIA Subcommittee.

**ADVICE SOUGHT**

2. Members’ views are sought on the findings and recommendations of the EIA report. The Director of Environmental Protection (DEP) will take into account comments from the public and the Advisory Council on the Environment in deciding whether or not to approve the EIA report under Section 8(3) of the EIAO.

**BACKGROUND**

3. CEDD and Planning Department (PlanD) jointly commissioned the Ngau Tam Mei (NTM) Land Use Review Study (“the Study”) in November 2021 to capitalise on development opportunities presented by the NTM Station on the proposed Northern Link Main Line. The Study examines comprehensive development of brownfield clusters in NTM and site identified under the “Green Belt” Review announced in the 2022 Policy Address (PA). The 130-hectare Development Area is currently occupied by village settlements, scattered brownfield operations, farmland, fishponds, and agricultural activities.

4. The 2024 PA announced the reservation of land in NTM for the "Northern Metropolis University Town (NMUT)", the third medical school, and an Integrated Hospital. The 2025 PA further established a Working Group to study the development mode and devise an industry-led approach for the NMUT sites. These initiatives align with the Northern Metropolis Action Agenda (NMAA) promulgated in October 2023, which positions NTM and San Tin Technopole within the Innovation and Technology Zone to promote "research, academic and industry" collaboration with the Shenzhen I&T Zone.

5. The Applicant, CEDD, conducted a 2-month public engagement (PE) exercise from November 2024 to January 2025 to solicit public views on the Broad Land Use Concept Plan developed under the Study. Taking into account the public views collected in the PE, policy directives, planning and engineering considerations, technical assessments as well as departmental advice, the applicant formulated a Recommended Outline Development Plan (RODP) (**Figure 1**) which serves as the basis of the EIA study of the Project.

6. The Applicant submitted on 13 August 2025 the EIA report for the Project for approval under the EIAO. The DEP, after taking advice from relevant authorities, considered that the EIA report met the requirements of the EIA Study Brief (SB) of the Project (No. ESB-363/2023) and the Technical Memorandum on EIA Process (TM), for the purpose of its exhibition for public inspection under Section 7(4) of the EIAO on 6 October 2025.

## **NEED FOR THE PROJECT**

7. To take forward the initiatives in NMAA and the 2024 PA, land will be reserved in the eastern part of the Project Site for development of a university town ("UniTown") and the third medical school. In view of the demand for health care services in the Yuen Long and North Districts, as well as the existing and planned population in the NM, an Integrated Hospital is needed to provide comprehensive healthcare services. It can also serve as a teaching hospital for the proposed third medical school in NTM. To make best use of the enhanced accessibility brought about by the proposed NTM Station, a residential community is planned around the Station, with comprehensive amenities and supporting facilities to attract and retain top-notch academics and researchers.

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT**

8. The Project covers a total development area of about 130 hectares (ha), comprising **(i)** approximately 66 ha for the UniTown, Integrated Hospital, other Government, Institution and Community facilities and reserve; **(ii)** approximately 19 ha for residential development; **(iii)** approximately 29 ha for roads and other uses (including railway and amenity); **(iv)** approximately 13 ha for open space; and **(v)** 3 ha for green belt.

9. The Project is a designated project (DP) under Item 1, Schedule 3 of the EIAO<sup>1</sup>. The Project also covers the following individual DPs under Schedule 2 of the EIAO<sup>2</sup>(**Figure 2**):

- (a) Item A.1<sup>3</sup> – Construction and operation of a district distributor road (Road D1) and associated road works at San Tin Highway; and
- (b) Item I.1(b)<sup>4</sup> – Revitalisation of the Ngau Tam Mei Drainage Channel (NTMDC) which is partially located within 300 m from the nearest boundary of an existing conservation area.

## ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

10. The EIA report concludes that the construction and operation of the Project will comply fully with the EIAO requirements with no adverse residual environmental impacts. The Project is expected to yield several environmental benefits, including:

- (a) **Enhancement of Rural Environment and Land Efficiency**  
Brownfields currently cluster throughout the Project Site, including logistics and freight operations, open storage, vehicle-related operations and warehouses/workshops, which produce adverse environmental, traffic and visual impacts to the neighbourhood. These scattered brownfield operations create environmental nuisances such as odour and fixed noise, resulting in land use interface problems. Through comprehensive development with more optimal uses, the Project provides opportunities to resolve these interface issues and significantly improve the local environment. With the proposed developments and infrastructures, land use efficiency would be enhanced and the overall environment in the area can be substantially improved, transforming the current incoherent rural fringe landscape into a well-planned, integrated community.
- (b) **Revitalisation of NTMDC**  
The existing NTMDC within the Project Site is primarily a concrete channelised waterway. Under the RODP, the NTMDC will be retained, widened, and revitalised to enhance its ecological function. Non-building area and “Open Space” will be provided along both sides of NTMDC, and the bottom and banks of the revitalised watercourse will be provided with natural substrates to encourage the establishment

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<sup>1</sup> Item 1 of Schedule 3 – “An urban development or redevelopment project covering an area of more than 50 ha”.

<sup>2</sup> A Schedule 2 DP under the EIAO would require an environmental permit (EP) for its construction and operation.

<sup>3</sup> Item A.1 of Part I, Schedule 2 – “A carriageway for motor vehicles that is an expressway, trunk road, primary distributor road or district distributor road”.

<sup>4</sup> Item I.1(b) of Part I, Schedule 2 – “A drainage channel or river training and diversion works ... (b)located less than 300 m from the nearest boundary of an existing or planned ... (vii)conservation area.”.

and colonisation of native flora and freshwater fauna. Furthermore, as the NTMDC serves as a major flight corridor and foraging ground for ardeids and other waterbird species, appropriate vegetation will be planted along the riparian zone. Peripheral tree planting on both sides of the channel will also act as a visual screen between the waterway and surrounding buildings, while forming a continuous movement corridor for waterbirds. These measures are expected to significantly enhance the ecological value of the NTMDC compared to the baseline condition.

- (c) **Provision of Open Space and “Blue-Green Spine” along NTMDC**  
The revitalised NTMDC will form a multi-functional blue-green spine linking the UniTown, Integrated Hospital and residential neighbourhood across the NTM New Development Area (NDA). Apart from forming part of the integrated blue-green infrastructure to reduce flood risks and enhance environmental sustainability, the blue-green spine will be integrated with surrounding public open space and incorporated with pedestrian and cycle tracks connecting key developments of the NTM NDA. An open space network radiating from the planned NTM station towards the blue-green spine and atop the NTM depot is also proposed.
- (d) **Improved Sewerage Infrastructure and Water Quality**  
The Project will improve the existing sewerage infrastructure with new sewerage networks and a new sewage pumping station, benefiting both the population of nearby existing residential developments/villages and the proposed developments. Water quality will be improved through the introduction of new sewerage networks to currently unsewered areas. The improved stormwater management system, including the revitalised NTMDC and proposed retention tanks, will mitigate potential flooding issues and enhance overall climate resilience.
- (e) **Promotion of Walkability and Provision of Pedestrian Network**  
The Project plans a comprehensive, people-centred network of pedestrian walkways and cycle tracks that will interconnect key destinations including public transport hubs, employment areas, residential neighbourhoods, retail outlets, and community and healthcare facilities. To ensure accessibility and comfort in various weather conditions, selected sections of the walkways will be elevated and covered, creating a barrier-free, weather-proof environment that encourages walking and cycling as daily modes of transport. This integrated network supports an active and healthy lifestyle, reduces reliance on mechanised vehicles, cuts carbon emissions, and fosters vibrant, well-connected communities within the Development Area.

## **CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

11. The EIA report has described the consideration of different development options for the Project, including major road connection, configuration of NTMDC, construction method and phasing, etc. to avoid and minimise potential environmental impacts. The recommended options have taken into account environmental considerations, site limitation and operational constraints, as well as comments received from the public. The key approaches adopted to avoid or minimise environmental impacts are summarised below:

### **Avoidance of Impact**

- (a) Avoid encroachment into sites of conservation importance, including Lam Tsuen Country Park, Conservations Areas, Wetland Conservation Area, Priority Site for Enhanced Conservation and Other Specified Uses;
- (b) Avoid/minimise ecological impact on pond habitat to the west of San Tin Highway which are considered to have moderate ecological value; and
- (c) Preserve and revitalise NTMDC, which served as a major flight corridor with the NTM area, to enhance its overall ecological value.

