

**For information
on 9 July 2007**

**Legislative Council Panel on Health Services
Medical Services in Tung Chung**

Purpose

This paper briefs Members of the medical services in Tung Chung, including the existing services and the latest progress of the preparatory work for the planned North Lantau Hospital (NLH).

Background

2. According to the 2006 Population By-census conducted by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), the population in North Lantau New Town (including Tung Chung) is about 72 000, the median age is 35 (the median age of the whole territory is 39) and elderly of 65 years old or above constitute 5.7% of that district's population (elderly of 65 years old or above constitute 12.4% of the whole territory's population). According to estimation by the Planning Department, the population of that district is projected to increase to about 89 000 in 2015. At present, one general out-patient clinic (GOPC), one chest clinic, one elderly health centre, and one maternal and child health centre are in place within Tung Chung providing public medical services. For private medical services, there are 10 out-patient clinics operated by private practitioners. As for hospital and specialist out-patient (SOP) services, the Kowloon West Cluster (KWC) under the Hospital Authority (HA) provides comprehensive medical services (including, among others, accident and emergency (A&E) services, in-patient services, SOP services, extended care, community care and mental health services) for Tung Chung residents. In terms of the service-to-population ratio, the level of medical services for Tung Chung residents is comparable with, if not better than, most other districts in the territory at present.

Current State and Future Development of Medical Services in Tung Chung

General Out-patient (GOP) Services

3. At present, GOP services in Hong Kong are primarily provided by the private sector. Public GOP services are mainly targeted at low-income families, the chronically ill and the vulnerable groups (including poor and frail elderly). According to HA's statistics, the ratio of attendances at the GOPC in the Tung Chung Health Centre (TCHC) to the population served in the area is higher than the territory-wide average (attendance at the clinic in 2006 is about 53 440, i.e. 740 attendance per 1 000 population, with an average utilisation rate of 92%; the territory-wide average for the same period is 711, with an average utilisation rate of 92%). Among those seeking consultation at the clinic, the proportion of the chronically ill and the elderly

is much lower than the territory-wide average and the KWC (the proportion of the chronically ill and the elderly patients accounted for 22% and 11% of attendance at the clinic in 2006 respectively, while the territory-wide average is 37% and 27% respectively and the KWC average is 37% and 45% respectively over the same period). Currently, there is a relatively higher proportion of younger patients with episodic illnesses among those seeking medical consultation at the clinic, as contrasted with the situation in other GOPCs where most of the patients are the chronically ill, the elderly and Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) recipients. Regarding service hours, the GOPC under the TCHC provides GOP services five and a half days a week. Its consultation hours are similar to those of other GOPCs under the HA which operate extended hours (i.e. from 9 am to 5 pm and 6 pm to 10 pm on Mondays to Fridays, and from 9 am to 1 pm on Saturdays).

4. On the other hand, there are currently a number of clinics operated by private practitioners in Tung Chung, providing out-patient services till late hours in the evening for seven days a week. The general consultation and medication fee charged by these clinics ranges from HK\$100 to HK\$150, which should be affordable to most of the public outside the target groups of public GOPCs.

5. Having considered the existing level of public and private GOP services in the Tung Chung district, the Administration has no plan at this stage to extend the public GOP services in Tung Chung to 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Basically GOP services are not meant to provide emergency services, and patients in genuine urgent needs should seek services from the accident and emergency departments of hospitals. Therefore, on consideration of the effective use of resources for GOP services, it is not cost-effective to provide GOP services late into the evening or overnight.

6. Nevertheless, having considered that Tung Chung residents may have greater demand for evening out-patient service due to the district's distinctive factors, the HA is planning to re-run from this summer the "special evening out-patient service" from 10 pm to 11:45 pm on Mondays to Fridays on a trial basis for local patients who cannot seek medical consultations during daytime in order to make an in-depth assessment of the utilisation of the evening out-patient service by local residents in the district and the cost-effectiveness of the service. The trial run will be conducted for six months, and the HA will conduct a review after the trial period to determine if the service should continue.

