

**For discussion  
on 18 July 2018**

**Legislative Council Panel on Development**

**Pier Improvement Programme**

**PURPOSE**

This paper briefs Members on the policy initiative of Pier Improvement Programme (PIP) introduced in 2017, which aims at improving a number of public piers to facilitate public access to outing destination and natural heritage. To enable fast-track implementation of improvement works for piers under the PIP, we propose to seek approval from the Finance Committee (FC) to create a new block allocation **Subhead 5102CX – “Pier Improvement Programme”** under **Head 705 – “Civil Engineering”**.

**BACKGROUND**

2. Hong Kong is an international metropolis with many natural scenic spots, rare geological features and hiking trails with rich biological diversity. The famous Hong Kong UNESCO<sup>1</sup> Global Geopark (the Geopark), Marine Parks, old temples, eco-tourism sites and beautiful beaches in coastal areas are some examples. These attractions are mostly located at remote areas without land access and rely on marine transport. In recent years, the number of tourists attracted to these remote destinations has been constantly increasing.

3. There are currently 117 public piers in Hong Kong which are built, maintained and managed by the Government<sup>2</sup>. Public piers do not only serve remote villages relying on boats as their main transport and support fishermen’s operation, but also facilitate rescue missions when necessary. Whilst the

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

<sup>2</sup> In addition to the piers built, maintained and managed by the Government, there are also several piers built by local villagers for public use that are currently not maintained and managed by the Government.

Government has carried out regular inspections and maintenance for public piers to ensure their structural integrity, some public piers at remote areas are in service for many years suffering from aging problem<sup>3</sup>, or cannot cope with the current needs / usages, such as:

- (a) unsatisfactory boarding condition of small or primitive piers leading to potential safety concerns to passengers especially for kids and elderly;
- (b) inadequate water depth for larger vessels to berth especially during low tide;
- (c) limited berthing space or narrow accesses which cannot cope with the high utilisation rate during festive times or weekends; and
- (d) aged pier structures pending reconstruction.

4. The above situations are unsatisfactory, as they will increase the potential risks for people using the piers, cause inconvenience to and hinder the development of some remote villages<sup>4</sup>, and limit the access of the locals and tourists to some beautiful natural heritage and scenic spots<sup>5</sup>. There have been repeated requests from the locals and the public for improvement to the existing public piers, including reconstruction of the existing piers. Noting that the conventional mechanism of taking forward improvement works of public piers under the Public Works Programme is primarily based on utilisation rate which is less favourable to piers serving remote areas, the Government introduced in 2017 a new policy initiative aiming at improvement of existing public piers at some remote areas, which have benefits to the public but relatively low utilisation rates (especially during weekdays). For reasons given in paragraph 3 above, the Government also sees pressing need to speed up the pace of improving public piers at remote areas in order to bring soonest enhancement to user safety, upgrade services and promote green tourism.

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<sup>3</sup> Some of the piers in remote areas were constructed some 50 years ago. While there may not be apparent or imminent danger to public using these old piers, various measures such as the erection of temporary props for supporting the structure and the increased frequencies of inspection and maintenance of the pier were required to address their aging problems.

<sup>4</sup> For remote coastal villages, villagers rely heavily on nearby piers for access, delivery of daily necessities and dealing with emergency situations. The lack of proper piers to these villages has posed difficulties on the villagers' daily routines and to a certain extent driven the villagers to move out of their villages, jeopardising the sustainability of the villages.

<sup>5</sup> The Geopark, Marine Parks, old temples, eco-tourism sites, etc. attract visitors from all parts of the world.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PIP

5. To take forward the policy initiative, the Government has launched the PIP to fast-track the implementation of improvement works for piers at remote areas in January 2017. It aims at enhancing the structures and facilities of a number of existing public piers or, where necessary, reconstructing the existing piers, so as to enhance public safety, improve the accessibility to some remote scenic spots and natural heritage and respond to requests for meeting the basic needs of local villagers that rely on boats as their main transport mode and supporting fishermen's operation.

