



revitalisation strategy for Tai O, having taken account of its natural setting and tremendous cultural resources. The overall planning concept of the Strategy was to balance nature and heritage conservation with appropriate new development building upon Tai O's traditional visitor attractions. The Strategy sought to rejuvenate the fishing village of Tai O with its unique heritage and character, to preserve the cultural heritage and natural attributes, and to enhance its visitor appeal and local employment base. A Recommended Outline Development Plan (RODP) had been formulated;

- (c) in May 2007, the Lantau Development Task Force published the "Revised Concept Plan for Lantau". The overall planning vision of the Revised Concept Plan was to promote sustainable development by balancing development and conservation needs. Amongst other recommendations, Tai O had been identified as one of the locations requiring special attention. The Revised Concept Plan for Lantau recommended that there was a need for early implementation of the improvement projects and to prepare/review town plans with due regard to the protection of area of high conservation value and to preserving its fishing village character;
  
- (d) to implement the recommendations of the RODP of the "Study on Revitalisation of Tai O" and the 2007 Revised Concept Plan for Lantau, the Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) in June 2007 commenced an "Improvement Works for Tai O Facelift - Feasibility Study" ("Tai O Facelift - Feasibility Study"). It aimed to study the feasibility and implementation requirements of the recommendations of the revitalization strategy. To gauge and solicit public views on innovative input on how to achieve a holistic plan and implementation strategy to revitalise Tai O, the Development Bureau co-organised with the relevant professional institutes and rural committee, launched the "Design Competition for the Revitalisation of Tai O" (Design Competition) in March 2008. After taking account of the results of the Design Competition as well as the public comments received, the "Tai O Facelift - Feasibility Study" had concluded a "Tai O Improvement Works Concept Plan" together with the works items proposed in accordance with three

principles, namely, local connectivity, heritage/culture and nature;

- (e) based on the “Tai O Facelift – Feasibility Study”, CEDD was proceeding with the detailed design and implementation of the recommended improvement works for Tai O;

*Need for Statutory Plan*

- (f) to take forward the findings and recommendations of the various studies mentioned above, it was necessary to prepare statutory town plans for the entire Tai O: one for the Tai O Fringe area and the other for the Tai O Town Centre. The latter was under separate preparation;
- (g) the Tai O Fringe area (the Area) had an area of about 186.62 ha. It was surrounded by the Lantau North Country Park in the east and south, with coastline in the north and west. The Area was virtually in a natural state and provided habitats for a range of flora and fauna species, which were environmentally and ecologically sensitive. It was, therefore, necessary to cover the Area by a Development Permission Area (DPA) plan so as to provide an interim planning guidance for future development pending preparation of a rural Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) and to enable enforcement action to be taken against any unauthorized developments to safeguard the Area’s outstanding natural landscape and ecological value;
- (h) the Tai O Town Centre mainly consisted of village settlements, temporary stilted structures along Tai O River, a public rental housing estate, a Home Ownership Scheme together with some government, institution or community facilities. As the majority of the land in the Tai O Town Centre was government land, the preparation of a DPA plan to enable statutory planning enforcement control was considered not necessary. The preparation of an OZP plan for Tai O Town Centre was considered more appropriate to provide a statutory planning framework for development control and to guide the long-term development of Tai O Town Centre;
- (i) on 1.12.2009, under the power delegated by the Chief Executive, the

Secretary for Development directed the Board, under section 3(1)(b) of the Ordinance, to prepare a draft plan designating the Area as a development permission area;

- (j) the urgency to prepare a DPA plan was justified by the recent sporadic land filling and dumping activities in the Area. The green groups had also urged the Government to publish a DPA plan at the earliest in order to protect the mangrove areas, wetlands and reedbed of Tai O against any unauthorized developments damaging the Area;

*Development Constraints and Opportunities of the Area*

- (k) the major development constraints and opportunities of the Area were summarized in paragraph 5 of the Paper;

*The Tai O Fringe DPA Plan*

- (l) the planning objectives of the Area was to conserve the areas of high ecological significance, to protect the rural and natural character as well as to maintain the unique landscape character and cultural heritage of the Area. Land was also reserved in the Area for Small House development by indigenous villagers;
- (m) to serve as guidance for the preparation of planning and development proposals, the main planning principles for the Area were:
  - i) preservation and protection of the uniqueness of the Area;
  - ii) limiting the scope of environmental and infrastructure upgrading;
  - iii) addressing local community needs; and
  - iv) promoting cultural heritage of the Area.

