

**Subcommittee on Country Parks (Designation) (Consolidation)
(Amendment) Order 2017**

**Government's Response to the List of Follow-up Actions
Arising from the Discussion at the Meeting on 16 October 2017**

This paper sets out the Government's responses to the matters raised by Members at the meeting of the Subcommittee on Country Parks (Designation) (Consolidation) (Amendment) Order 2017 on 16 October 2017.

The building of small houses in country parks

(a) the respective number of applications for the building of small houses in recognized villages within the boundary of country parks received, approved and rejected by the Administration since the handover in 1997;

2. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) received 14 applications for small house development (including new development or re-development) within recognized villages within country parks since July 1997. After assessing the details of these applications, the Country and Marine Parks Authority ("the Authority") has indicated no objection to six of the applications. There were six applications that the Authority could not process further as the final development sites had changed to areas outside country parks, or the applicants failed to provide further necessary information due to comments from other departments. Meanwhile, two applications are still being considered by the Authority.

Compensation claims under section 19 of the Country Park Ordinance (Cap. 208)

(b) the respective number of claims made and granted under section 19 of the Cap. 208 in relation to the Country and Marine Parks Authority's decisions on the land use in country parks so far;

3. The Administration had not received any compensation claims under section 19 of the Country Parks Ordinance.

Sai Wan Management

(c) Records of discussion of the Working Group on Sai Wan Management

4. A summary of the records of discussion of the Sai Wan Management Working Group is at **Annex 1**.

(d) details of the funding proposal of \$9.5 million approved by the Environment and Conservation Fund for a non-government organization to implement a Management Agreement project at Sai Wan enclave through engagement of the local community and public.

5. Details of the Management Agreement project at Sai Wan are at **Annex 2**.

**Environment Bureau
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
October 2017**

**Summary of the records of discussion
of the Sai Wan Management Working Group**

After the country park enclave at Sai Wan was incorporated into the Sai Kung East Country Park in 2013, the Country Parks Committee of the Country and Marine Parks Board formed a working group which focused on the discussion of the management of Sai Wan and other related issues.

The first meeting of the Sai Wan Management Working Group (“the Working Group”) was held on 10th April 2014, and a total of eight meetings had been held so far. Apart from some of the members of the Country Parks Committee and the representatives of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), representatives from other government departments, such as the Lands Department (LandsD), the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD), the Environmental Protection Department and the Sai Kung District Office (SKDO), etc. were also invited to the meetings. In addition, AFCD also had several additional meetings with stakeholders such as the Heung Yee Kuk, rural committee, village representatives and villagers of Sai Wan Village, etc. to follow up on various projects. Matters discussed in these meetings are summarized as follows:

Environmental Hygiene

Since the incorporation of Sai Wan into the Sai Kung East Country Park, AFCD had continued to put in resources to upkeep the environmental hygiene condition in Sai Wan. These included engaging a contractor to provide daily refuse collection service and cleansing service at the two public toilets, and large-scale operation to remove accumulated large-sized garbage, etc. In order to cope with the demand from the villagers and visitors, AFCD is upgrading the sewage treatment systems at the two public toilets and reconstructing the refuse collection point in Sai Wan. AFCD and the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department are now working on the preliminary designs of the sewage treatment systems and the refuse collection point.

Tree Risk Assessment and removal of trees with hazard

AFCD conducted tree risk assessment every year in Sai Wan and removed trees with hazard to ensure the safety of villagers and visitors. Moreover, AFCD carried out enrichment planting in Sai Wan, which included the removal of aging or wilted exotic trees and planting of native trees at the woodland areas, and planting of mangroves along the riverbank areas to enrich the mangrove diversity and enhance their coverage, so as to enhance the overall biodiversity and the quality of living environment in Sai Wan.

Visitor Facilities

To provide suitable facilities for visitors who come for ecotourism, AFCD designated a camp site at a beach in Sai Wan, constructed a new hiking trail, and planned to install a stargazing site. At the meetings of the Working Group, Members had made various suggestions on visitor facilities, which would be considered and followed up by AFCD as appropriate.

The Footpath to Sai Wan

Sai Wan villagers mainly access Sai Wan Village through a footpath provided by SKDO. Representatives of the Sai Wan Village expressed their concern that the footpath was rather narrow, and hoped the footpath could be improved for villagers to transport goods by village vehicles and small tractors. As the footpath was built and maintained by SKDO, any works for the footpath should be discussed with SKDO. AFCD arranged a joint site visit with representatives of the Sai Wan Village and SKDO in May 2015. Representatives of the Sai Wan Village gave their opinions on the footpath design, and representatives of SKDO agreed to take follow-up actions and proposed improvement plan. AFCD and SKDO carried out another site visit in October 2016 with the Wan villagers, representatives of the Working Group and the Chairman of Sai Kung Rural Committee and explain the proposed designs of the footpath enhancement works. The designs were later modified according to the feedbacks from the Sai Wan villagers and members of the Working Group.