### **Minimisation of Impacts**

- (a) Minimise bird collision and obstruction of flight corridor through the provision of peripheral buffer planting, non-transparent or non-glaring materials and non-building area of approximately 20 m to 30 m for both sides of NTMDC in the UniTown, and area adjacent to the downstream section of NTMDC is zoned “Open Space” in order to maintain flight corridor; and
- (b) Minimise the water quality impact, the revitalisation works of NTMDC would be undertaken in dry season, with clear site demarcation and flow diversion to avoid leakage of sediments or other pollutants into downstream section.

## **SPECIFIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS TO HIGHLIGHT**

12. The key EIA findings of specific environmental aspects are highlighted below:

## Ecology

### Ecological Survey

13. The Project Site is predominantly rural in character, comprising low-density residential developments, military facilities, scattered brownfield operations, drainage channels, farmland, fishponds and agricultural activities. Ecological baseline surveys were conducted over a 12-month period covering both dry and wet seasons, in accordance with EIAO Technical Memorandum and Project SB requirements.

14. A total of 13 habitat types were identified within the assessment area and Project Site, namely: marsh/reed, pond, natural watercourse, modified watercourse, semi-natural watercourse, agricultural land, woodland, mixed woodland, plantation, shrubland, grassland, village/orchard, and developed area/wasteland. Over 70% of the Project Site consists of developed area/wasteland and village/orchard habitats of low impact significance. The NTMDC was identified as having moderate ecological value, serving as a major flight corridor and foraging ground for ardeids and other waterbirds. No egrettries or night roosts were identified within the Project Site.

15. The baseline ecological surveys recorded multiple species of conservation importance within the Project Site, including 28 avifauna species (e.g. Chinese Pond Heron, Great Egret, White-throated Kingfisher), 4 flora species (e.g. *Aquilaria sinensis*, *Brainea insignis*), 10 mammal species, and various herpetofauna and aquatic species. Most of these are commonly distributed across Hong Kong.

### Evaluation of Potential Ecological Impacts

16. The evaluation of overall impact significance on habitat is derived by considering multiple factors, including habitat quality/ecological value, size/abundance, regional significance, etc. Within the 126 ha of habitat to be affected by the Project, approximately 70% (i.e. approximate 89 ha) comprises developed area/wasteland and village/orchard. These artificial habitats have low impact significance. The remaining 30% (i.e. approximate 37 ha) consists of natural and semi-natural habitats, most of which are scattered, small-scale, and subject to existing disturbance.

17. Unavoidable loss of 2.55 ha of wetland habitat with "low to moderate" impact significance remains, comprising 1.95 ha of marsh/reed and 0.60 ha of natural watercourse. These wetland habitats, while scattered and disturbed, are uncommon in Hong Kong and support wetland-dependent species of conservation importance. In accordance with EIAO Technical Memorandum Annex 16, wetland compensation on a "like-for-like" basis is proposed to mitigate this impact. Paragraph 19 further elaborates on the wetland compensation. A summary on ecological value and overall impact significance of habitats to be affected is in **Table 1**.

18. In addition to the wetland compensation, further ecological measures have been proposed, such as preservation and revitalisation of NTMDC, conducting pre-construction fauna surveys, species capture and translocation, and provision of wildlife corridor and animal barriers. Following comprehensive impact assessment and application of recommended measures, residual impacts are reduced to acceptable levels.

#### Wetland Compensation

19. The proposed wetland compensation site (**Figure 3**) is located between Tsing Long Highway and San Tam Road at Sha Po area, approximately 2.5 km northeast of the Project Site. Currently occupied by developed area/wasteland overgrown with ruderal vegetation and exotic species, the site has low ecological value. The site is proposed for wetland compensation due to its connectivity with adjacent wetland habitats (i.e. Park Yoho wetland Fairyland and wetland habitats in Nam Sang Wai locating approximately 45 m and 220 m from the proposed wetland compensation site respectively) and the same river system as NTMDC (i.e. Kam Tin River adjacent to the proposed wetland compensation site). This river system connection is expected to facilitate the movement of species between habitats, effectively mitigating the on-site impact by supporting a diverse and resilient ecosystem.

