

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BRIEF

Country Parks Ordinance (Chapter 208)

COUNTRY PARKS (LANTAU NORTH (EXTENSION) COUNTRY PARK DESIGNATION) ORDER 2008

INTRODUCTION

At the meeting of the Executive Council on 24 June 2008, the Council ADVISED and the Chief Executive ORDERED that the Country Parks (Lantau North (Extension) Country Park Designation) Order 2008 (the Order), at **Annex A**, should be made under section 14 of the Country Parks Ordinance (Cap. 208) (the Ordinance).

A

JUSTIFICATIONS

The Proposal

2. In the Policy Address 2007-08, the Chief Executive announced that the Government would initiate the statutory procedures to designate Hong Kong's 24th country park in North Lantau, so as to step up our ecological conservation efforts and provide Hong Kong people with more open space in a natural environment. The proposed Lantau North (Extension) Country Park (the proposed Country Park) covers a total area of about 2,360 hectares to the north, northeast and east of the existing Lantau North Country Park. It is largely mountainous and comprises upland valleys covered with natural woodland and unspoiled stream courses, which provide a scenic backdrop to the urban development at the North Lantau New Town. The area has high conservation and landscape value.

3. The Country and Marine Parks Authority (the Authority), i.e. the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation, prepared a draft map of the proposed Country Park under section 8(1) of the Ordinance. On 4 January 2008, a notice was published in the Gazette informing the public that a copy of the draft map of the proposed Country Park was available for inspection for a period of 60 days in accordance with section 9 of the Ordinance.

4. During the 60-day period of public inspection from 4 January 2008, the Authority received one objection against the draft map. The objection was lodged by a mountain biker. He opined that the proposed Country Park would affect his enjoyment of mountain biking activity in Mui Wo area.

5. The Authority's representation to the objection is that the objective of the designation of the proposed Country Park is to conserve and manage habitats of high

conservation and landscape value in North Lantau. The proposed Country Park will be managed by the Authority. Recreational and educational facilities which are consistent with environmental objectives will be provided for public enjoyment; and mountain bikers could apply to the Authority for permits if they wish to carry out mountain biking activity within the proposed Country Park.

6. The hearing of objection by the Country and Marine Parks Board (the Board) took place on 22 April 2008. Having considered the reason for the objection and the Authority's representation, the Board rejected the objection.

7. The draft map was approved by the Chief Executive in Council on 3 June 2008. The approved map is at **Annex B**.

THE ORDER

8. Following the approval of the draft map by the Chief Executive in Council on 3 June 2008, the approved map was deposited in the Land Registry according to the procedural requirements laid down in the Ordinance. The Order designating the areas delineated and coloured pink on the approved map to be a country park was then signed by the Chief Executive. Upon the proposed commencement date of the Order on 7 November 2008, these areas will be controlled and managed in accordance with the Ordinance and the regulations made under that Ordinance.

LEGISLATIVE TIMETABLE

9. The legislative timetable will be as follows -

Publication in the Gazette	4 July 2008
Tabling at the LegCo	9 July 2008
Commencement of the Order	7 November 2008

OTHER OPTIONS

10. Designation of a country park would provide statutory protection to the area concerned and enable the Authority to conserve and manage it for conservation, education and recreation purposes. The Authority considers that there is no better alternative to achieve the aforementioned purposes.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL

11. The proposal is in conformity with the Basic Law, including the provisions concerning human rights. The Order will not affect the current binding effect of the Ordinance. As the proposed Country Park is mostly mountainous and mainly visited by people for recreational purposes, its designation does not have any significant economic

C implications. The proposal has financial, civil service, environmental and sustainability implications as set out at **Annex C**.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

12. The Board was consulted in November 2007 and supported the proposed designation. After publishing in the Gazette a notice inviting inspection by the public of the draft map of the proposed Country Park on 4 January 2008, the Islands District Council and the Legislative Council Panel on Environmental Affairs were consulted on 4 February and 28 April 2008 respectively. Both had no objection to the draft map of the proposed Country Park.

