GLOBAL INNOVATION CENTRE

Report to the Town Planning Board Meeting
11 July 2025

香 港 大 學
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

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VISION

01

With interdisciplinary upstream research as the cornerstone, the GIC seeks to find innovative solutions to address challenges faced by humankind and create knowledge that benefits the humankind

CHALLENGES FACED BY HUMANS

CLIMATE CHANGE

Research in new energy, carbon-neutral technologies, and new materials can all contribute to tackling problems brought by climate change, such as extreme weather patterns

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Research in life sciences and natural sciences will help us understand the root of diseases and advance vaccinology

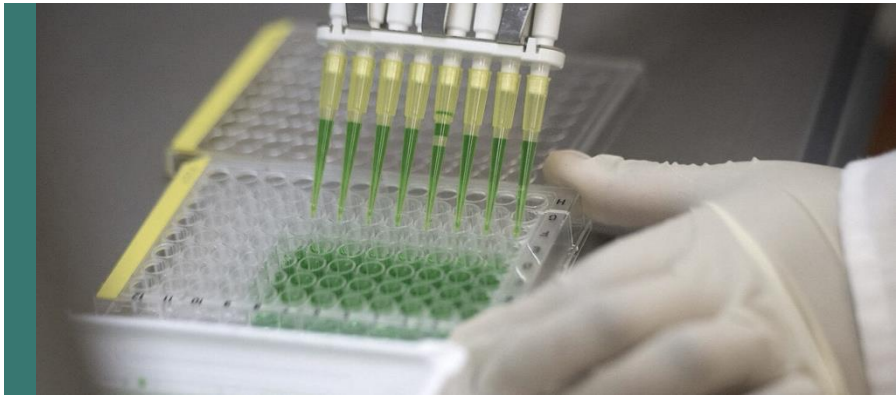
OPPORTUNITIES FOR HUMANS

NEW MATERIALS

Research in materials science and quantum science will allow us to discover new materials and processes that can advance medicine, machinery, manufacturing, etc.

NEW THERAPEUTICS

Further research in life sciences and molecular sciences is key to discovering new therapeutics that seek to cure illnesses with limited solutions today



INITIAL STRATEGIC RESEARCH AREAS

QUANTUM SCIENCES

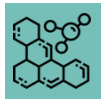
Study of properties and behaviours of atoms and particles for new technology and applications

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

A branch of computer science focusing on developing computer systems that can reason, learn and act in ways which require the intelligence level of a human or more

LIFE SCIENCES

Study of living organisms and biological processes, encompassing cell biology, genetics, microbiology, etc.



MOLECULAR SCIENCES

Study of the structures, properties, and interactions between molecules for development of new materials, pharmaceuticals and the like

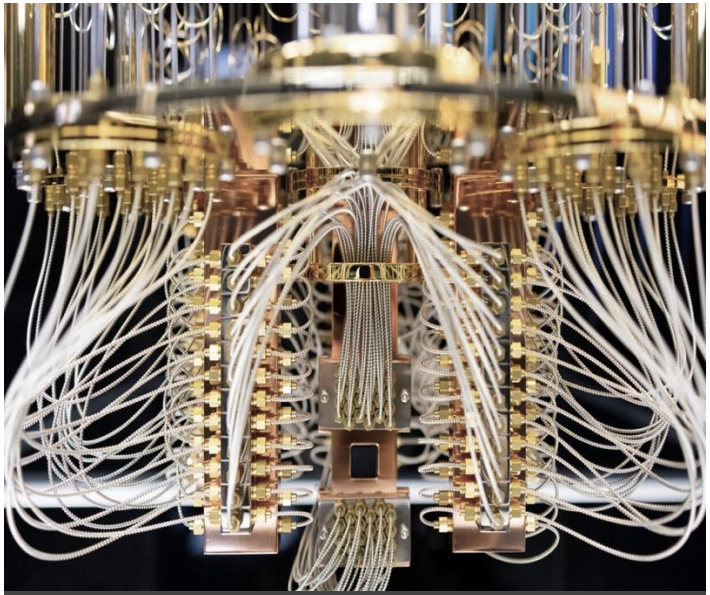
ENERGY TECHNOLOGY

Study of the development, optimisation, and integration of systems for energy generation, storage, conversion, and utilisation

FINANCIAL TECHNOLOGY

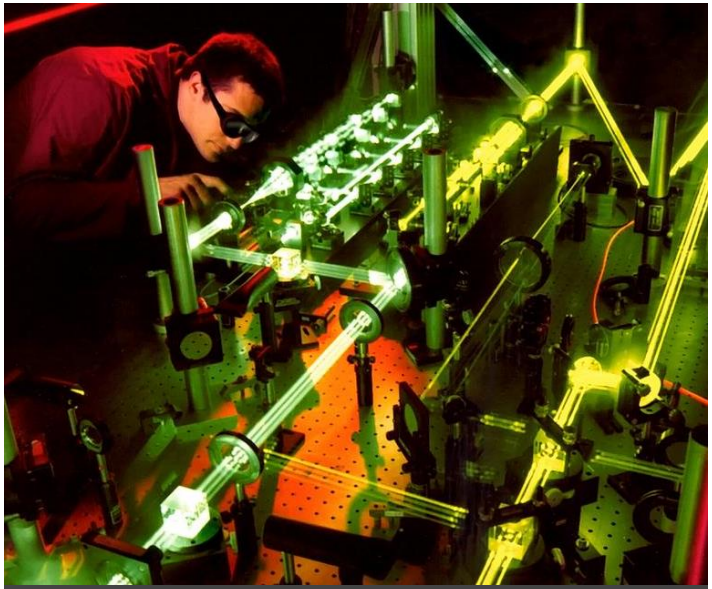
Integration of digital technology with financial services to innovate and enhance performance

DEEP-DIVE: QUANTUM SCIENCES



Research in **quantum computing** will greatly improve computers' **processing power**. Solving a problem with a very large number used to take thousands of years, and is a matter of **minutes** now.

Greater processing power means **faster medicine discovery**, **more advanced AI models**, **better route planning on GPS**, etc.



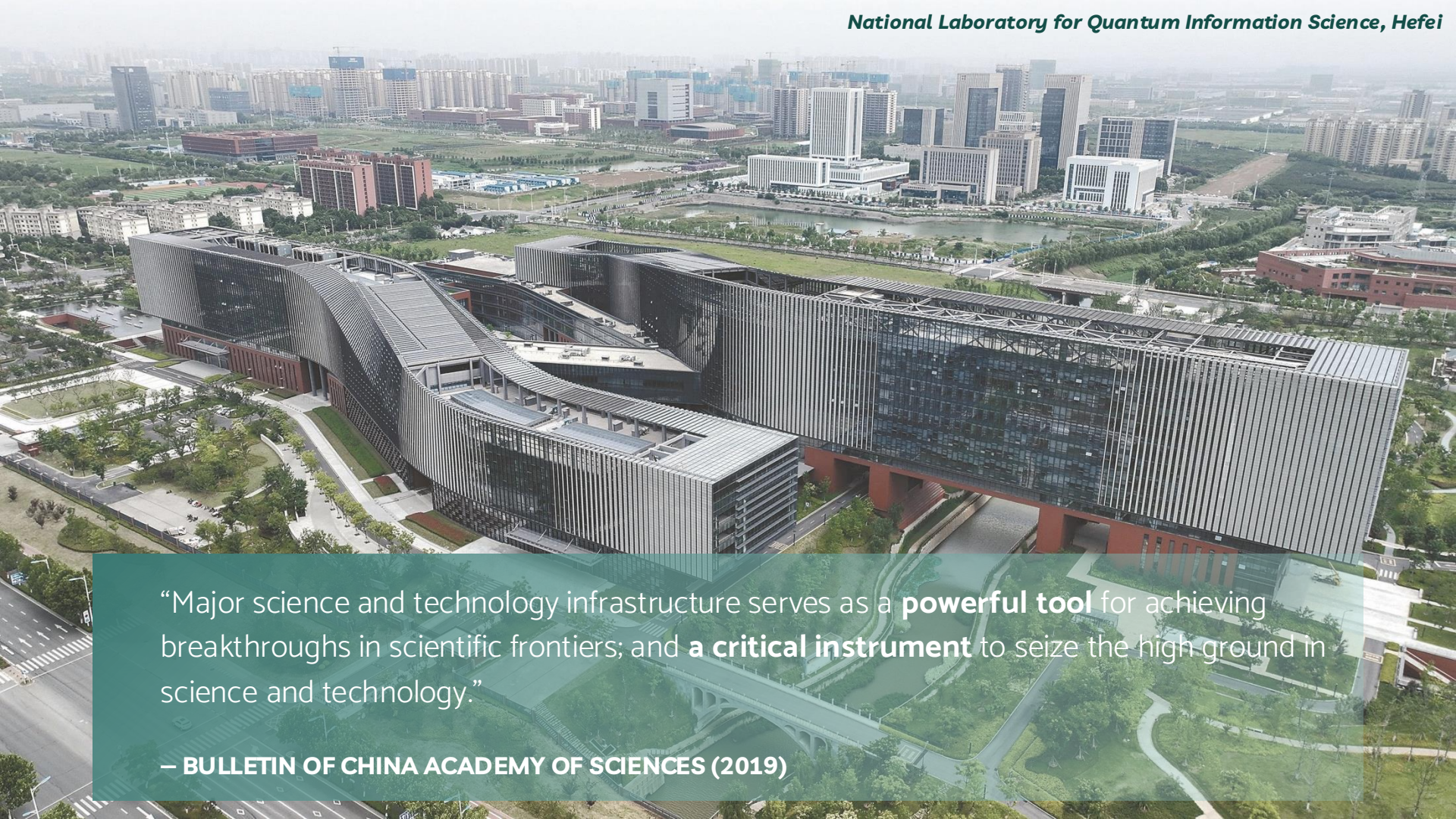
Research in **quantum optics** aims to understand and manipulate light and matter with quantum precision.