6. We have set up a Committee on Piers<sup>6</sup> (the Committee) to examine the requests received by different departments concerning improvement suggestions for public piers in the New Territories and outlying islands and set priority for pier improvement items under the PIP taking into account a host of factors<sup>7</sup>. The Committee has recommended implementing a list of 10 proposed pier improvement items under the first implementation phase<sup>8</sup> of the PIP. The proposed pier improvement items and their locations are indicated at **Annex 1** and **Annex 2** respectively.

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION

7. We consulted the relevant District Councils in May and June 2017<sup>9</sup>. Members generally supported fast-track implementation of the PIP and the

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<sup>6</sup> Spearheaded by the Development Bureau in coordination with relevant bureaux and departments, the Committee had been set up, comprising members from the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, the Environment Bureau/Environmental Protection Department, the Home Affairs Department, the Civil Engineering and Development Department, the Tourism Commission, and the Transport Department. Representatives from the Transport and Housing Bureau, the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau and the Marine Department will also be invited to advise the Committee on an ad hoc basis when needed.

<sup>7</sup> The host of factors includes structural and public safety concerns, accessibility of nearby natural and heritage scenic attractions, utilisation and availability of alternative transport, requests from locals and districts, and technical feasibility.

<sup>8</sup> The first implementation phase is targeted to commence construction progressively from 2019, subject to availability of funds.

<sup>9</sup> Civil Engineering and Development Department consulted Tsuen Wan District Council's Traffic and Transport Committee at its meeting on 8 May 2017, Tai Po District Council's Traffic and Transport Committee at its meeting on 12 May 2017, North District Council's District Minor Works and Environmental Improvement Committee at its meeting on 15 May 2017, Islands District Council's Traffic and Transport Committee at its meeting on 22 May 2017 and Sai Kung District Council's Working Group on Tourism and Economic Development at its meeting on 6 June 2017.

proposed pier improvement items under the first implementation phase in their districts. Since May 2017, we have also met with relevant stakeholders, including academia, non-governmental organisations, operators of kaito services, village representatives etc. They have been generally supportive and offered constructive views on the proposed pier improvement items, including appearance and ancillary facilities of the piers and potential environmental implications. Their views will be considered in the technical feasibility studies<sup>10</sup> being conducted.

## **DEDICATED FUNDING SOURCE**

8. To implement the proposed pier improvement items under the PIP in a fast-track manner and bring benefits to the public as soon as possible, we see the need to put in place a mechanism which can offer the necessary flexibility and efficiency to allocate the resources for arranging the studies and works for individual pier improvement items. Such mechanism will enable the studies and improvement works for public piers under the PIP to be proceeded as soon as possible according to the actual circumstances and progress of individual pier items, thus benefiting the public early.

9. Some of the proposed pier improvement items under the PIP are located within the Geopark, Marine Parks or coastal protection area. Some of them may involve complicated ecological, hydrodynamic and geotechnical considerations that may impact on their implementation programme. Similar to other public works projects, each pier improvement item will need to go through different stages including consultation with stakeholders, technical feasibility study, funding application, design, gazettal of scheme, ground investigation, construction works, etc. If there are complications at any stage mentioned above, the overall programme will be affected.

10. The swift launching and implementation of individual pier improvement items will call for timely availability of funding. The current funding arrangement through the Public Works Programme, which permits en bloc application for funding a certain number of designated works, does not allow

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<sup>10</sup> To enable the earliest start of the PIP, we have commissioned technical feasibility studies by using in-house resources and employing consultants funded under Head 705 – “Civil Engineering” Subhead 5101CX. The scope of these technical feasibility studies mainly includes the preliminary environmental review, hydrodynamic assessment and geological appraisal to confirm technical feasibility of the works. The preliminary design of piers will be carried out as well to facilitate the implementation of the next stage.

sufficient flexibility<sup>11</sup> such that some mature pier improvement items which are supported by the public may not be able to implement as soon as possible. This may slow down the overall progress and efficiency of implementing the policy initiative, and fail to meet the public expectations for fast-track implementation of pier improvement items under the PIP.

### **Proposed New Block Vote Allocation Subhead**

11. In order to allow necessary flexibility and efficiency in the implementation of the proposed pier improvement items under the PIP so as to complete them as soon as possible, we propose the creation of a new block allocation **Subhead 5102CX – “Pier Improvement Programme” under Head 705 – “Civil Engineering”**.

