

Regarding the proposal on Lantau Development, I have a few major concerns:

1. Overestimation of the carrying capacity of Lantau Island. Lantau Island has hilly relief, and the current spots of settlements have already occupied the more accessible parts of the Island. With the ultimate goal of the proposal to have Lantau Island to accommodate a population between 700,000 to 1,000,000, development of Eastern Lantau Metropolis through reclamation was thus justified, while the society has reached no general consensus on the development of Eastern Lantau Metropolis. It is absurd for the government as well as the Lantau Development Committee to have included Eastern Lantau Metropolis as a major long-term development plan for Lantau Island.

2. Regarding the recreation and tourism perspective of the plan, there is no point to include Sunset Peak and turn it into a spot of stargazing and camping by providing even more facilities. As a hiker, I personally enjoy the tranquility of Sunset Peak, and do not think that campers would prefer such an inaccessible place as camping, with rather long and hilly hikes would be necessary if one is to camp at Sunset Peak and its vicinity. Besides, the spots of recreation and outdoor activities are probably chosen without consulting the residing population at the spots of development. Maybe the committee members do want to replicate the success of Cingjing farm at Taichung by putting it here at Shui Hau, yet Shui Hau is never Cingjing, nor Shui Hau shares the same heritage as Cingjing does.

3. I have strong reservation about extending Ngong Ping 360 cable car system to Tai O. Tai O is best known for its residents living their lives around water, they may have been fishermen in the past, and Tai O is best appreciated by foot and through the channels on boat. With Tai O has limited footpaths available, and the hills between Ngong Ping and Tai O are still high, and may be easily affected by landslide related to the geology of that part, and maybe highly windy, that it would not be feasible to extend the cable car system to Tai O at all.

4. The whole Lantau Development Plan may have contained elements of sustainable development, such as attempts to preserve the natural landscape through Marine Parks or Sites of Special Scientific Interests (SSSIs). The experiences of Chinese White Dolphins since the handover are actually the best counter-example of government planned preservation, for that these plans would only drive the wildlife away. Further, while the government has projection of an aging population for the coming decades, it is absurd for a city with aging population to have the need for a development plan as extensive as this one. If this is achievable only through attracting immigrants from other parts of the world, what we need is to maintain high attraction by providing excellent living environment, allowing people to enjoy the well-preserved wilderness, making space by separating towns/settlements with wilderness. Further, we the people need a more balanced life outside work to be able to enjoy all these, thus provision of standard working hours, not replaced by working hours as stipulated by employment contracts, should be made necessary.

Submission from Jason Yu, written on March 31, 2016.