Breakthroughs in this area may advance quantum sensors to **improve the resolution and sensitivity** of medical imaging, or may **drive innovations** in secure data transfer and development of quantum computers.

DEEP-DIVE: MOLECULAR SCIENCES

Research in **molecular sciences** can pave way to our understanding of atoms and molecules and how they behave. If we can figure out how things work the way they do, we can find **breakthroughs** in many areas.

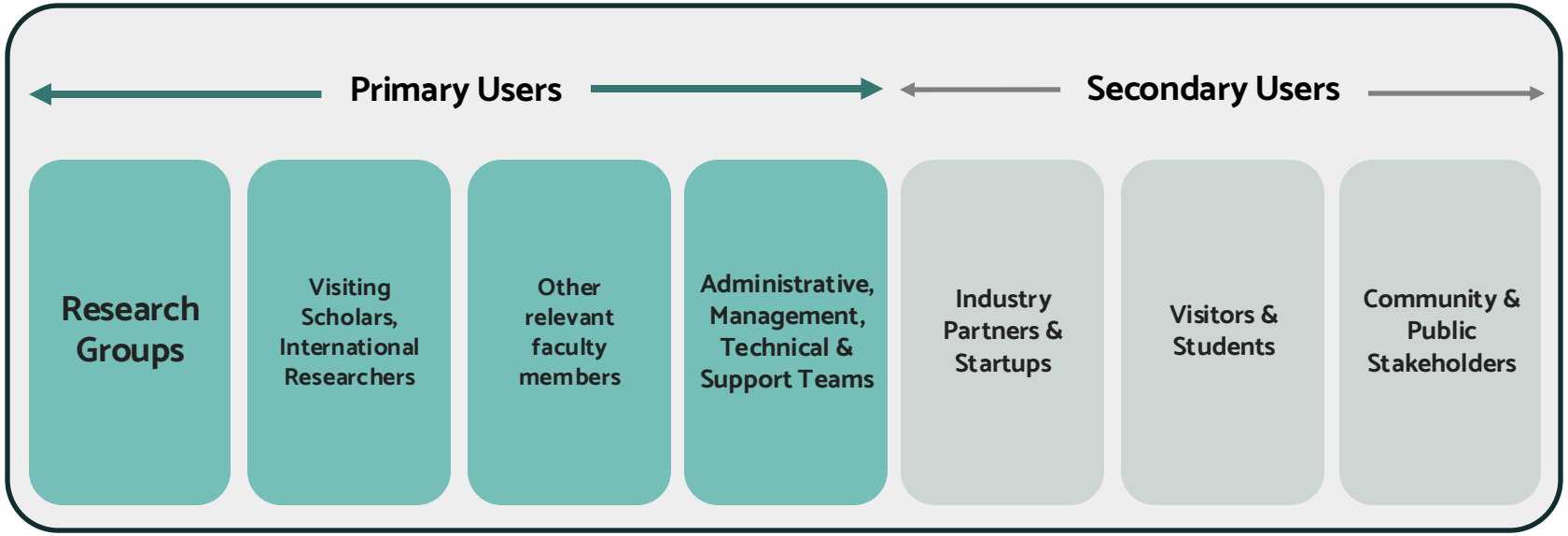
Deeper molecular research means **designing better drugs**, **creating new materials for medical or energy use**, **producing bright, thinner and more flexible OLED**, etc.



"Major science and technology infrastructure serves as a **powerful tool** for achieving breakthroughs in scientific frontiers; and **a critical instrument** to seize the high ground in science and technology."

– BULLETIN OF CHINA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES (2019)

GIC MAIN USERS



WHAT DO THE RESEARCHERS SAY?

On People

To truly succeed, we need more than just infrastructure; ***we need the right people, a supportive culture, and strong administrative staff***

On Space

Innovation doesn't thrive in silos. The GIC must be ***embedded in the city, connected to HKU, and open to the world***. It should be a place where disciplines blur, ideas flow, and people from all walks of life interact.

On Operation

We have the potential to become a key innovation node … With the GIC, we would establish industry-sponsored centres – creating an innovative hub where academic knowledge solves problems for the humankind.

WHAT CAN THE BEST SITE OFFER?

PROXIMITY TO A UNIVERSITY

This is important for GIC as a fountainhead of knowledge discovery as university support will be able to drive this agenda

ADEQUATE SIZE

Advanced research tools usually need a lot of highly customised space that can only fit in newly built building clusters

RESEARCH CULTURE

The synergy of any research centres shall root in the environment and culture of its vicinity to maximise its potential

EARLY OUTCOMES

The earlier the GIC can operate, the sooner it can yield tangible results and become an engine for economic transformation

HKU LEADING EXCELLENCE

Unparalleled achievements:

11th
Worldwide, QS 2026
#2 in Asia and #1 in HK

12 top 100 global researchers

5 ranked **#1 in Asia**

Research.com 2025

120+
International recruits in 2024

10th
Worldwide, having **53 Clarivate's Highly Cited Researchers (2024)**

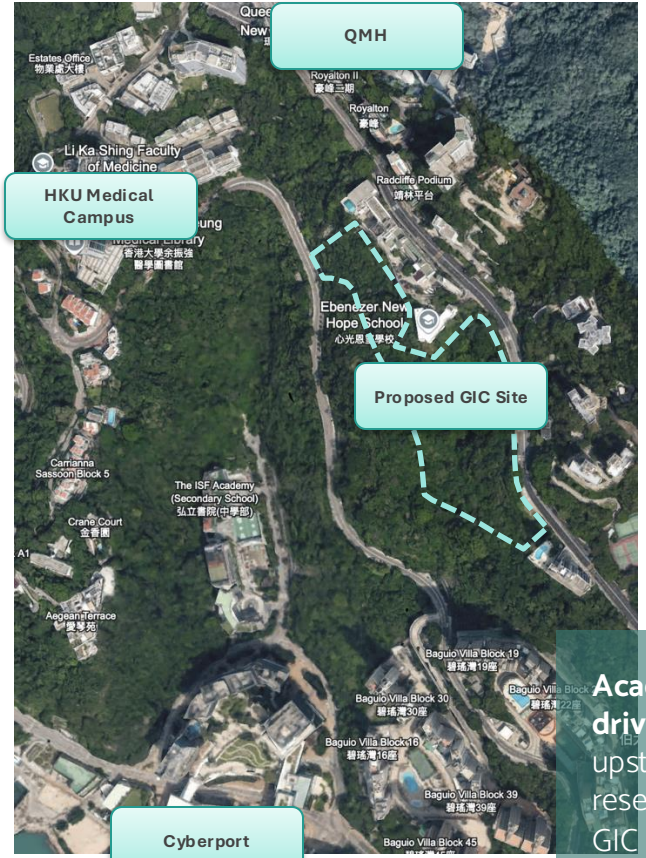
"As a leader in higher education, HKU actively **promotes Hong Kong as a premier hub for global talent to study, innovate, and conduct research**. HKU remains committed to excellence and innovation, and advancing its mission by actively supporting national strategies in developing our country into a leading nation in education."