12. We propose that the Director of Civil Engineering and Development should be the Controlling Officer for Subhead 5102CX, with the delegated authority to approve individual items according to the financial limits, provided that the item is a proper charge to the subhead.

### **Coverage of the proposed block allocation subhead**

13. The proposed block allocation subhead will cover the costs incurred in planning, design and construction stages of pier improvement projects under the PIP, including consultants’ fees, ground investigation, technical assessment, design and contract procurement, construction supervision and the construction cost.

14. We propose to introduce a financial limit<sup>12</sup> on individual works item under the new block allocation subhead, which should be able to accommodate the anticipated cost range of the proposed pier improvement items in the PIP. The cost of the individual pier improvement items depend on their respective site

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<sup>11</sup> Under the en bloc funding application arrangement, the Government will apply to the Finance Committee (FC) for block allocation for a certain number of designated works items, usually of similar nature and smaller scale, en bloc at one time. Yet, under this arrangement, even if one component works item is ready and there is public request for its early implementation, an en bloc application for funding will not be made until other component items in the same round of funding application are ready. Accordingly, the implementation pace of the en bloc package will be determined by the readiness of the last component. On the other hand, implementation of individual component works item alone may take longer time for funding application for overall programme.

<sup>12</sup> At present, there are a total of 26 block allocation subheads under CWRF, of which three do not have a financial limit and one is subject to a financial ceiling of \$75 million in spending on each item. The other 22 are subject to a financial limit of \$30 million or less in spending on each item.

conditions and design requirements. Taking into account the latest estimated costs of the pier improvement items in the first implementation phase of the PIP, we propose a financial limit of \$150 million<sup>13</sup> be set for individual item to provide the Government with requisite delegated authority for fast-tracking implementation of pier improvement items under the PIP. In processing the funding application of individual proposed items under the new block vote allocation subhead, the Government will ensure their cost-effectiveness.

## **WAY FORWARD**

15. We plan to seek the support of Public Works Subcommittee and the approval of FC for creating a new block allocation subhead for the implementation of the PIP in the next legislative year. We also plan to commence construction of the first pier improvement item under the PIP in 2019.

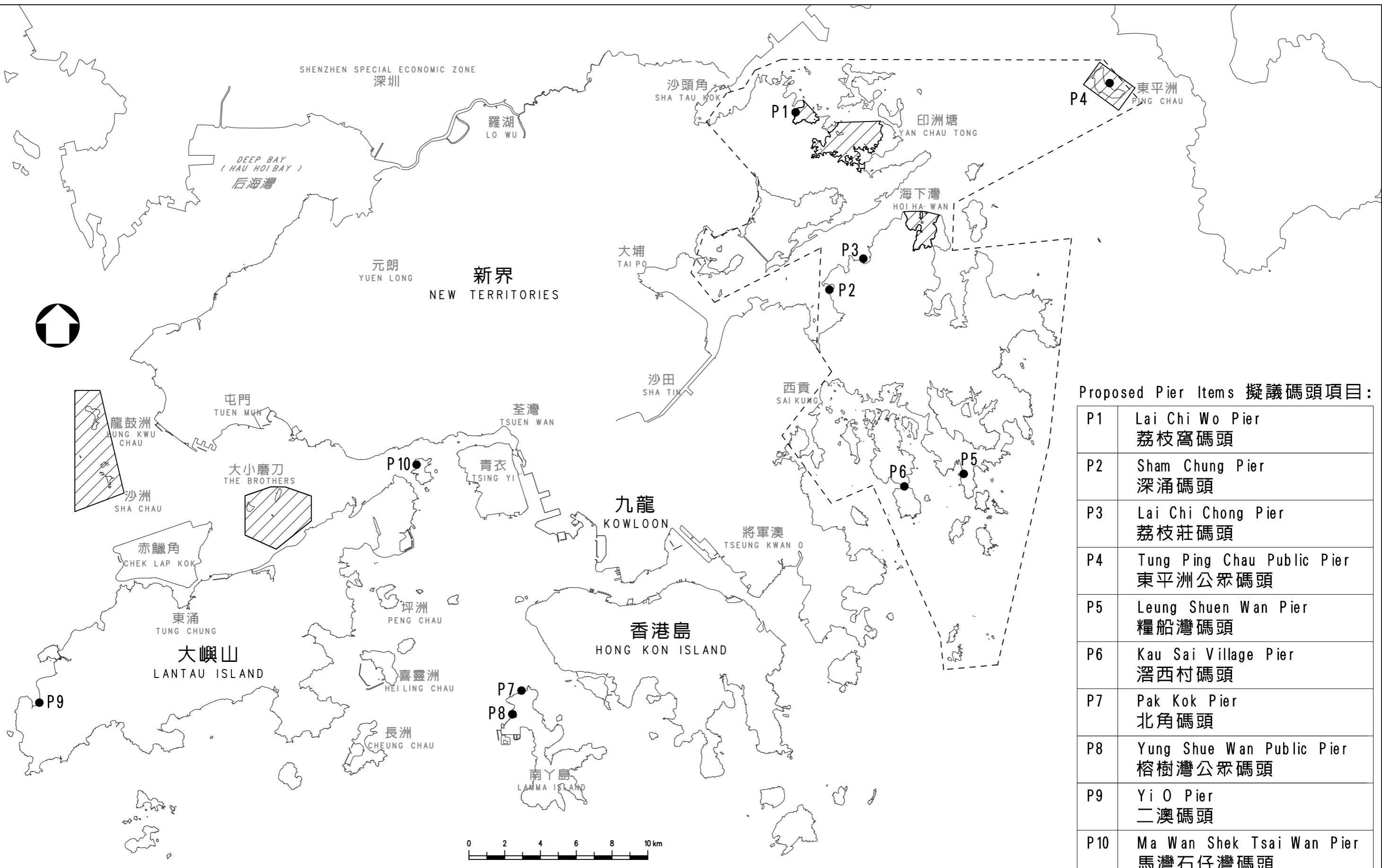
**Development Bureau**  
**Civil Engineering and Development Department**  
**July 2018**