7. Meanwhile, the HA will continue to improve the overall quality of the public GOP services, for example, introducing the family doctor service model, planning to carry out minor operations for patients who are CSSA recipients in the district to cut down their waiting time and travelling expenses arising from referrals to specialist outpatient services outside the district, introducing integrated community nursing and family health services, providing patients in need with individual emotional

counselling service, streamlining the medical treatment and appointment arrangements for the chronically ill, strengthening the disease prevention efforts, etc.

Hospital Services

8. The services of the HA is provided on a cluster basis. Hospital services for Tung Chung are mainly provided by the KWC of the HA. Currently, the seven hospitals under the KWC are providing Tung Chung residents with comprehensive hospital services which include, among others, A&E services, SOP services, extended care, community care and mental health services. Regarding in-patient services, the KWC has around 7 000 beds, including 5 100 general beds and 430 convalescent beds. In 2006-07, the bed occupancy rate of the KWC was about 81%.

9. As regards accident and emergency services, at present the acute and emergent cases in Tung Chung will be transferred by ambulance to the A&E Departments of the hospitals under the KWC. According to HA's statistics, in 2006, 3 851 Tung Chung residents were taken by ambulance from Tung Chung to the A&E Departments of hospitals under the KWC for treatment, of which over 35% were semi-urgent or non-urgent cases. Patients in critical or emergency condition account for about 4% of the cases, which is fewer than one case per day on average.

10. As for the SOP services in Tung Chung, it is also mainly provided by the hospitals of the KWC. Currently, the SOP services provided in the KWC cover various major specialties, including, among others, ear, nose and throat, obstetrics and gynaecology, medicine and geriatrics, surgery, orthopaedics and traumatology, neurosurgery and paediatrics and adolescent medicine, etc. In 2006-07, the average median waiting time for first SOP appointment for all specialties in the KWC is 7 weeks. This figure is similar to the overall figure of the whole territory.

North Lantau Hospital

11. In accordance with general planning standard, an acute hospital will be planned for a district when the population of the district reaches 200 000, in order to ensure a reasonable utilisation rate for the hospital upon its commissioning. However, apart from population growth, we will also take into account the planning of other infrastructures, tourist and commercial facilities in the district, and the demand for medical service arising from these facilities.

12. To keep in pace with the development of the North Lantau New Town and the population growth in the district, and considering that the Hong Kong International Airport and some major tourist facilities are situated on the Lantau Island, we have given special consideration to the case of Tung Chung and commenced preliminary planning of the North Lantau Hospital (NLH) before the population of Tung Chung has reached the planning standard. We have earmarked a site of around 49 000 square metres in Tung Chung Areas 13 (part of), 22 and 25 for the

construction of the NLH (site location plan at the Annex). Area 13 is being temporarily used as football playground while Areas 22 and 25 are vacant and unused. Currently, Area 13 is zoned for "Government, Institution or Community" use where hospital development is always permitted; and Areas 22 and 25 are zoned for "Residential (Group A)" use. We need to apply for a change of land use from the Town Planning Board (TPB) before the NLH could be constructed at the subject site. Before submitting the application to TPB, we will first conduct environment impact assessment, traffic impact assessment, etc., of the hospital development, and consult the Legislative Council Panel on Health Services, Islands District Council, and Tung Chung Rural Committee on matters related to the hospital project, scope of services of the hospital, etc.