Professor Xiang Zhang
President & Vice-Chancellor, HKU

WHERE CAN WE MAXIMISE SUCCESS?

	PROXIMITY	SIZE	ENVIRONMENT	COMMUNITY	PEOPLE TALENT	READINESS
VICINITY OF POKFULAM	+++ (about **5 to 7 mins** drive from HKU Main Campus)	++ (4 hectares)	+++ (surrounded by HKU Campuses, QMH, Cyberport)	+++ (adjacent to well established & existing community and proximity to city core)	+++ (synergy with proximity to HKU to integrate talent pipeline)	+++ (R(C)6 ready for development)
MOUNT DAVIS SITE	++ (about **7 to 10 mins** drive from HKU Main Campus)	++ (about 4 hectares)	++ (relatively close to HKU)	++ (close to established community and proximity to city core)	++ (relatively close to HKU for talent integration)	+ (Currently zoned as Green Belt)
NORTHERN METROPOLIS	X (about **33 mins** drive from HKU Main Campus)	? (subject to Gov't allocation)	? (Yet to assess before a critical mass can be formed)	? (Yet to assess before a critical mass can be formed and development still to be established)	? (Yet to assess before critical mass can be formed)	? (land acquisition underway; a long development programme)

DEEP-DIVE: UPSTREAM RESEARCH WITH DIFFERENT DRIVERS



Academia-driven upstream research in GIC

DEEP-DIVE: GIC CAN BE FAST

	SAN TIN PHASE 1	SAN TIN PHASE 2	NGAU TAM MEI UNI TOWN	GIC
2024 DEC	Site formation commences			
2026/2027		Land resumption commences		Land use rezoning application
2027/2028			Site formation commences	Site formation commences
2031	First population intake (anticipated)			
2032				★ First building in operation (anticipated)
2034	**Completion of NOL Main Line**			Upcoming phases
	Bulk population intake (anticipated)			

SNAPSHOTS AT THE WORLD

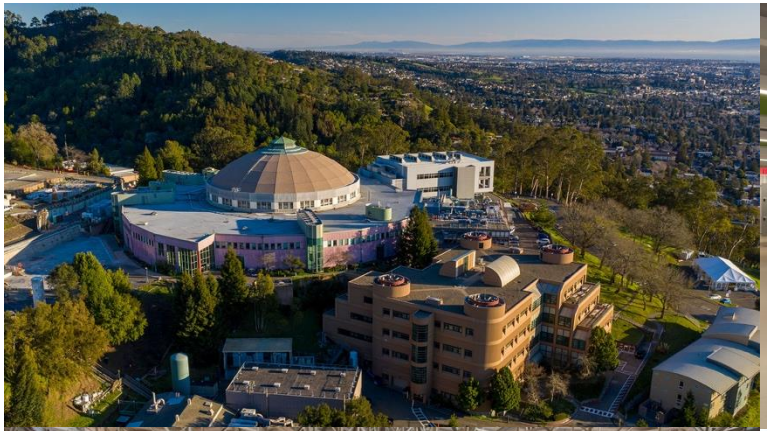
Biopolis
Singapore

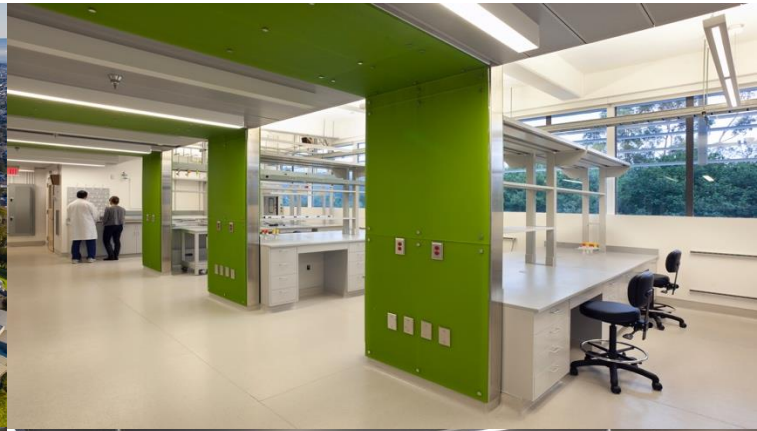
03

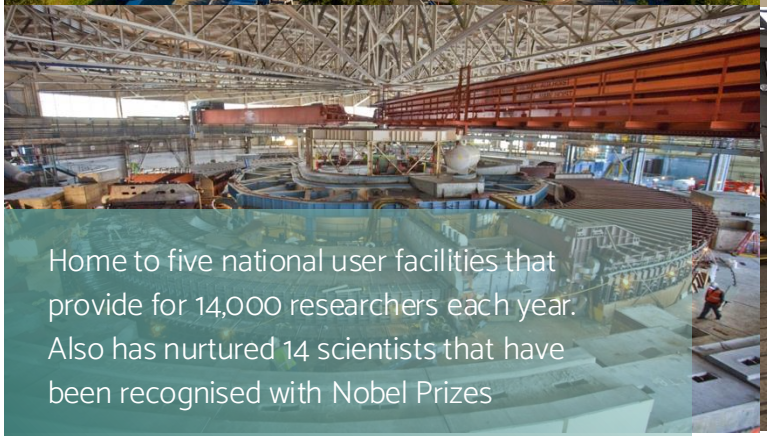
WHAT ARE OUR PEERS DOING?

	SINGAPORE	CHINA	USA	HONG KONG
	FUSIONOPOLIS	**NATIONAL LABORATORY FOR QUANTUM INFORMATION SCIENCE**	**LAWRENCE BERKELEY NATIONAL LABORATORY**	**GIC** *proposed*
GFA (APPROX)	392,500m²	480,000m²	190,660m²	190,000m²
SHORT-TERM RESIDENCE	YES (Serviced Apartments)	YES	YES	YES
RESEARCH AREAS	information & communication tech, media, physical sciences, engineering	quantum technology	biosciences, computer sciences, energy technology, earth and environmental sciences, physical sciences	life sciences, AI, energy, quantum sciences, molecular sciences, fintech
PROXIMITY TO A UNIVERSITY	YES (NUS)	YES (USTC)	YES (UC Berkeley)	YES (HKU)