#### Revitalisation of NTMDC

20. The NTMDC will be preserved, widened, and revitalised under the RODP to significantly enhance its ecological value and function. The revitalisation design includes:

- (a) Naturalised substrates – provision of natural materials on channel beds and banks (e.g. permeable paver blocks, porous concrete, natural granite) to encourage colonisation by native flora and freshwater fauna;
- (b) Riparian vegetation – planting of native species selected for their ecological suitability and capacity to support local wildlife, particularly providing food sources and cover for recorded avifauna, mammal, herpetofauna and invertebrate species;
- (c) Flight corridor enhancement – designation of 20-30 m non-building setback on both sides of NTMDC within UniTown, with downstream sections zoned as "Open Space", and peripheral tree planting as screening to maintain and enhance the major flight corridor function for ardeids and waterbirds; and
- (d) Bird collision mitigation – use of non-transparent, non-glaring materials on building facades and implementation of phased construction to minimise disturbance. These integrated measures are

expected to substantially improve foraging opportunities, habitat quality, and ecological connectivity compared to the existing concrete-lined baseline condition, benefiting fauna species identified in recent surveys and creating a multi-functional blue-green spine through the NTM NDA.

### **Air Quality**

21. Cumulative air quality impact arising from the vehicular emission from existing and planned open roads, proposed transport facilities and parking site, as well as existing and planned industrial emissions with assessment area has been assessed. All existing and planned air sensitive receivers would comply with the air quality objectives, and mitigation measures is not necessary.

22. Potential odour impact from the operation of existing lard boiling factory, chicken farm and Tam Mei Barrack Sewage Treatment Plant in the vicinity of the Project area, and the proposed sewage pumping station (SPS) within the Project area have been assessed in the EIA Report. With the implementation of odour control measures, including provision of odour removal system for the proposed SPS, proper planning on the location of air sensitive uses, and proper storage and full enclosure of odourous materials/emission sources for the lard boiling factory, no adverse odour impact during operation phase is anticipated.

23. With the implementation of the recommended measures, the EIA has concluded that adverse air quality impact is not anticipated from the Project.

### **Water Quality/Sewerage**

24. Sewerage generated from the NTM NDA will be discharged to the public sewerage system via the proposed SPS. Stormwater control measures including provision of adequate stormwater drainage system with suitable pollutant removal devices, and blue-green infrastructure would be provided. Adverse water quality impact during operation phase is not anticipated.

25. During construction, recommended measures for site run-off would be implemented, including provision of channels or earth bunds or sandbag barriers to direct stormwater to silt removal facilities, provision of perimeter channels at site boundaries to intercept storm run-off from outside of the site, and silt removal facilities should be maintained and the deposited silt and grit should be removed regularly. The effluent discharge quality must meet the requirements specified in the discharge licence. With the implementation of the recommended measures, no adverse water quality impact is anticipated during construction phase.

### **Cultural Heritage**

26. No declared monuments, proposed monuments, graded historic buildings or government historic sites identified by the Antiquities and Monuments Office,



was identified within the Project Site. In response to comments obtained during public engagement, Wai Cheung Ancestral Hall will be preserved in situ in view of its significance in cultural heritage. The former Yau Tam Mei Primary School is valued for its social significance because many descendants of Yau Tam Mei Tusen were educated there. The school is also proposed to be preserved in situ within the UniTown for potential adaptive reuse.

### **Other Environmental Aspects**

27. The potential impacts of other environmental aspects including noise, waste management, land contamination, fisheries, hazard to life, landfill gas hazard, and electric and magnetic field have been assessed in the EIA report. With the implementation of recommended mitigation measures, the Project will comply with the relevant requirements of the EIA SB and the EIAO Technical Memorandum and adverse environmental impacts are not anticipated.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND AUDIT**

28. The EIA report has included an Environmental Monitoring and Audit (EM&A) Manual, which recommends an EM&A programme during the construction and operational phases of the Project, including construction monitoring and site audit for air quality, noise, water quality, waste management, land contamination, ecology, landscape, and cultural heritage issues. Also, the operational phase EM&A has covered ecology, landscape and visual and cultural heritage aspects.