PUBLICITY

13. A press release will be issued. A spokesman will be available to answer media and public enquiries. For any enquiries, please contact Mr. C H Leung, Senior Country Park Officer (Southeast) of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department at 2150 6840 or Miss Florence Chan, Senior Administrative Officer (Nature Conservation) of Environmental Protection Department at 2594 6229.

Environmental Protection Department
2 July 2008

**COUNTRY PARKS (LANTAU NORTH (EXTENSION)
COUNTRY PARK DESIGNATION) ORDER 2008**

(Made by the Chief Executive under section 14 of the Country Parks Ordinance (Cap. 208) after consultation with the Executive Council)

1. Commencement

This Order shall come into operation on 7 November 2008.

**2. Designation of Lantau North (Extension)
Country Park**

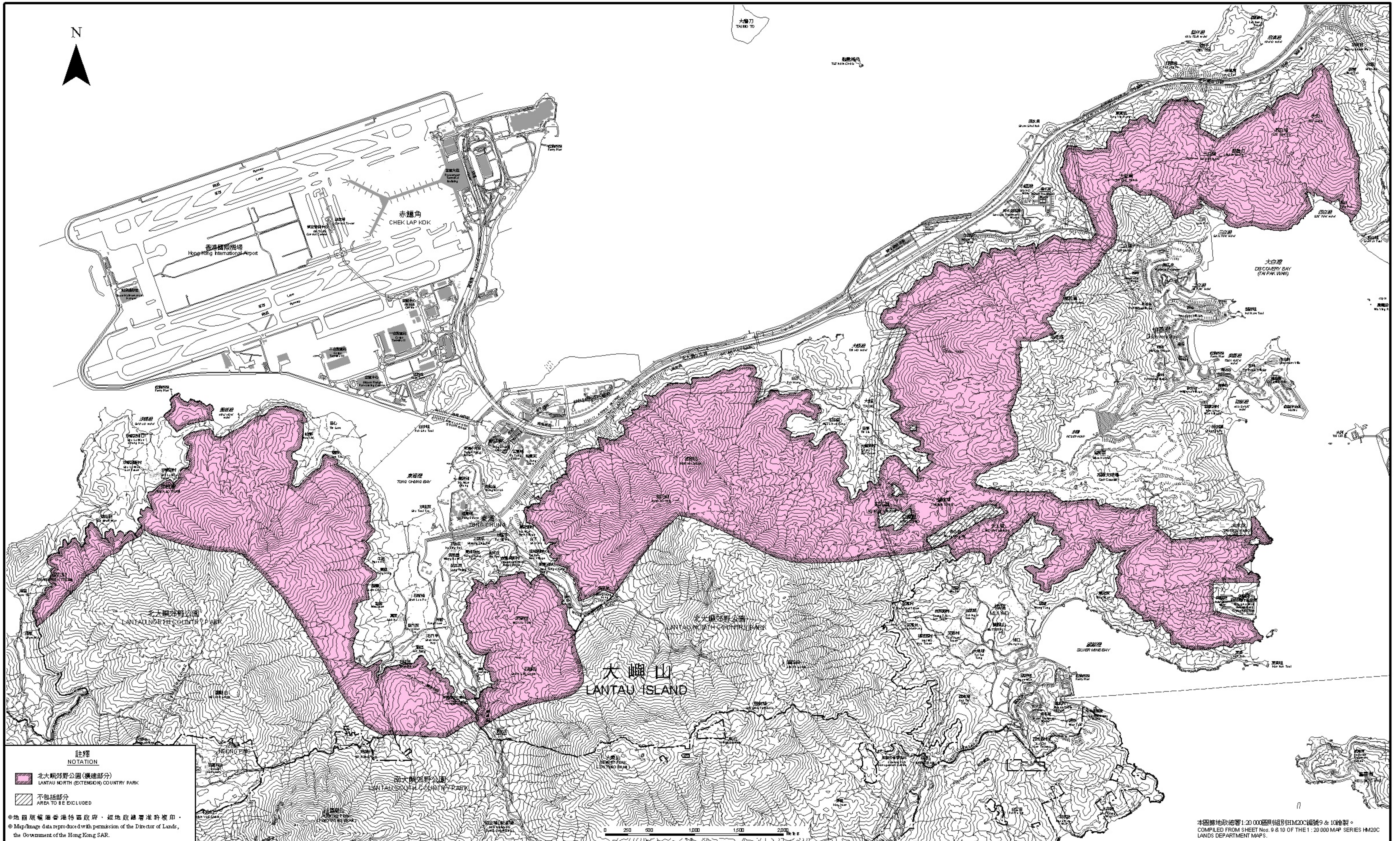
Those areas delineated and coloured pink on Plan No. CP/LN(E)^A approved on 3 June 2008 by the Chief Executive in Council and deposited in the Land Registry are designated as a country park to be known as the Lantau North (Extension) Country Park.

