

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)1717/09-10(01)

Ref: CB1/PL/DEV

Panel on Development

Meeting on 27 April 2010

Background brief on improvement works at Tai O

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the improvement works at Tai O and a summary of the concerns and views expressed by members during previous discussions on the subject.

Background

2. Tai O is an old fishing village rich in heritage. Once home of fishing and salt industries, Tai O is now a rural fishing village with traditional residential/shopping streets and a popular tourist destination. The Tai O planning framework had been established in the Revised Lantau Concept Plan prepared under the Study on Revitalisation of Tai O completed in 2002. The Tai O revitalisation strategy aims to preserve the cultural heritage and natural attributes of Tai O, and at the same time enhance its visitor appeal and local employment base.

3. In June 2007, the Civil Engineering and Development Department commissioned a consultancy to undertake the "Improvement Works for Tai O Facelift – Feasibility Study" (Feasibility Study). To solicit public input to the development proposals, the "Design Competition for the Revitalisation of Tai O" (Design Competition) was held in March 2008.

Concept Plan for Revitalisation of Tai O

4. The proposed Tai O Revitalisation Concept Plan (Concept Plan) has been prepared by the Civil Engineering and Development Department based on the design concepts collected through the Design Competition. The vision of the

proposed Concept Plan is "Harmonious Enhancement of Tai O", i.e. to revitalise Tai O through nature and heritage conservation for the benefit of the local community. The proposals made under the proposed Concept Plan can be categorised into three principal enhancement themes, i.e. "Local Connectivity", "Heritage/Culture" and "Nature". In order to address local needs, the Administration intends to implement the following proposals to improve the local infrastructure —

- (a) information and directional signage;
- (b) temple garden upgrade at Yeung Hau Temple and Kwan Tai Temple;
- (c) improvement of existing roads, streetscape within the Tai O inner-core area
- (d) advance works for an Entrance Plaza (new paving, tree planting and landscape hardworks);
- (e) promenade and garden for improved circulation and views;
- (f) Inner Loop Heritage Trail;
- (g) Outer Loop Nature Trail;
- (h) footbridges for improved circulation in Yim Tin and Po Chue Tam;
- (i) new coach parking area;
- (j) new jetties/improvement to existing jetties;
- (k) event space for community and cultural events at Yim Tin; and
- (l) improvement to the existing helipad.

5. Apart from the above, there are other proposals to bring about new or improved elements for sustaining the economy, culture and eco-tourism in Tai O, thereby enhancing the livelihood of residents in the longer term. These include proposals such as the Tai O Experience Centre, Re-built Stilted House Experience Centre and the Salt Plan Demonstration Area.

Advance improvement works

6. In response to the request of the local community to attend to more imminent needs, the Administration has also planned a number of advance improvement works to bring early improvements to Tai O. These works include —

- (a) beautifying fences east of the mangrove area;
- (b) installing telescopes at the dolphin-watching pavilions at Fu Shan and Kau San Tei;
- (c) upgrading pedestrian safety facilities at the Tai Po public transport terminus;
- (d) providing a coach park at Yim Tin; and
- (e) constructing a riverwall at Yat Chung.

Major concerns and views of members

7. The Administration briefed the Panel on Development (the Panel) on the revitalisation of Tai O on 28 July 2009. Panel members expressed the following concerns and views at the meeting —

Conservation, revitalisation and enhancement of existing facilities

8. Some members opined that what Tai O needed was conservation rather than revitalization. The Administration should not bring in facilities available in other districts, as too many such facilities would adversely affect Tai O's heritage and ecological value. They urged the Administration to accord priority to the needs of residents, such as improvement of the sewerage systems, rather than those of the visitors. Fearing that the works might affect the growth of mangroves and the natural environment in Tai O, they expressed concern about the proposals to construct boardwalks and the Salt Pan Demonstration Area.

9. The Administration advised that although a major theme of the Revitalisation of Tai O project was conservation, there were strong aspirations among local residents to enhance the existing infrastructure facilities in Tai O. The improvement projects were proposed after the Administration had carried out extensive consultation and a design competition.

Flood prevention and riverwall at Yat Chung

10. Some members considered that the flood prevention works in Tai O should be implemented as soon as practicable. In this regard, they considered it necessary for the Administration to enhance its communication with the residents and to explain to them why a riverwall was required in Yat Chung to prevent flooding.

11. The Administration explained that as Tai O was located at a low-lying area, flooding in Tai O was due to inundation of seawater under high tide. The construction of a riverwall at Yat Chung would protect the area from influx of seawater during astronomical high tide and reduce the risk of flooding. The proposed riverwall was accepted by the relevant parties during public consultation and a balance had been struck in setting its height. In exceptional events such as typhoons including severe storm surges, the proposed riverwall might not be capable of offering full protection against inundation. In this regard, a flood alert system had been put in place and the former Wing Chor Primary School would be used as a temporary shelter for the residents.

Sewerage improvement works

12. Members expressed concern about the odour problem at Tai O and enquired whether the sludge could be cleared up regularly. They asked whether the Administration had communicated with residents on the difficulties in implementing sewerage improvement works, and requested the Administration to provide information on the study on sewerage improvement works being conducted by the Drainage Services Department (DSD) in Tai O and possible improvement measures.

13. The Administration advised that DSD was conducting a study on the sewerage improvement works for the unsewered areas in Tai O. Since the stilted houses were weak and irregularly built, it would be difficult for them to support and connect to sewerage pipes. As the sludge deposits/soft mud underneath was some 30 metres thick and was close to the stilted houses, there was a high risk that dredging would affect the stability of the stilted houses. The Administration had exchanged views with Tai O residents on the various options for the sewerage improvement works. The residents raised questions but did not put forward any proposal. The Administration had provided supplementary information on the study on sewerage improvement works (LC Paper No. CB(1)1130/09-10(01)).

Latest development

14. The Administration plans to consult the Panel on 27 April 2010 on the funding proposal for the construction of a riverwall at Yat Chung and the associated

drainage and sewerage improvement works, upgrading of the temple garden in front of Kwan Tai Temple, and improvement to the signage within the inner-core area of Tai O. It plans to submit the funding proposal to the Public Works Subcommittee and the Finance Committee for consideration on 2 June 2010 and 18 June 2010 respectively.

15. A list of relevant papers with their hyperlinks is in the **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
23 April 2010

Improvement works at Tai O

List of relevant papers

Council/Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Development		Administration's paper on "Proposed Riverwall at Yat Chung, Tai O" was circulated to Panel members on 23 April 2009 (LC Paper No. CB(1)1393/08-09(01)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/papers/devcb1-1393-1-e.pdf
Panel on Development	28 July 2009	Administration's paper on "District-based Beautification and Revitalisation Projects" (LC Paper No. CB(1)2342/08-09(03)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/papers/dev0728cb1-2342-3-e.pdf Minute of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)479/09-10) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/minutes/dev20090728.pdf Administration's follow-up paper on "District-based beautification and revitalization projects" (LC Paper No. CB(1)1130/09-10(01)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/dev/papers/dev0728cb1-1130-1-e.pdf
Panel on Development		Administration's paper on the funding proposal for "PWP Item 417RO -- Improvement works at Tai O" was circulated to Panel members on 16 April 2010 (LC Paper No. CB(1)1632/09-10(01)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/dev/papers/devcb1-1632-1-e.pdf