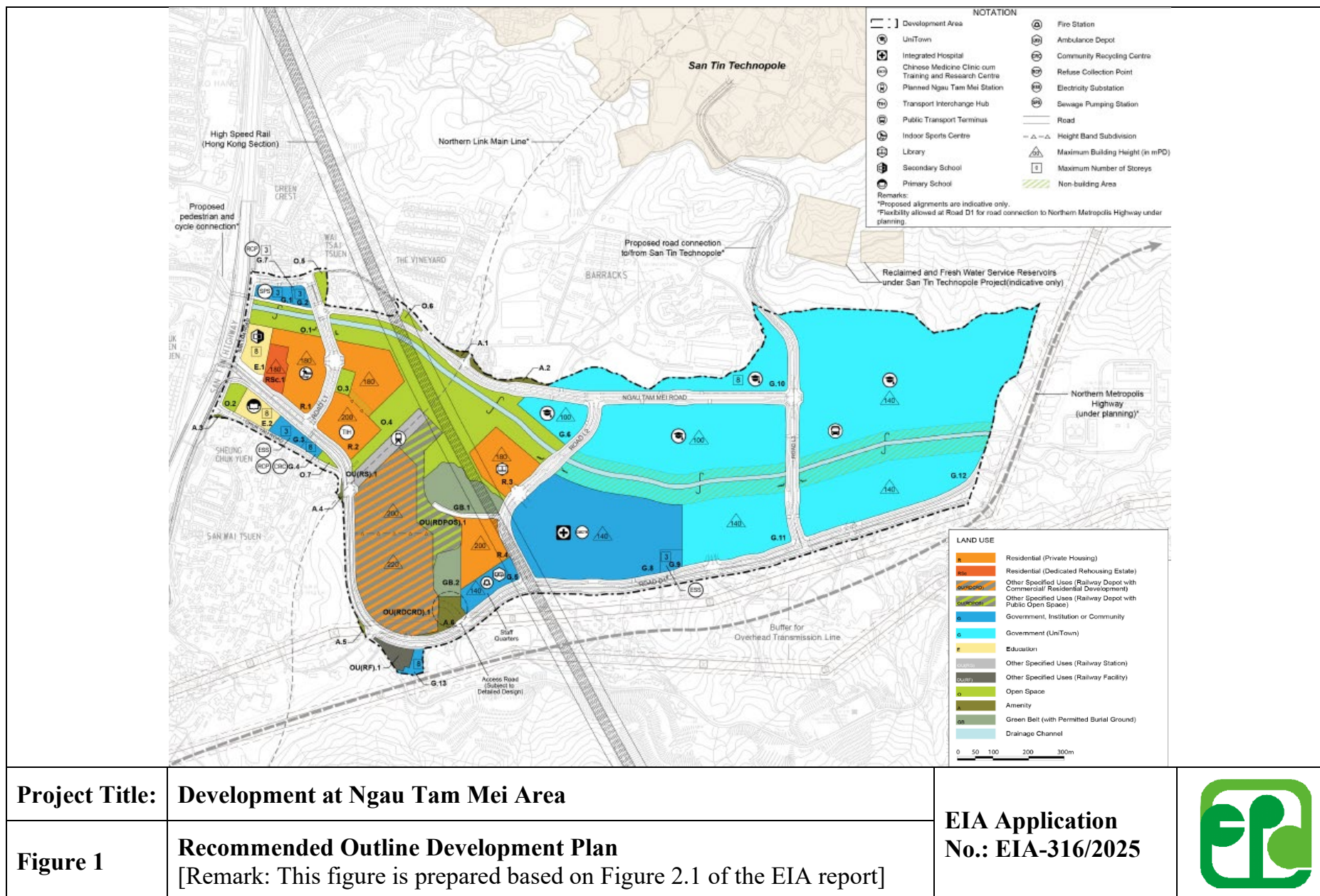
### **PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

29. The Applicant has made the EIA report, EM&A Manual and Executive Summary available for public inspection under the EIAO from 6 October 2025 to 4 November 2025. A summary of all the public comments received by the Environmental Protection Department during the public inspection period and a gist of the main concerns raised in the public comments will be provided separately.