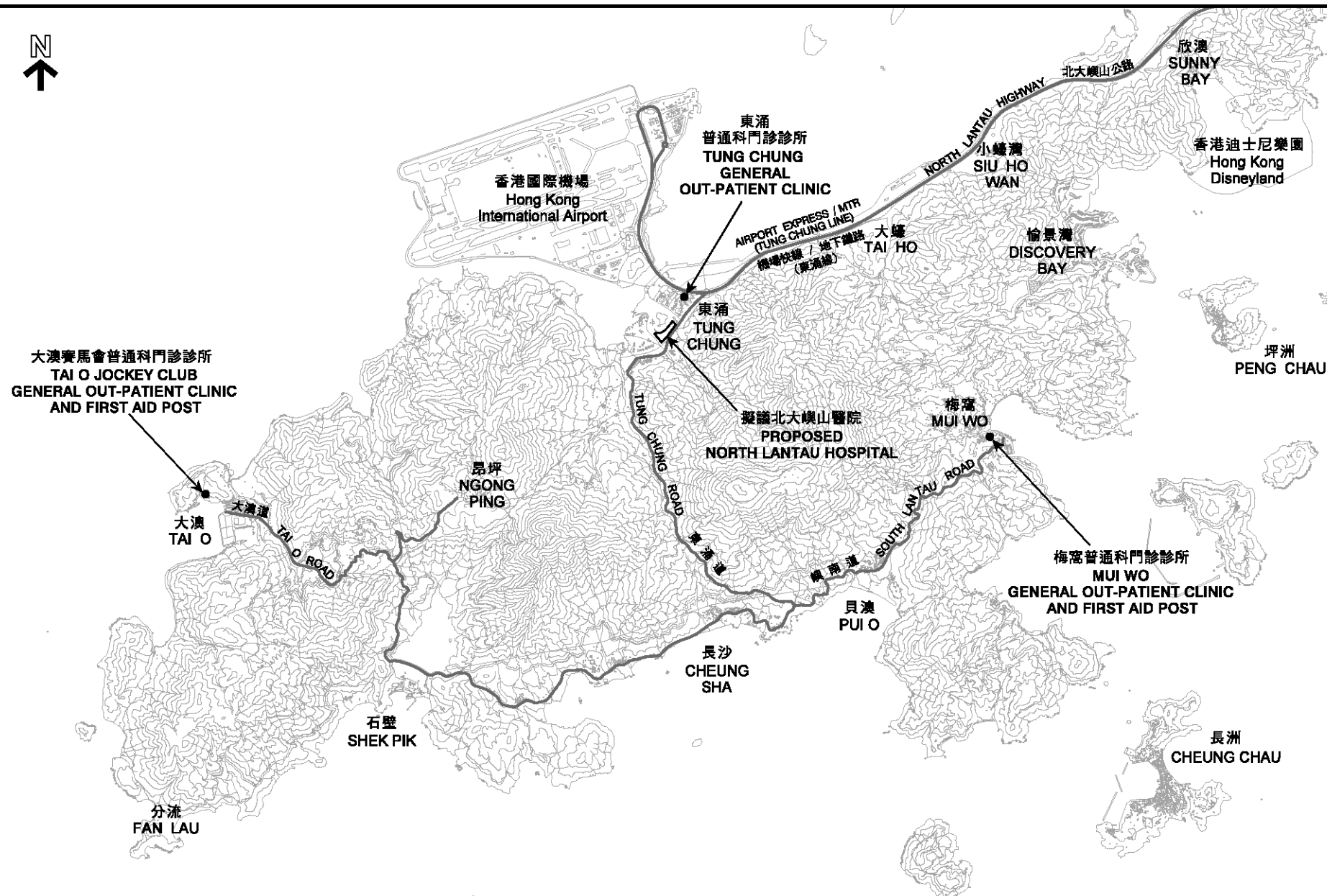
13. Subject to the relevant legal and administrative procedures, the Government and the HA will expedite the planning and construction process of the NLH, to facilitate early commissioning of the NLH. The planning of the NLH is underway and we are now studying the scope of medical services and operational model of the NLH. We will also explore the feasibility of public-private collaboration and commissioning the hospital by phases. We are now reviewing the schedule of developing the NLH based on the above.

Conclusion

14. We will continue to closely monitor the medical services in Tung Chung in collaboration with the HA and make appropriate improvements as necessary. We will also continue to plan for the development of future medical services in Tung Chung and the whole North Lantau, including the planned NLH.