DEEP-DIVE: LAWRENCE BERKELEY LAB

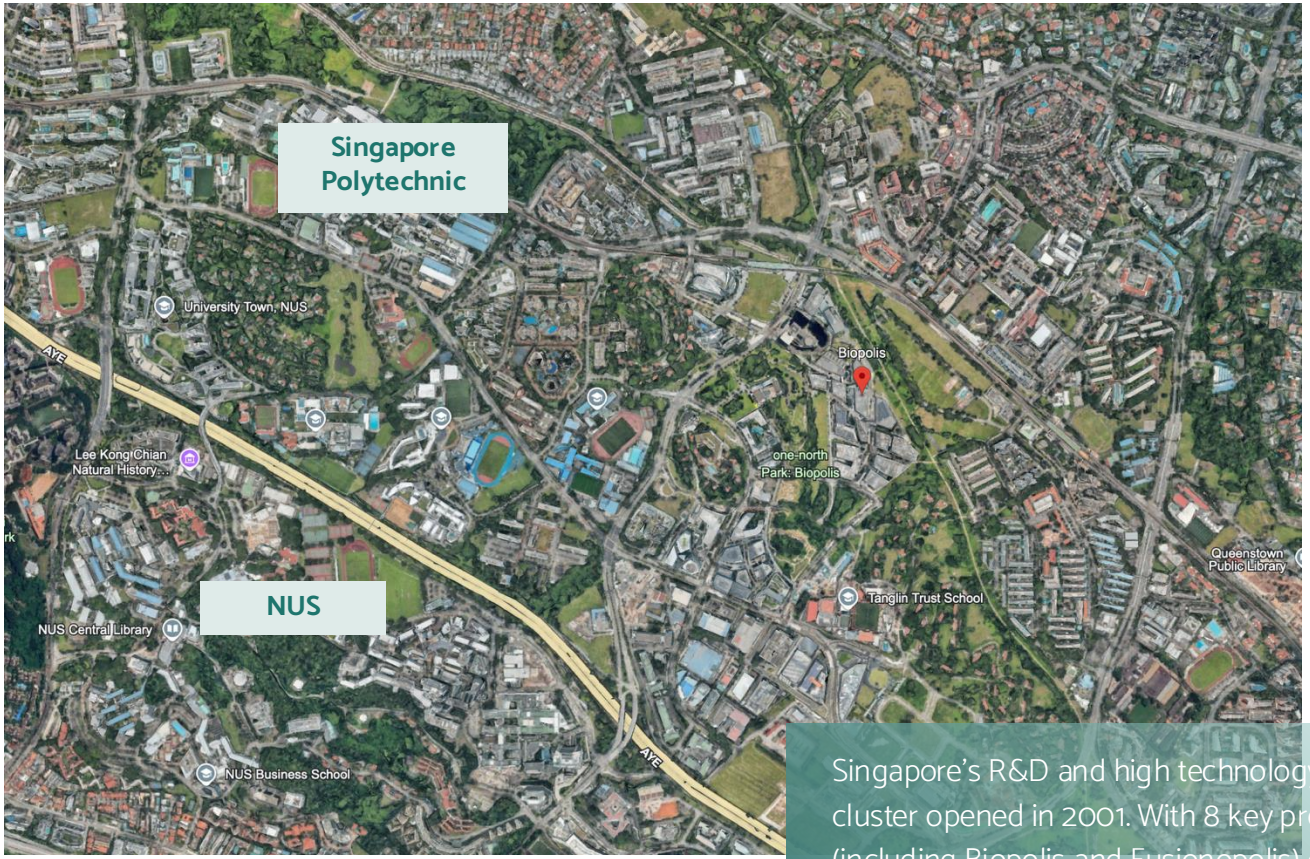






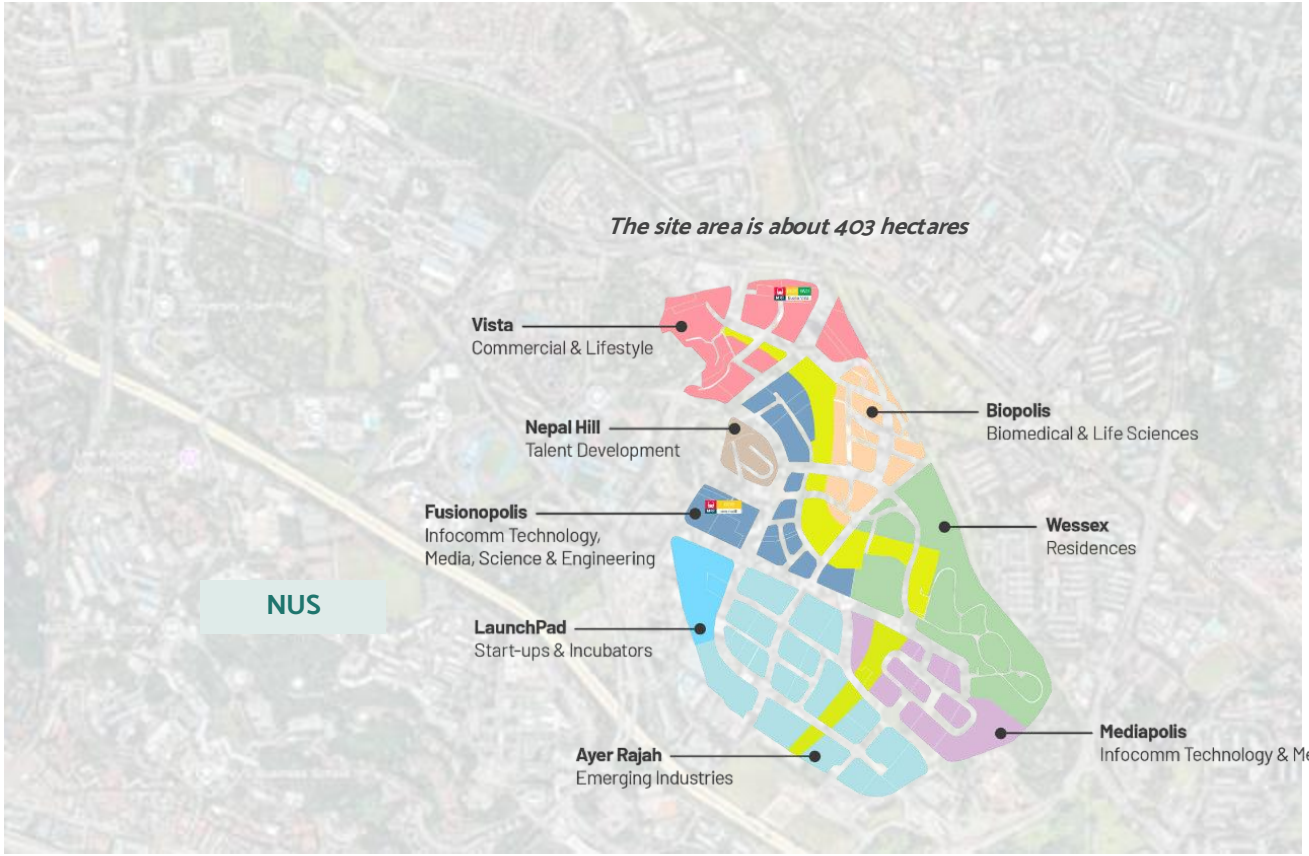
Home to five national user facilities that provide for 14,000 researchers each year. Also has nurtured 14 scientists that have been recognised with Nobel Prizes

DEEP-DIVE: ONE-NORTH SINGAPORE

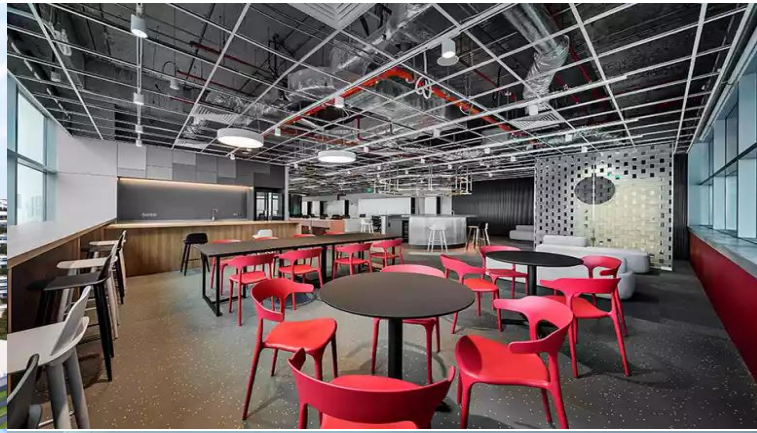


Singapore's R&D and high technology cluster opened in 2001. With 8 key precincts (including Biopolis and Fusionopolis) close to NUS and Singapore Polytechnic.

DEEP-DIVE: ONE-NORTH SINGAPORE



DEEP-DIVE: FUSIONOPOLIS & BIOPOLIS



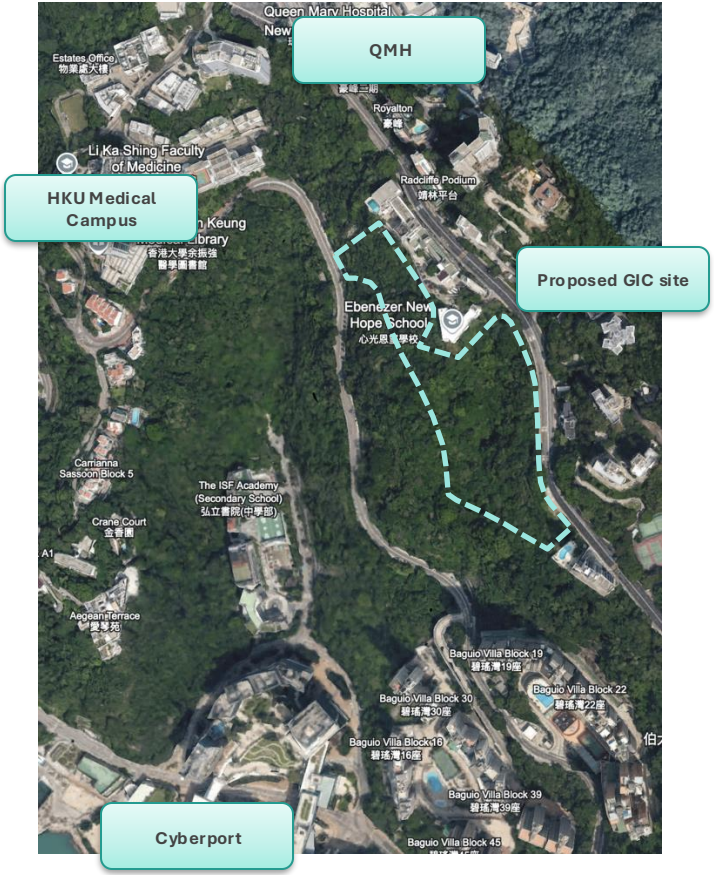
These are theme-based research hubs that allow researchers and scientists to conduct experiments with support from both academia and industries

TAKE-AWAY FROM ONE-NORTH:

POKFULAM CAN OFFER SIMILAR SOIL

The proposed site presents an ***already-established*** advantage that combines **academia, research, and industry**.