Sitting-out Area and Stargazing Area

AFCD commissioned the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Hong Kong (HKU) to provide design proposals for the proposed sitting-out area and stargazing site in Sai Wan. A design charrette workshop was held in June 2015 in HKU, where architecture professionals and Sai Wan stakeholders (e.g.

hiking groups and representatives of the Working Group) were invited to provide comments. During September and October 2015, the Faculty of Architecture of HKU organised a public exhibition in Sai Kung Country Park Visitor Centre in Pak Tam Chung, which displayed various design proposals and collected comments from the public. AFCD also invited representatives of Sai Wan Village to visit the exhibition and collected their comments. With reference to the relevant design proposals and comments, the Architectural Services Department is currently working out the detailed design and arranging the construction works.

Food Stalls and Home-stay Lodgings

Currently, as there are villagers residing in Sai Wan Village and operating food stalls there, one of the major objectives of the management of Sai Wan is to facilitate ecotourism at Sai Wan through the engagement of villagers. Although some of the existing village houses may have potential to transform into food stalls, yet such transformation must be conducted in a lawful and sustainable manner, so that the overall characteristics in Sai Wan would not be depreciated.

The Working Group had in-depth discussions in various meetings about the food stalls in Sai Wan and their licensing requirements. Representatives of relevant departments were invited to the meetings to provide advice. In general, relevant licence could be applied from the FEHD if such use was permitted at the relevant structure/ land. If the cafe only provided takeaway food, a Food Factory Licence could be considered.

Suggestions of providing village houses as home-stay lodges for visitors would require transformation of the houses and have other policy considerations. The Working Group considered that the Government should continue discussing with the villagers to work out feasible proposals.

“Management Agreement Scheme” in Sai Wan

With a view to effectively managing the private land while conserving the historic, cultural and ecological values of Sai Wan, the Working Group discussed the application of a Management Agreement project in Sai Wan for funding support under the Environment and Conservation Fund (ECF). The Working Group acknowledged the merit of cooperation between the landowners and relevant non-government organisations to implement a

conservation project, and has taken forward the idea of Management Agreement Scheme to promote eco-tourism at Sai Wan through local engagement.

In late 2015, the Sai Kung District Community Centre introduced a rehabilitation project for Sai Wan under the “Management Agreement Scheme” to the Working Group, and responded to the members’ enquiries and suggestions. After collecting the Sai Wan Villagers’ opinions, the Sai Kung District Community Centre and Heung Yee Kuk jointly submitted an application for a rehabilitation project for Sai Wan area under a revised “Management Agreement Scheme” to the ECF, which was approved in late 2016. The Management Agreement Scheme is now in progress.

Follow-up on the Unauthorised Structures in Sai Wan

LandsD and AFCD have been reporting the latest situation and follow-up actions taken against the unauthorised structures in Sai Wan to the Working Group. The Working Group agreed with the enforcement actions taken against the unauthorised structures, and suggested that the Government should communicate with villagers via Heung Yee Kuk to resolve the problems.

Sai Wan Management Agreement

Background

The Sai Wan enclave was designated as part of the Sai Kung East Country Park in December 2013. During the consultation for country park designation, there were views that a non-governmental organisation can apply funding support from the Environment and Conservation Fund (ECF) for implementing a Management Agreement (MA) project in Sai Wan in order to effectively manage the private land, while conserving the historic, cultural and ecological values of Sai Wan. The Working Group on Sai Wan Management acknowledged the merit of cooperation between the landowners and relevant non-government organisations to implement a conservation project, thus promoting eco-tourism at Sai Wan through the MA Scheme and local engagement.

In this connection, Sai Kung District Community Centre (SKDCC) in association with Heung Yee Kuk submitted a MA application titled “Rehabilitation Project for Sai Wan Area”. The project aims at revitalising Sai Wan through the concerted efforts of relevant stakeholders and the rural community to conserve the ecological habitats, showcase the cultural uniqueness of the area and enhance the amenity of the country park areas through engagement of local villagers and public.

In October 2016, ECF approved a funding of about \$9.5 million for the MA project. The MA project commenced on 15 February 2017 and will last for 36 months.

Project Scope

Under the project, SKDCC will carry the following to implement the MA:

- (i) renting abandoned agricultural land for rehabilitation;
- (ii) renovating a village house to become a visitor information centre and a venue for workshops;

- (iii) restoring an old well in the village;
- (iv) carrying out habitat management work to enhance the conservation value and amenity of Sai Wan;
- (v) organising education programmes including workshops and guided tours, as well as other publicity programmes for the general public;
- (iv) engaging Sai Wan villagers to assist in management and conservation work of the MA.

The rehabilitation work is now in progress.

In February 2017, in accordance with the approval conditions, SKDCC has set up a steering committee to oversee the project. Members include representative of Heung Yee Kuk, two Sai Wan villagers, representatives from green groups, relevant experts and academics.