*Land Use Proposals*

- (n) various land use zones were designated within the Area, which were mainly based on the “RODP” prepared under the “Tai O Revitalisation Study”, the latest findings and recommendations of the CEDD’s “Tai O Facelift – Feasibility Study” and the current physical characteristics of the

Area. “Conservation Area” was proposed to protect the natural habitats of high ecological significance in the Area, including the large stretch of undisturbed woodlands, streams, disused salt pans, wetlands, mangrove stand and Tai O reedbed, etc. Fallow agricultural land and ponds were retained to protect the rural character of the Area. Other development zonings were mainly to reflect the corresponding existing uses of the Area;

- i) about 36.58 ha of land were zoned “Conservation Area” (“CA”) to protect and retain the existing natural landscape, ecological or topographical features of the Area. Areas covered by this zone included patches of woodland in Po Chue Tam; an extensive area comprising abandoned salt pans and fishponds to the east of Sun Ki Street; mangrove stand and wetlands to the east of Lung Tin Estate; the natural river bank of Tai O River next to Hang Mei; the Tai O reedbed to the north of Leung Uk Tsuen; and the Tai O Mangrove Replanting Area. It was necessary to impose stringent planning control on these areas in view of their high environmental and ecological value. The Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation supported the “CA” zoning of these areas;
- ii) about 124.47 ha of land were zoned “Green Belt” (“GB”) to define the limits of development areas by natural features and to preserve the existing topography and natural vegetation as well as to provide passive recreational outlets. There was a general presumption against development in this zone. The “GB” zone mainly included areas covered with fallow agricultural land, hillslopes, natural vegetations and small streams. Areas adjoining Leung Uk Tsuen were put under this zone so as to form a buffer area between the Tai O reedbed and village type development in Leung Uk Tsuen. Traditional burial grounds on the hillslopes of Fu Shan, Wang Hang and Nam Chung were also within this zone. They had been in existence for many years,

which were considered as an existing use and intended for burial places of deceased indigenous villagers in the area;

- iii) about 6.72 ha of land were zoned “Coastal Protection Area” (“CPA”) to protect and retain the coastlines and the sensitive coastal environment. A long strip of coastline to the north of Tai O Island and the coastal strip to the east of Po Chue Tam were under this zoning;
- iv) about 6.57 ha of land were zoned “Village Type Development” (“V”). The planning intention of this zone was to reflect the existing recognized village of Leung Uk Tsuen and other village settlements as well as areas of land considered suitable for village development. The “V” zone was drawn up having regard to the village ‘environs’, the local topography, the existing land-use, the site constraints, the outstanding Small House applications, as well as the Small House demand forecast. Areas of difficult terrain, potential natural terrain hazards, dense vegetation, conservation value, and burial grounds were excluded. The Leung Uk Tsuen was the only recognized village in Tai O. It was estimated that the land available within the proposed “V” zone could fully meet the outstanding and future Small House demand. In order to reflect the existing village settlement at Wang Hang, this area was also zoned “V” on the OZP;
- v) about 3.79 ha of land were zoned “Government, Institution or Community” (“G/IC”) mainly to reflect the existing “G/IC” facilities in the Area. Major “G/IC” facilities in the Area included an existing water treatment works and a service reservoir at the hillslope to the southeast of San Tsuen, a sewage pumping station and a drug addiction treatment centre at Po Chue Tam, an automatic weather station at Fu Shan and Lung Ngam Monastery at Wang Hang. As there was sparse population in the Area, the local demand for major G/IC facilities, including education,

community hall, library and sports centre, was small and could be met by the G/IC facilities provided in the Tai O Town Centre;