Talents are already here – why move them?

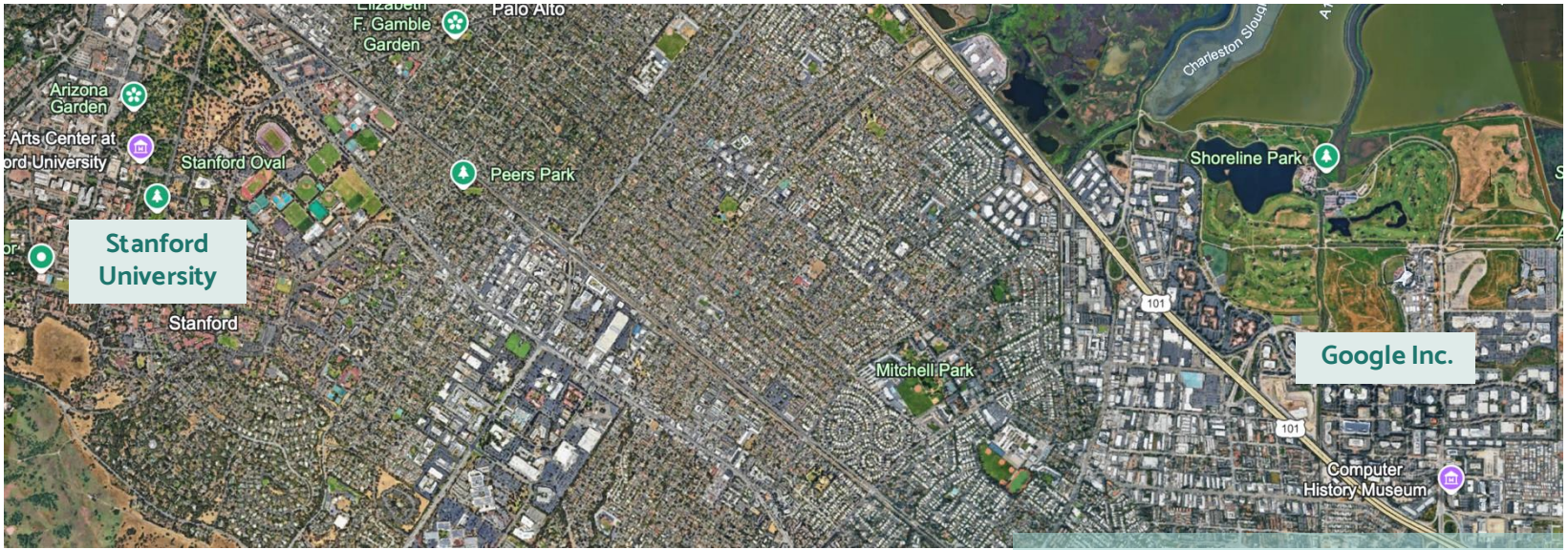


CASE STUDY: STANFORD

SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory is geographically adjacent to Stanford, or a 6-minute drive away (~1.6km)

N.B. The distance between HKU Main Campus and the proposed GIC site is about 2.8km, a 5-to-7-minute drive

CASE STUDY: STANFORD

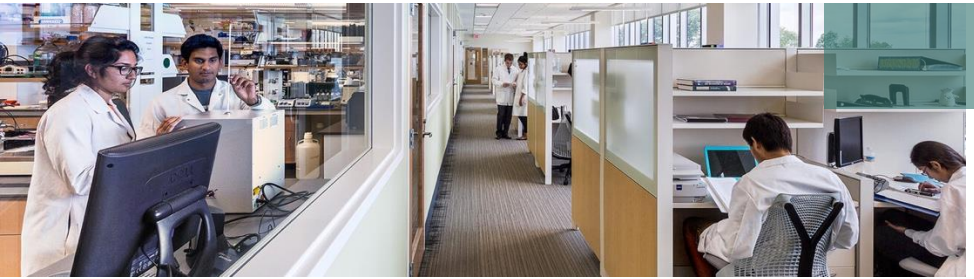


Leading tech giants are close to Stanford. Google Inc. is only a 15-minute drive away (~9km) and Apple Inc. 20 minutes (~19km).

N.B. The distance between HKU Main Campus and the proposed GIC site is about 2.8km, a 5-to-7-minute drive


GIC IS AN
INSPIRATION HUB

ESSENTIAL FACILITIES TO ADVANCE RESEARCH



OFFICES

Allow researchers and scientists to prepare scholarly papers and lab reports close to their laboratories for better experiment management; also allow meeting and exchange to spark innovation

LECTURES & CONFERENCES

Incubation hubs for the best minds to gather to share research outcomes, break through bottlenecks, and celebrate discoveries

SHORT-TERM RESIDENCE

Short-term researchers and scientists can stay close to laboratories to maximise their time efficiency to monitor research at especially irregular hours to ensure smooth operation, thereby increasing productivity

DEEP-DIVE: OVERNIGHT EXPERIMENTS

Beamtime is extremely valuable and **scheduled in blocks**, **regardless of the hour**. Many experiments require periodic interventions, such as changing samples, adjusting temperature or pressure conditions or re-aligning instruments.

