

Ms. CHENG Mei Sze, Maisie
Director of Environmental Protection
(E-mail: eiaocomment@epd.gov.hk)

By email only

10 February 2021

Dear Ms. Cheng,

Comments on the Project Profile for Desilting Works at River Silver Mui Wo (DIR-281/2021)

The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society (HKBWS) noted that the proponent of the Project Profile (PP) mentioned an ardeid night roost was found within 500m from the desilting site (i.e. to the west of Ngan Ho Court). It is stated in Section 4.6.3 of PP that the proponent “noticed that an avifauna night roost was present to the west of Ngan Ho Court. Nonetheless, as the night roost was located away from the desilting area, and the desilting works will be carried out in daytime, it is confirmed that no direct or indirect impacts on the night roost is anticipated.” There is also another active night roost near the estuary of Wang Tong River about 300m from the desilting site. Although both night roosts are not identified as ecological sensitive receivers, we would like to supplement some ecological information of ardeids in the area. From our casual observation at around sunset in February 2021, more than 75 ardeids, including Little Egrets, Great Egrets and Cattle Egrets, roosting at the night roost near the estuary of Wang Tong River (Figure 1). A few individuals of Little Egret, Great Egret, Grey Heron and Black-crowned Night Heron were observed perching near the desilting site or flying along the River Sliver (Figure 2).

As the location of ardeid night roosting site may subject to change over time, additional monitoring by monthly ardeid night roost surveys should be considered to allow proper project planning in advance to deal with different scenarios, so as to ensure the proposed works will not cause any adverse ecological impacts on birds. In case the night roost moves to area close to the works site during the surveys, stricter

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phasing of the construction works within a day (e.g. avoid overlapping of the construction hours with the ardeid's use of the night roost starting before sunset each day) should be adopted to avoid/minimize the adverse ecological impacts on the ardeid night roost. We have published a guideline for planning and carrying out construction works at egrettries (i.e. nesting colonies) back in 2016 and was recently updated in 2018 (available online at: <https://www.hkbws.org.hk/cms/index.php/reports>). In the guideline, there is a small section on egrets/herons roosting sites.

The HKBWS hopes that our comments would be taken into consideration. Thank you for your kind attention.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Suet Mei".

Wong Suet Mei
Conservation Officer
The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society

Figure 1. From our casual observation in February 2021, there were more than 75 ardeids, including Little Egrets, Great Egrets and Cattle Egrets, roosting at this night roost near the estuary of Wang Tong River.

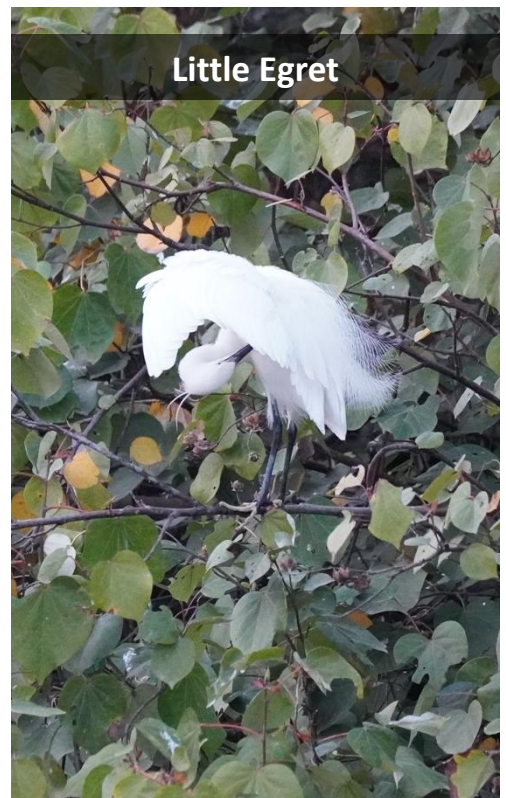


Figure 2. A few individuals of Little Egret, Great Egret, Grey Heron and Black-crowned Night Heron were observed perching near the desilting site or flying along the River Sliver.