- vi) about 0.75 ha of land was zoned “Open Space” (“O”) to provide outdoor open-air space for active and/or passive recreational uses serving the needs of local residents as well as the general public. This zone included the existing sitting-out areas in the vicinity of Po Chue Tam, children playgrounds at Leung Uk Tsuen and Hang Mei, and a public promenade along the seawall of the Mangrove Replanting Area. To enhance the physical settings and safeguard the “fung Shui” corridor, land in front of Tin Hau Temple and Yeung Hau Temple was also zoned “O”;
- vii) about 3.25 ha of land were zoned “Other Specified Uses” including the Tai O Barracks at Fu Shan, sewage treatment works at the natural coastline in the north of Tai O Island and Tai O Cemetery;
- viii) about 1.16 ha of land were zoned “Undetermined” (“U”). This area covered a portion of the disused salt pan to the east of Sun Ki Street. According to the CEDD’s “Tai O Facelift – Feasibility Study”, it was recommended to use this area for ‘Salt Panning Demonstration Area’. However, the Study on Restoration of Disused Salt Pans in Tai O commissioned by CEDD had not been completed. Pending the finalization of the study, the proposed site was zoned “U”. Under the “U” zone, except those uses permitted under the covering Notes, all uses or developments would require planning permission from the Board;

#### Consultation

- (o) the draft DPA Plan together with the Notes, Explanatory Statement and the Planning Report had been circulated to the relevant Government bureaux and departments for comments;

- (p) on 15.4.2010, the draft DPA Plan was considered and endorsed by the New Territories Planning District Conference; and
- (q) the Islands District Council and the Tai O Rural Committee would be consulted on the draft DPA Plan shortly after its publication under section 5 of the Ordinance.

4. The Chairman then invited comments from Members.

5. A Member supported the designation of areas with high environmental and ecological value under the “CA” zoning, in particular the Tai O Mangrove Replanting Area. This Member considered that the replanted mangrove habitat was found to be very effective in enhancing the local ecology. This Member also welcomed the preservation of a portion of the disused salt pan and used it as a ‘Salt Panning Demonstration Area’. The revitalization proposal, as opined by this Member, would be well-received by the local community and tourists. This Member also requested PlanD to consult the local villagers on the proposed “V” zone to ensure that the future Small House demand could be met.

6. Another Member said that the land use proposals put forward under the Tai O Fringe DPA plan would broaden the range of visitor attractions and attract more visitors to Tai O. Consideration should be given to improving the connectivity between respective sub-areas in Tai O. Adequate supporting facilities such as cycle track, pedestrian walkway and rain shelters should be provided. Mr. Ivan M.K. Chung replied that unless otherwise specified in the Notes of the DPA Plan, the proposed public facilities were always permitted and did not require planning permission from the Board. In addition, CEDD, based on the “Tai O Facelift – Feasibility Study”, was preparing the detailed design and construction of the recommended improvement works for Tai O. The proposed improvement works included, amongst others, the construction or improvement of footbridges, natural trails, visitor signages and riverwall.

7. Another Member suggested that in designing the improvement works for the Area, its local characters should be taken into account. Moreover, as a historic fishing village, boat trip via the waterways should be encouraged to enhance the connectivity of the area.

8. A Member recalled that the “Design Competition For the Revitalisation of Tai O” held in 2008 was well-participated by the general public, the local community as well as the professional institutes, and quite a number of design concepts had been submitted for the Government’s consideration. This Member enquired whether the submitted design proposals had been taken into account in formulating the land use proposals under the DPA Plan. In response, Mr. Ivan M.K. Chung said that the proposals submitted to the design competition, including the proposal of using an area to the east of Sun Ki Street as salt panning demonstration area, had been taken into consideration in preparing the DPA Plan for the Tai O Fringe area.

21. The Chairman informed Members that the Government would implement the improvement proposals which were recommended by the “Tai O Improvement Works Concept Plan” by phases. In April 2010, funding was sought from the LegCo for implementing the riverwall and ancillary improvement works at Tai O. For other proposals, the Government would collaborate with the local residents and other stakeholders with a view to achieving` a better local environment for Tai O.

22. After further deliberation, the Board:

- (a) agreed that the draft Tai O Fringe DPA Plan No. DPA/I-TOF/D (to be renumbered to DPA/I-TOF/1) and its Notes were suitable for exhibition for public inspection under section 5 of the Ordinance;
- (b) agreed that the Explanatory Statement (ES) was suitable to serve as an expression of the planning intentions and objectives of the Board for various land use zonings of the draft Tai O Fringe DPA Plan and that the ES should be issued under the name of the Board ; and
- (c) agreed that a briefing on the draft DPA Plan would be conducted for the Islands District Council and Tai O Rural Committee shortly after its publication under section 5 of the Ordinance.

23. As Members had no further questions and comments to raise, the Chairman thanked PlanD’s representatives for attending the meeting. They all left the meeting at this point.