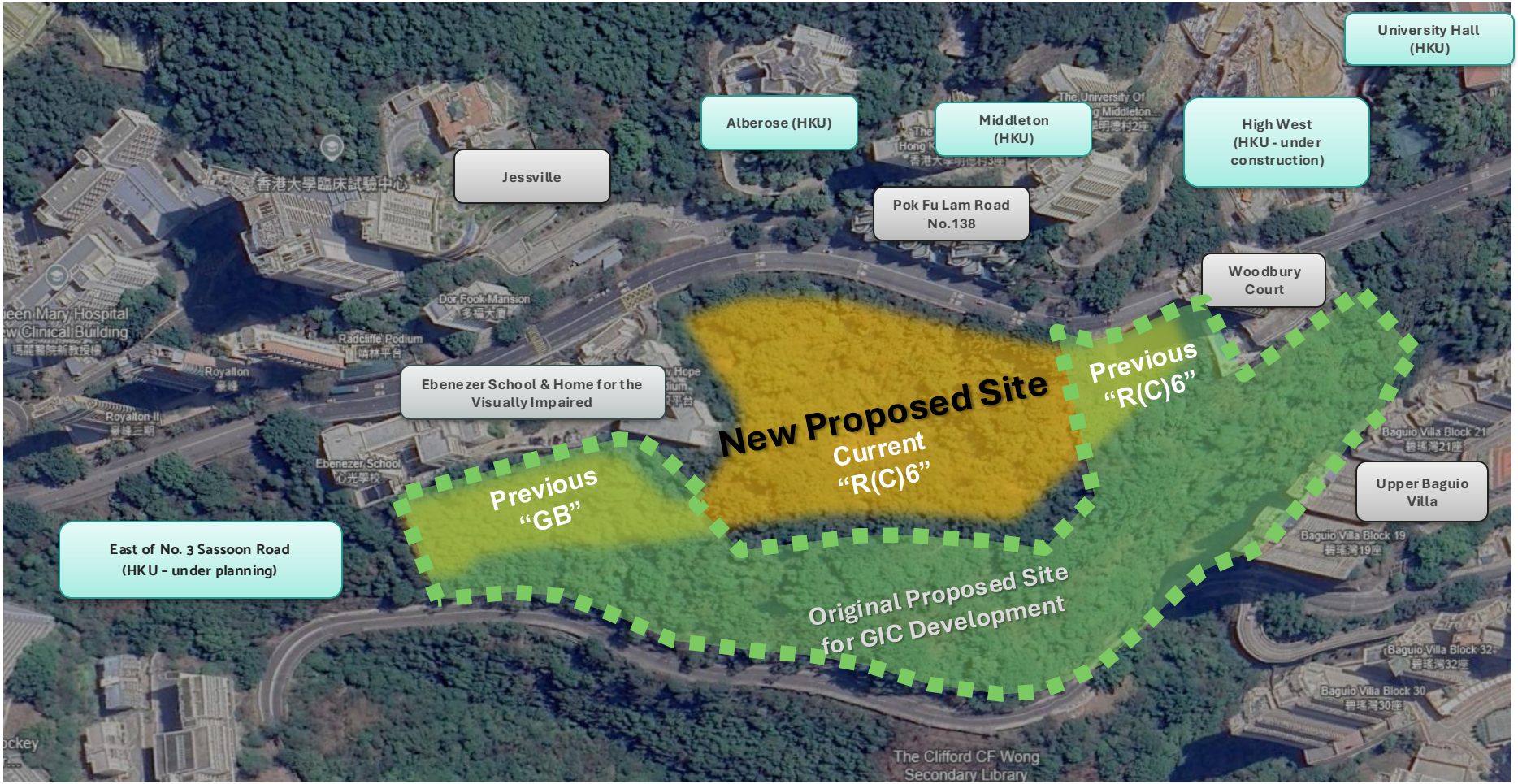
DEEP-DIVE: OVERNIGHT EXPERIMENTS

Human cells can be grown in special dishes to study disease or test medicine. Their growth does not stop and scientists often need to check on them, feed them or split them into new dishes at specific times before cells are ruined.