Chief Executive

2008

Explanatory Note

This Order designates as the Lantau North (Extension) Country Park certain areas to the north, north-east and east of the existing Lantau North Country Park. Those areas are to be controlled and managed in accordance with the Country Parks Ordinance (Cap. 208) and the regulations made under that Ordinance.



註釋
NOTATION

北大嶼郊野公園(擴建部分)
 LANTAU NORTH (EXTENSION) COUNTRY PARK

不包括部分
 AREA TO BE EXCLUDED

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本圖則已於二零零八年六月三日經由行政長官會同行政會議根據郊野公園條例第十三條批准。
 THIS PLAN WAS APPROVED ON 3 JUNE 2008 BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE IN COUNCIL IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 13 OF THE COUNTRY PARKS ORDINANCE.

郊野公園及海洋公園管理局
 COUNTRY AND MARINE PARKS AUTHORITY
 日期：二零零八年六月四日
 DATE: 4 JUNE 2008

北大嶼郊野公園(擴建部分)
 LANTAU NORTH (EXTENSION) COUNTRY PARK

本圖根據地政總署1:20,000圖則組別HM20C編號9 & 10繪製。 COMPILED FROM SHEET Nos. 9 & 10 OF THE 1:20,000 MAP SERIES HM20C LANDS DEPARTMENT MAPS.		圖則編號 PLAN No.
檔案編號 FILE REF.	AF CPA 02/37	CPLN(E) ^A
比例 SCALE	1:20 000	
製圖日期 COMPILED	12.2007	漁農自然護理署 AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT



LANTAU NORTH (EXTENSION) COUNTRY PARK

Explanatory Statement

1. Authority

This statement forms part of the draft map of the proposed Lantau North (Extension) Country Park, prepared by the Country and Marine Parks Authority (the Authority) under Section 8 of the Country Parks Ordinance (Chapter 208) (“the Ordinance”).

2. Location and Boundaries

The proposed Lantau North (Extension) Country Park (the proposed Country Park) covers areas to the north, north-east and east of the existing Lantau North Country Park. It embraces most of the mountainous areas stretching from Tai Shan above the Penny’s Bay in the east, to Tai Ho, Tung Chung and Sham Wat in the west. It is bounded to the south by the Lantau North Country Park, and to the north by the North Lantau Highway, new town at Tung Chung and the existing villages. The area north of Silvermine Bay and south of the Discovery Bay golf course is also included in the proposed Country Park. It covers an area of about 2360 hectares.

3. Objectives

3.1 The majority of the proposed Country Park is mountainous and upland valleys covered with natural woodland and unspoiled stream courses, which provide highly scenic backdrop to the urban development at Tung Chung. The upland areas also offer magnificent views of the airport to the north, rural and wilderness mountainous areas to the south. The well established areas of secondary woodlands, developed montane forests and fresh water habitats are of high conservation and landscape value. The overall objective of the Country Park is to conserve the natural environment, to protect the diversified habitats and to preserve the scenic landscape.