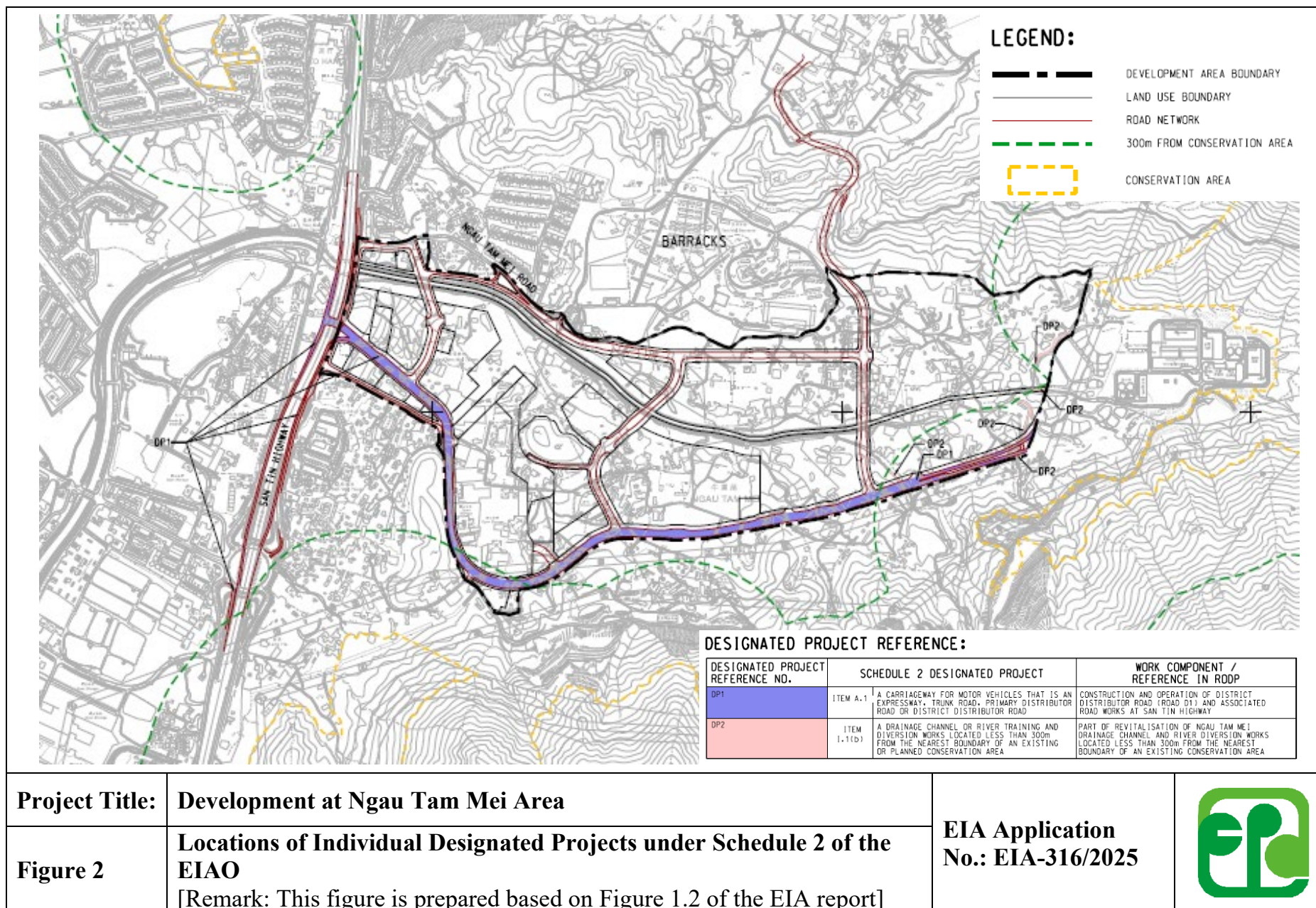
**November 2025**

**Environmental Assessment Division**

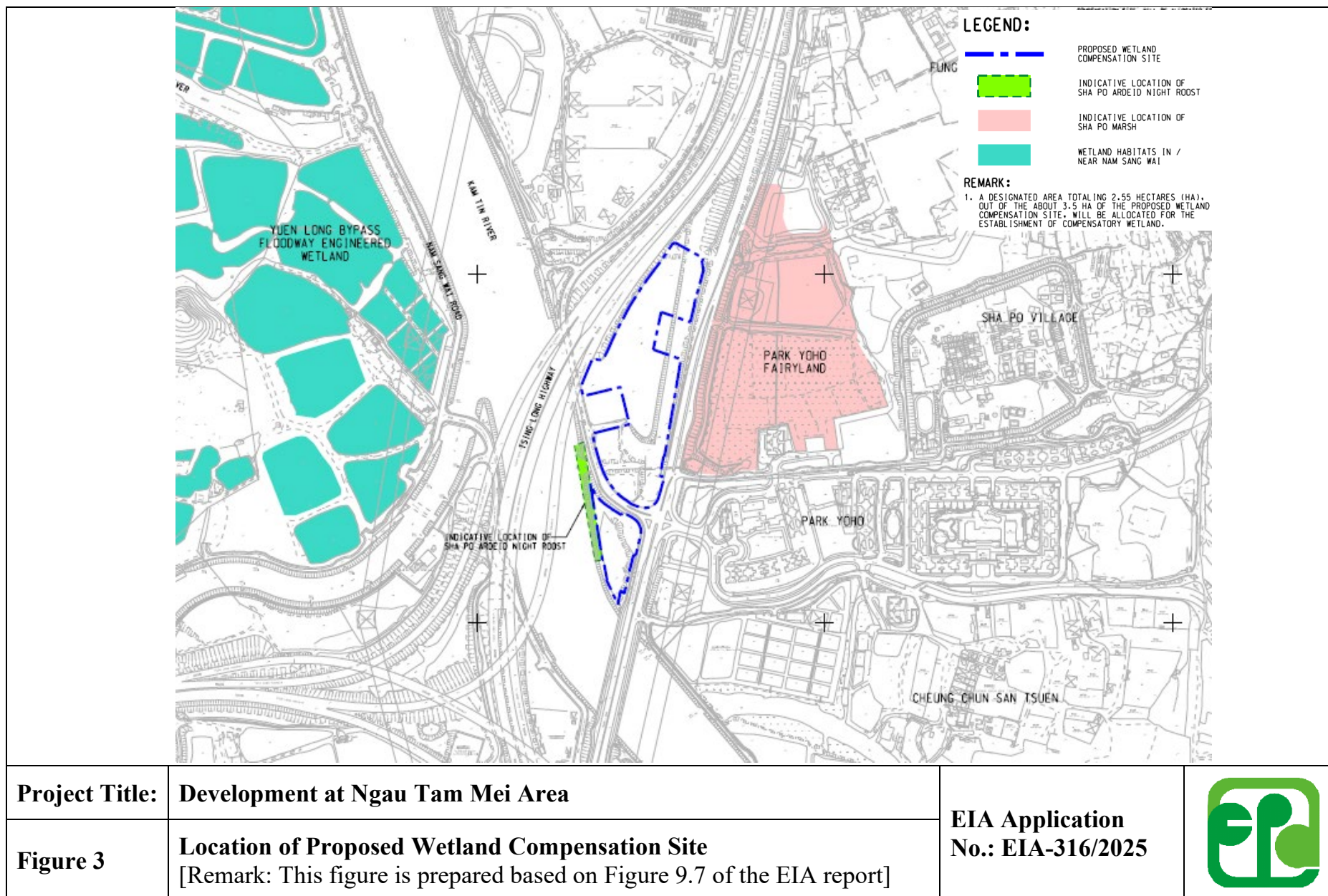
**Environmental Protection Department**











**Table 1: Summary on Ecological Value and Overall Impact Significance of Habitats to be Affected**

<b>Habitat</b>	<b>Ecological Value<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Overall Impact Significance<sup>2</sup></b>
<u><b>Wetland</b></u>		
Ponds (6.08 ha)	Pond near W8a and W8b: Low to moderate Other Ponds: Low	Pond near W8a and W8b: Low Other Ponds: Low
Modified Watercourses (2.07 ha)	NTMDC: Moderate Others: Low	NTMDC: Low Others: Low
Marsh/Reed (1.95 ha)	Low to moderate	Low to moderate
Semi-natural Watercourses (0.83 ha)	W8, W8a and W8b: Low to moderate Others: Low	W8, W8a and W8b: Low Others: Low
Natural Watercourses (0.6 ha)	Low to moderate	Low to moderate
<u><b>Non-wetland</b></u>		
Developed Area/ Wasteland (50.64 ha)	Low	Low
Village/Orchard (38.43 ha)	Low to moderate	Low
Grassland (5.78 ha)	Low to moderate	Low
Agricultural Land (5.65 ha)	Low to moderate	Low
Mixed Woodland (5.55 ha)	Low to moderate	Low
Plantation (4.98 ha)	Hillside plantation: Low to moderate Others: Low	Low
Shrubland (2.46 ha)	Low to moderate	Low
Woodland (0.77 ha)	Moderate	Low

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to Tables 9.4-9.12 of the EIA Report for evaluation of ecological value

<sup>2</sup> Please refer to Tables 9.16-9.25 of the EIA Report for evaluation of potential ecological impacts

Note:

- i) Considerations of ecological value include: naturalness, size, diversity, habitat rarity, recreatability, fragmentation, ecological linkage, potential value, nursery/breeding ground, age and abundance/richness of wildlife.
- ii) Considerations of impact significance include: habitat quality (ecological value), species/ecological resources, size/abundance, duration, reversibility, magnitude and regional significance.