15. Members are invited to note the contents of this paper.

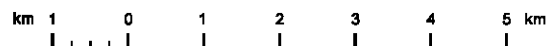
Food and Health Bureau
July 2007



位置圖 LOCATION PLAN

現有/擬議的大嶼山醫療設施
EXISTING / PROPOSED MEDICAL / HEALTH FACILITIES ON LANTAU

SCALE 1 : 100 000 比例尺

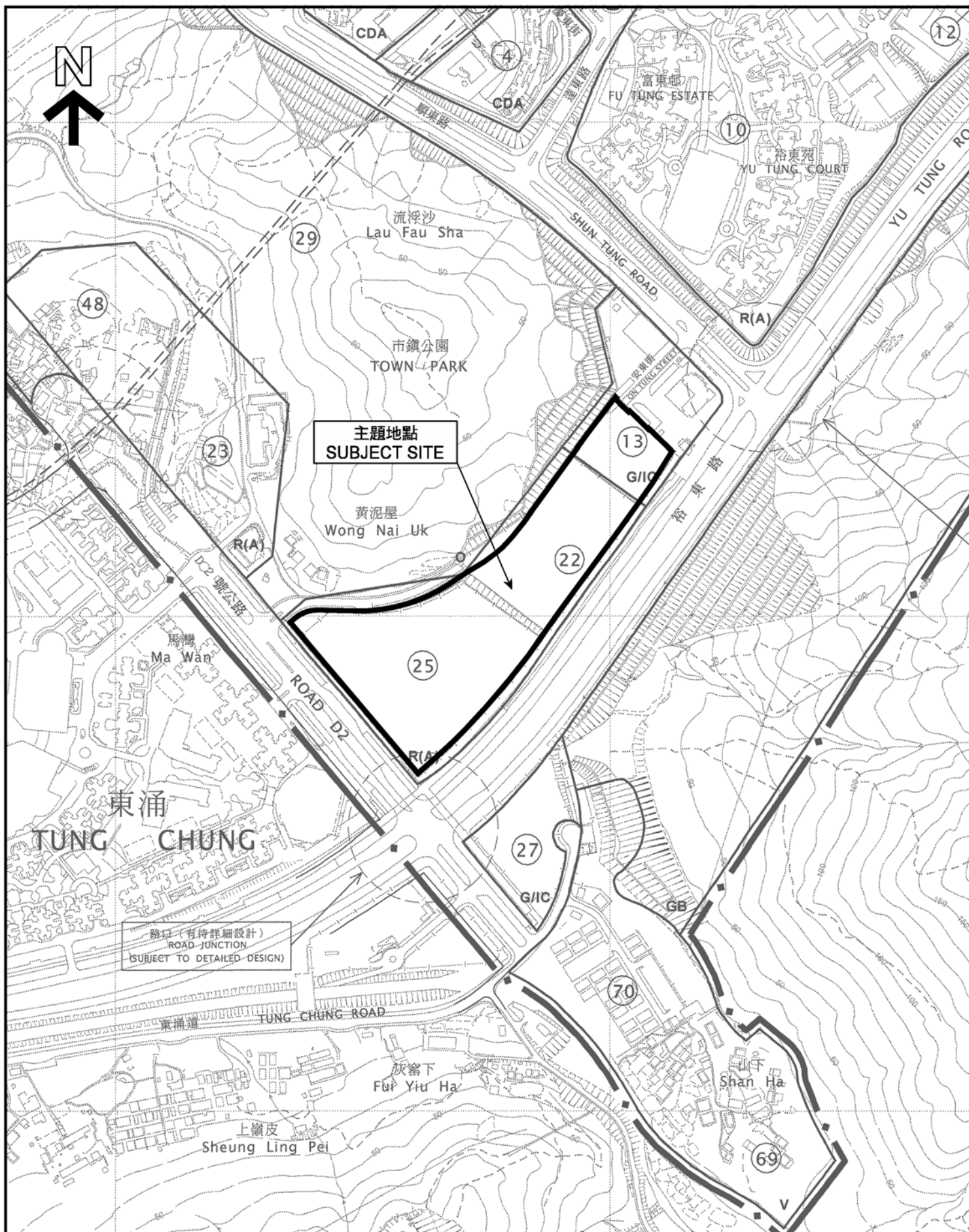


規劃署 西貢及離島規劃處
SAI KUNG AND ISLANDS
DISTRICT PLANNING OFFICE
PLANNING DEPARTMENT



M/LI 06/40

圖 PLAN
A



本摘要圖於2006年3月21日擬備，
所根據的資料為於2006年1月3日
核准的分區計劃大綱圖編號S/I-TCTC/14
EXTRACT PLAN PREPARED ON 21.3.2006
BASED ON OUTLINE ZONING PLAN
No. S/I-TCTC/14 APPROVED ON 3.1.2006

擬議北大嶼山醫院 PROPOSED NORTH LANTAU HOSPITAL

米 METRES 100 0 100 200 METRES
SCALE 1:5 000 比例尺

規劃署 西貢及離島規劃處
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圖 PLAN
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