3.2 Apart from conservation, the area also offers opportunities for outdoor recreation and countryside education. At suitable locations, recreational and educational facilities will be provided. Footpaths will also be improved and upgraded to facilitate hiking and leisure walking activities. The remote mountainous areas of the proposed Country Park provide a good environment for various activities as well as for nature appreciation.

3.3 The management of the proposed Country Park will focus on the conservation of the scenic landscape with special attention to the protection of the woodland against hill fires. Extensive tree planting will be carried out at suitable locations. The area will be patrolled by park wardens. Litter collection and general landscape maintenance will also be carried out by the Authority.

4. Revised Concept Plan for Lantau

4.1 In 2004, the Lantau Development Task Force under the steer of the Financial Secretary formulated a “Concept Plan for Lantau” to provide an overall planning framework for a balanced and coordinated development of Lantau. To promote sustainable development of Lantau by balancing development and conservation needs, nature conservation is one of the important proposals in the Concept Plan. The proposed Country Park was included as a major conservation proposal.

4.2 Taking into account public comments and the latest findings/progress of studies/projects affecting Lantau, the Lantau Development Task Force released in May 2007 a “Revised Concept Plan for Lantau”. The proposed Country Park remains a major item in the comprehensive conservation strategy, as part of the Revised Concept Plan for Lantau.

5. Access

The proposed Country Park is accessible through the existing footpaths connecting to the Lantau North Country Park and adjacent villages. There are also footpaths connecting from Tung Chung Road, Sham Wat Road and Wong Lung Hang Road. The footpath network will be reviewed and improved, directional signs will be erected where appropriate.

6. Zoning

6.1 The proposed Country Park will be subdivided into zones appropriate to different uses, an arrangement which can be adjusted to accommodate future requirements.

- (a) Recreational Zone – This zone refers mainly to areas on the lower slopes around Tung Chung and Tai Ho. Recreational facilities such as campsites or picnic/barbecue sites, family walks etc. will be provided for large and small groups of visitors.
- (b) Wilderness Zone – This zone will provide scenic views of densely vegetated mountainous areas. Footpaths will be provided and maintained for hiking.
- (c) Conservation Zone – The areas identified for this zone are sites of special scientific importance. Access to these areas is, however, not encouraged.

6.2 A piece of land of about 12 hectares at Sze Pak Wan within the proposed Country Park has been identified for the construction of service reservoirs by the Water Supplies Department. Construction of the proposed service reservoirs will be allowed subject to the future need of the Lantau area and the fulfillment of environmental protection requirements. When making plan relating to the proposed

Country Park, the authority will take into account the possible use of the service reservoirs there.

7. Visitor Facilities

Existing footpaths will be upgraded and recreational facilities such as picnic tables, benches, litter bins, shelters, information boards and view compasses will be provided at suitable locations. Way markers will be erected at entry points and other strategic locations. Educational facilities such as nature trails, warden posts will be provided where appropriate and guided walks and other nature education activities will be organized.

Country and Marine Parks Authority
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
December 2007

FINANCIAL AND CIVIL SERVICE IMPLICATIONS

The management and control of the proposed Country Park will be carried out by redeployment of resources and creation of six civil service posts in AFCD (1 Senior Field Assistant and 5 Field Assistants). These six posts have been approved for creation in the 2007 Resource Allocation Exercise.

2. AFCD estimates that the additional recurrent resources for the management and control of the proposed Country Park would be about \$5 million, including staff cost of \$2.3 million for 15 civil service posts. AFCD has agreed to meet the additional resources required by redeployment of internal resources.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

3. Designation of the proposed Country Park will enable areas of high conservation value in North Lantau to be protected as a country park under the Ordinance. The Authority will manage the areas for nature conservation purpose and promote other compatible uses including countryside recreation, eco-tourism, outdoor education and scientific research.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

4. Designation of the proposed Country Park will help contribute to the conservation of biodiversity and terrestrial habitats. It will also help promote conservation education and enhance public awareness of the importance of nature conservation.