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<sup>13</sup> The cost of improvement works for individual pier item varies with site conditions and design requirements. For the piers under the first implementation phase, the estimated overall project cost for a proposed pier improvement item with two typical berthing spaces and catwalk of an overall plan area of around 500 square-metre, inclusive of expenditure in planning, design and construction stages is around \$65 million per item. There are also some proposed pier improvement items requiring larger catwalks to address practical needs such as tidal effect on water level, passenger flow demand and environmental mitigation measures, etc. Taking another pier improvement item with an overall plan area of about 1,100 square-metre under the first implementation phase as an example which requires for a large catwalk and more supporting piles, the preliminary estimated cost is close to \$150 million.

**Proposed Pier Improvement Items under First Implementation Phase of Pier Improvement Programme**

<b>Proposed Pier Improvement Items</b>	<b>Districts</b>
Lai Chi Wo Pier	North
Sham Chung Pier	Tai Po
Lai Chi Chong Pier	Tai Po
Tung Ping Chau Public Pier	Tai Po
Leung Shuen Wan Pier	Sai Kung
Kau Sai Village Pier	Sai Kung
Pak Kok Pier	Islands
Yung Shue Wan Public Pier	Islands
Yi O Pier	Islands
Ma Wan Shek Tsai Wan Pier	Tsuen Wan



Proposed Pier Items 擬議碼頭項目:

P1	Lai Chi Wo Pier 荔枝窩碼頭
P2	Sham Chung Pier 深涌碼頭
P3	Lai Chi Chong Pier 荔枝莊碼頭
P4	Tung Ping Chau Public Pier 東平洲公眾碼頭
P5	Leung Shuen Wan Pier 糧船灣碼頭
P6	Kau Sai Village Pier 濳西村碼頭
P7	Pak Kok Pier 北角碼頭
P8	Yung Shue Wan Public Pier 榕樹灣公眾碼頭
P9	Yi O Pier 二澳碼頭
P10	Ma Wan Shek Tsai Wan Pier 馬灣石仔灣碼頭

圖例：  
LEGEND:

- Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark 香港聯合國教科文組織世界地質公園
- Marine Park 海岸公園

名稱 drawing title  
**PIER IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME**  
**LOCATION PLAN OF PROPOSED PIER ITEMS UNDER**  
**FIRST PHASE OF PIER IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME**  
 改善碼頭計劃  
 首階段擬議改善碼頭項目的位置圖

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