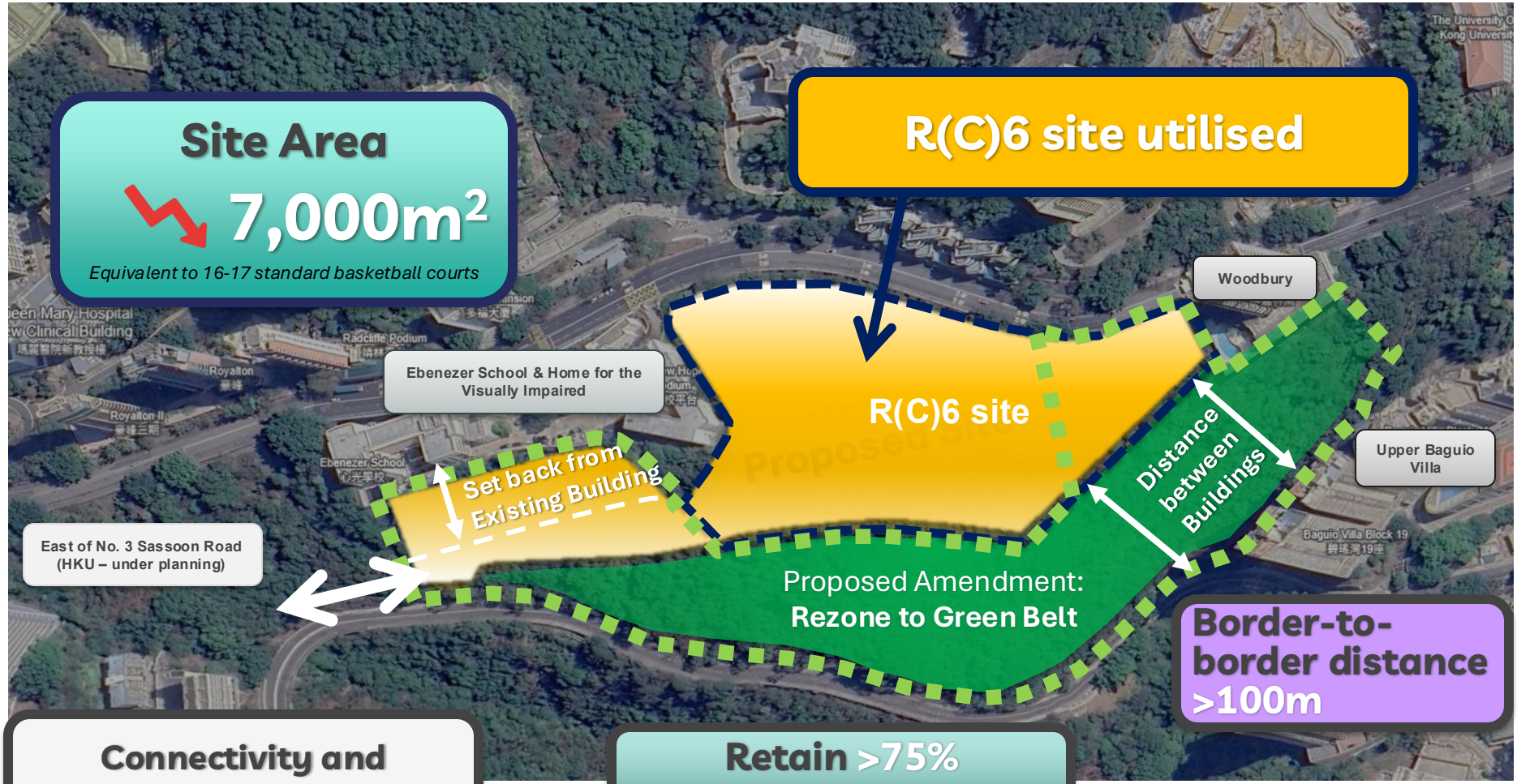
Cell and tissue culture

05

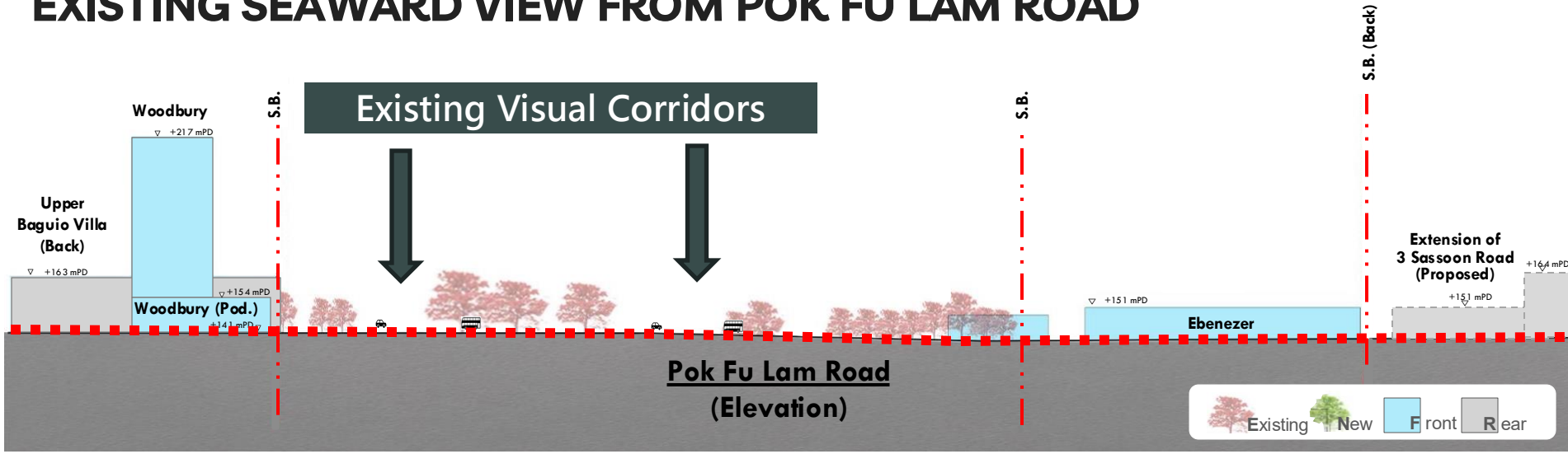
PROPOSED REVISION

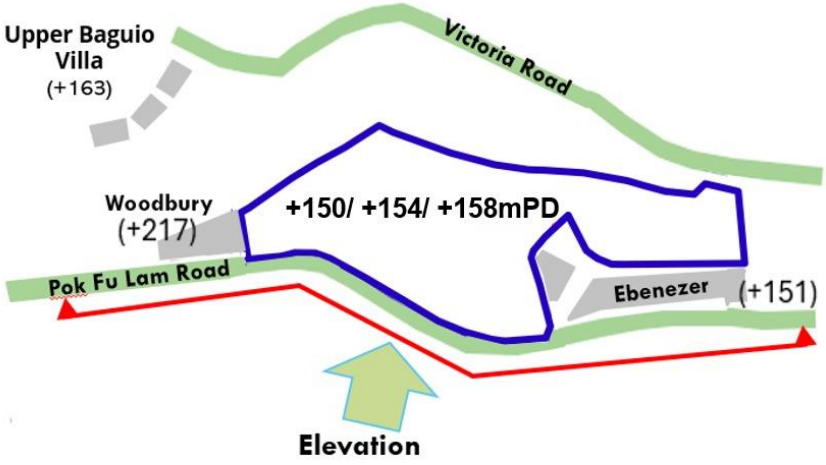


Reference Only – Further Studies Required

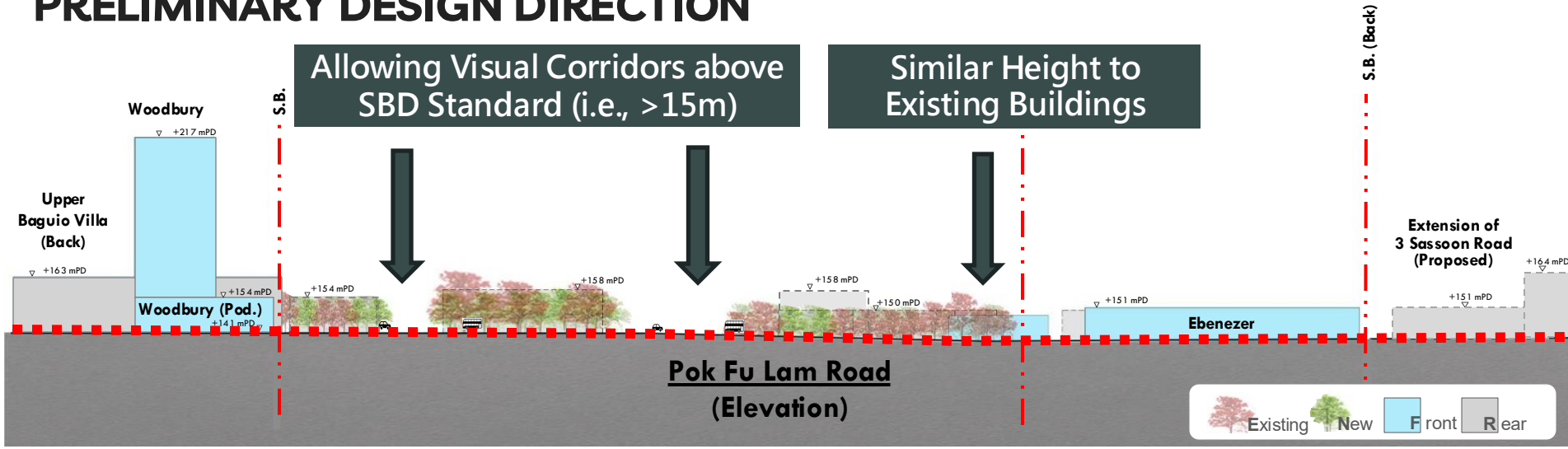

Site Area
7,000m²
Equivalent to 16-17 standard basketball courts
R(C)6 site utilised
R(C)6 site
Woodbury
Upper Baguio Villa
Ebenezer School & Home for the Visually Impaired
Set back from Existing Building
Distance between Buildings
East of No. 3 Sassoon Road (HKU – under planning)
Proposed Amendment:
Rezone to Green Belt
Border-to-border distance >100m
Connectivity and accessibility
Retain >75% Green Belt area
Reference Only – Further Studies Required

EXISTING SEAWARD VIEW FROM POK FU LAM ROAD





PRELIMINARY DESIGN DIRECTION



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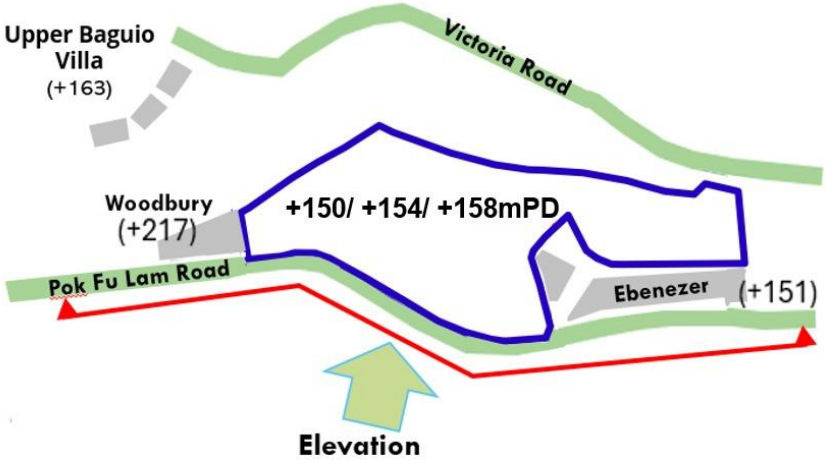
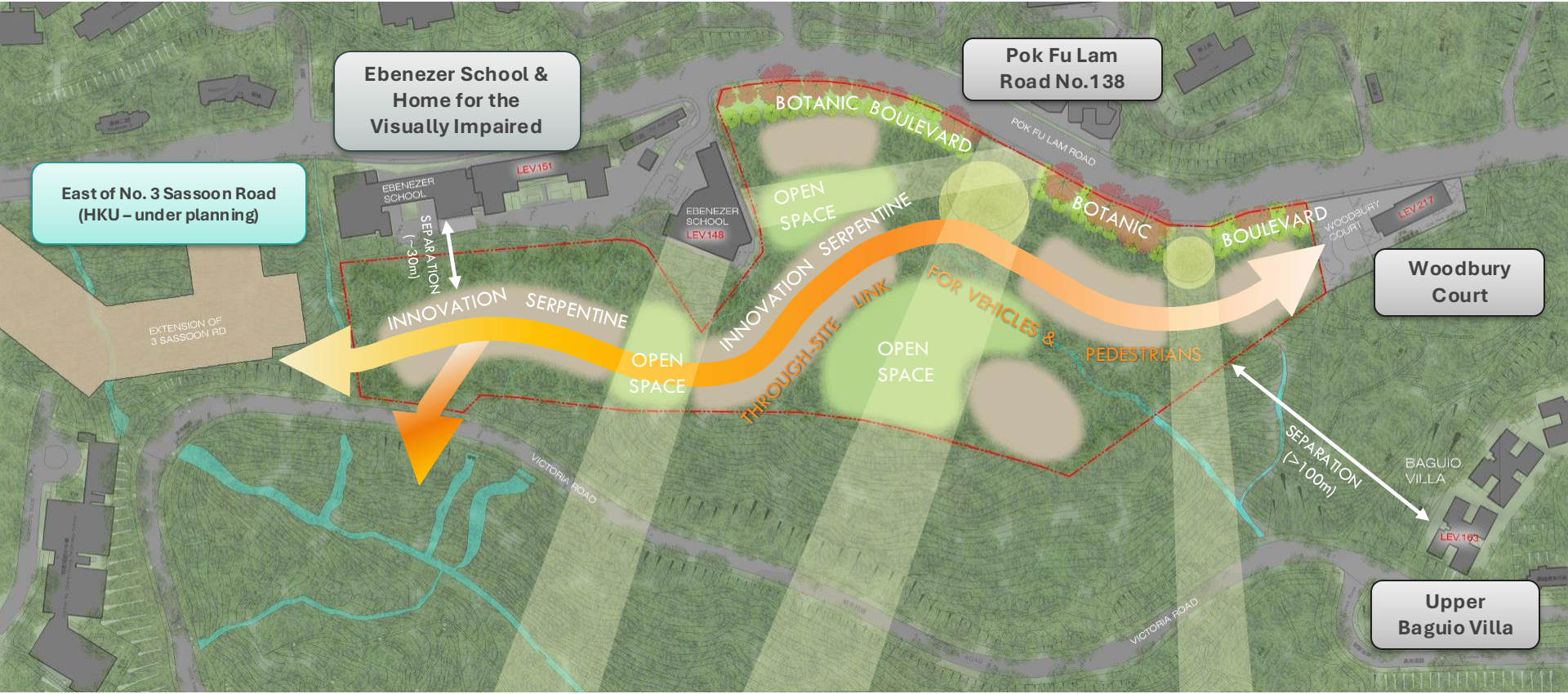


