

NOTE FOR PUBLIC WORKS SUBCOMMITTEE OF FINANCE COMMITTEE

Supplementary Information on 236CL – Tai O development, package 4, stage II engineering works

INTRODUCTION

When considering PWSC(2002-03)74 on **236CL** at the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC) meeting held on 18 December 2002, Members requested the Administration to provide supplementary information on the development strategy and the associated capital works planned for the Tai O area.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Background

2. Tai O is a historic fishing village in Hong Kong. Over the years, the traditional industries have declined and the majority of the younger generation moved away in search of better opportunities. In 1999, the Planning Department commissioned the Study on Revitalisation of Tai O (the Study) with a view to formulating a planning strategy to revitalise Tai O and identifying infrastructural and environmental improvement works to facilitate detailed design and feasibility studies in future. The Study was completed in mid 2002. The study recommendations were well received by the Islands District Council and other local bodies. The key elements of the recommended revitalisation strategy are summarised in paragraphs 3 – 4 below.

/The

The recommended revitalisation strategy

3. The revitalisation strategy seeks to rejuvenate the fishing village of Tai O with its unique character and heritage. The overall planning concept is to balance nature and heritage conservation with appropriate new development, building upon Tai O's traditional visitor attractions.

4. The revitalisation strategy has four key components –

(a) Rejuvenating the fishing village

The proposed sheltered boat anchorage would provide a safe base for local fishing vessels and help bring back the fishing community and related activities to rejuvenate the village. The stilted structure areas, which form an important part of the history and fishing village character of Tai O, would be retained. To enhance the sustainability of the structures in the long term, the Study recommends that the improvement of the servicing of the stilted structure areas be subject to detailed studies.

(b) Sustaining the natural and cultural heritage resources

The Study recommends preserving the existing natural landscape and ecologically sensitive habitats in Tai O, retaining the historical buildings and cultural heritage sites, and enhancing linkages to them by conservation and heritage trails.

(c) Enhancing the existing visitor appeal

Tai O's existing appeal to visitors would be retained and enhanced. A new ferry pier is proposed at Shek Tsai Po, which is closer to the village core than the present one. The Study also recommends providing a new bus terminus and public parking area at Tai O Road. Small-scale commercial uses and visitor facilities are proposed at these two access nodes. To encourage a longer stay in Tai O, overnight accommodation such as youth hostels or holiday camps is also proposed.

/(d)

(d) Addressing local community needs

The planned population of Tai O could reach about 6 700 upon full development. Additional open space and community facilities are proposed to meet local needs in the future. These include a more centrally-located police station and a new helipad to replace the existing one. The Study recommends upgrading the water supply and sewerage systems and installing a riverwall at Yat Chung to protect the main area from risk of flooding.

Details of the study recommendations are set out in the *Digest on "Study on Revitalisation of Tai O – Recommended Revitalization Strategy"*, a copy of which has been deposited at the LegCo Secretariat.

Associated capital works

5. Subject to the outcome of detailed studies and availability of resources, the implementation of the revitalisation strategy may include the following capital works –

- (a) construction of a riverwall at Yat Chung;
- (b) relocation of the helipad to the existing ferry pier site and improvement of the emergency vehicular access link;
- (c) provision of open space and community facilities;
- (d) construction of a new ferry pier at Shek Tsai Po; and
- (e) provision of a new public transport terminus and vehicle parking facilities, footpaths, public landing steps and other minor site formation works.

In addition, the construction of a sheltered boat anchorage is already the subject of a funding request recommended by the PWSC on 18 December 2002.