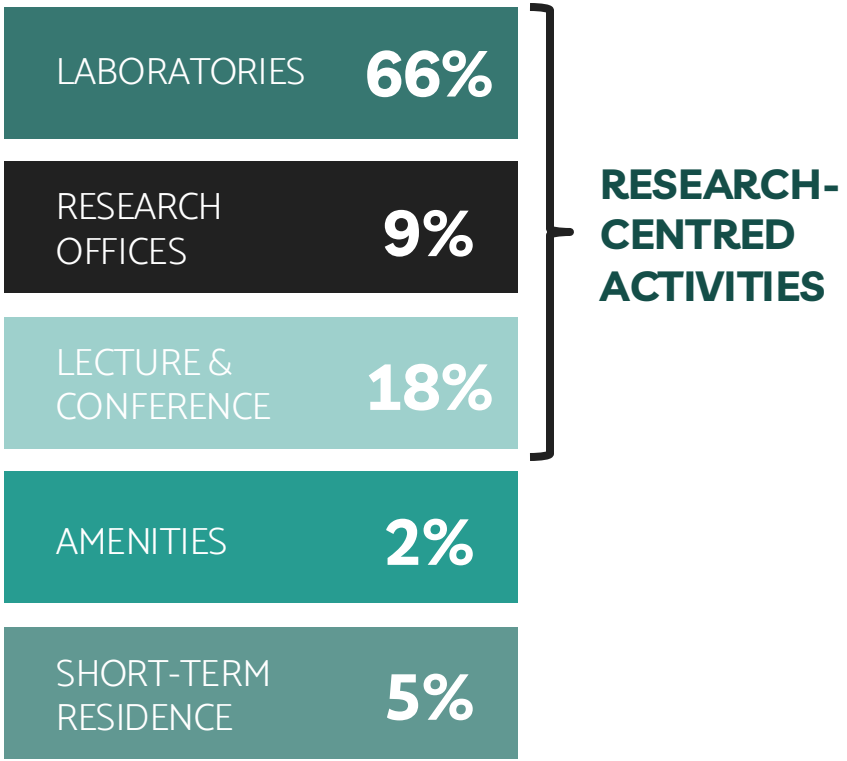
PRELIMINARY CONCEPTUAL LAYOUT



Reference Only – Further Studies Required

REVISED DEVELOPMENT FIGURES (TENTATIVE)

	Previous [Undetermined]	Proposed [OU (GIC)]
Site Area (m^2)	47,200	40,000
Total GFA (m^2)	222,720	190,000 (-32,720; -15%)
Plot Ratio	5 / 2.1	4.75
Building Height	+158	+158/+154/+150




ROADMAP
06

ONGOING CONSULTATIONS

COUNCILLORS

May 9, 2025 (LegCo)
May 26, 2025 (LegCo)
Jun 17, 2025 (SDC)
Jun 23, 2025 (LegCo)

General support garnered for utilising R(C)6 site and understood the importance of continuous engagement

GIC REPRESENTATION GROUP

Jan 8, 2025
Jun 18, 2025
Jun 23, 2025 (with LegCo Members)

General positive view for R(C)6 site; to consider less use of Green belt. Noted comments on height/density, content of GIC especially on non-research areas, use of existing staff quarters, alternative site, etc.

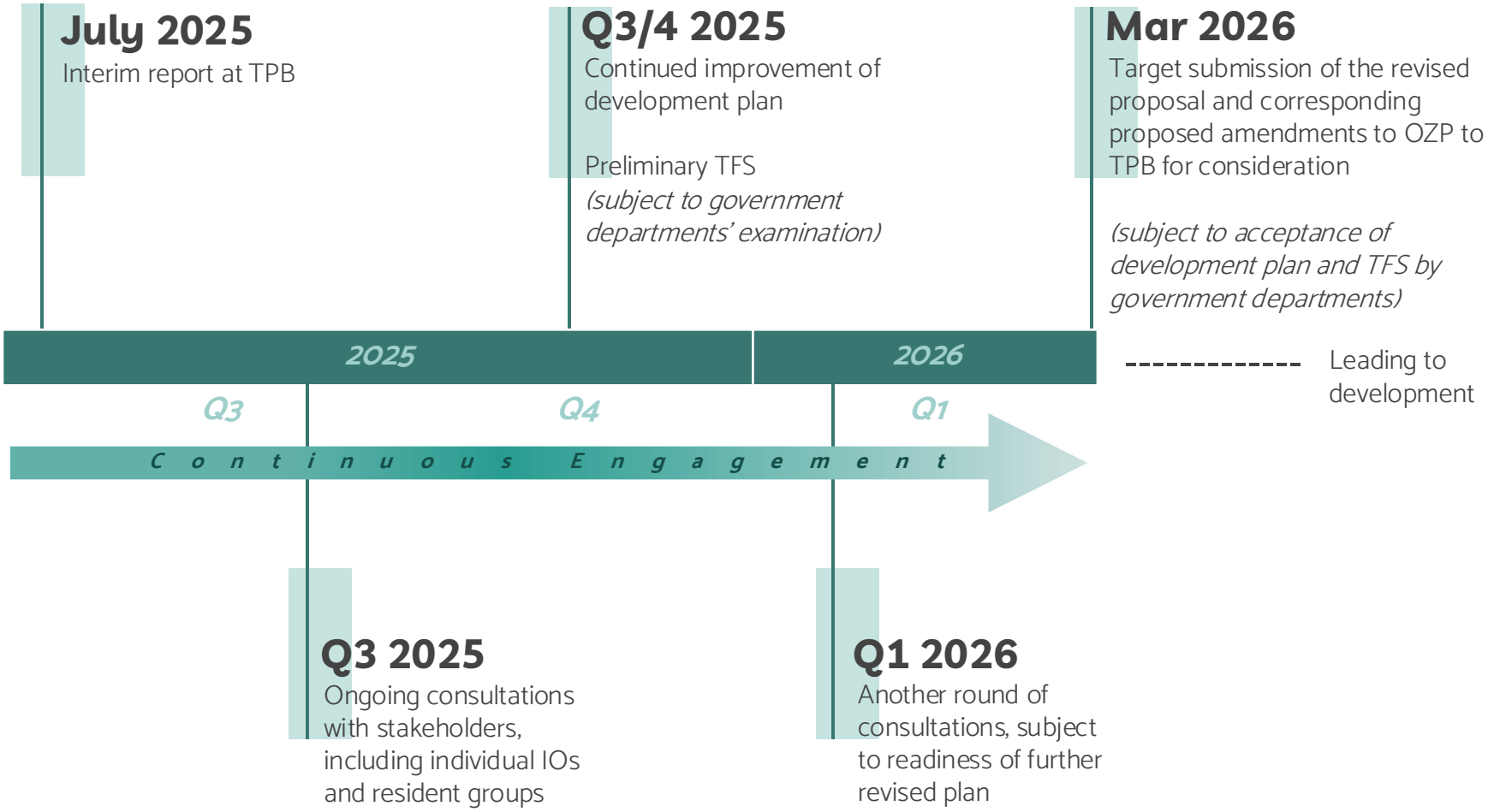
EBENEZER'S SCHOOL

Feb 18, 2025
Jun 18, 2025
Jun 27, 2025

Noted the new plan on R(C)6 site, and showed concern on having structure at its front. Noted comments on building height and concerns on potential nuisance during construction

More coming in the pipeline...

TIMELINE – TOWN PLANNING PROCEDURE



TIMELINE – DEVELOPMENT

Subject to approval of amended OZP by CE-in-C (*expected in end 2026 / early 2027)*

YEAR -1

Engagement of architectural consultant for detailed design

(expected in 2027)

YEAR 0

Execution of Private Treaty Grant

Site formation can begin

(expected in 2028)

YEAR 4

First building to be in operation

(expected in 2032)

YEAR 5+

Continous planning and development for subsequent phases

(expected in 2033)

“I had no idea, back in 1989, that the work I was doing would eventually lead to such a breakthrough that would open up whole new research areas. But without it – and the funding that supports this type of “what if” basic research – we would not be where we are today. **Exploring the unexplored can lead to life-changing applications that cannot be predicted at the start**.”

WILLIAM MOERNER

Nobel Laureate in Chemistry (2014)

JOIN US TO INNOVATE THE FUTURE

香 港 大 學
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG