

Islands District Council
Paper IDC 131/2016

Draft Tai Ho Outline Zoning Plan No. S/I-TH/B

1 Purpose

The purpose of this Paper is to seek Members' view on the draft Tai Ho Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/I-TH/B (**Appendix I**), its Notes (**Appendix II**) and Explanatory Statement (**Appendix III**).

2 Background

2.1 Pursuant to section 20(5) of the Town Planning Ordinance (the Ordinance), the Tai Ho Development Permission Area (DPA) Plan is effective only for a period of 3 years until 28 March 2017. As such, an OZP has to be prepared to replace the DPA Plan in order to maintain statutory planning control over the Tai Ho area (the Area) upon expiry of the DPA Plan.

2.2 On 24 October 2016, the Town Planning Board (the Board) agreed that the draft Tai Ho OZP No. S/I-TH/B (the Plan) was suitable for submission to the Islands District Council (IsDC) and Mui Wo Rural Committee (MWRC) for consultation. Views of the IsDC and the MWRC on the draft OZP will be submitted to the Board for further consideration prior to the gazettal of the draft OZP under section 5 of the Ordinance.

3 The Planning Scheme Area

3.1 The Area covers a total area of about 230 ha including about 32 ha of water body (Tai Ho Wan). It is located to the east of Tung Chung New Town Extension (TCNTE) Area and is separated by the mountain ridges of Por Kai Shan within Lantau North (Extension) Country Park. The Area mainly consists of Tai Ho Valley, which comprises Tai Ho Wan, village settlements, agricultural land, the natural vegetated areas including woodland, shrubland, streams etc. and several pieces of isolated vegetated upland areas on the eastern and southern sides, i.e. Tin Liu, Hung Fa Ngan, A Po Long and Wong Kung Tin. The boundary of the Area is shown by a heavy broken line on the Plan.

3.2 The Area generally consists of a low lying valley at the centre with hilly terrain descending from the mountain ranges and peaks in the south towards the seashore. According to the Landscape Value Mapping of Hong Kong, the Area including the four isolated vegetated upland areas is classified as having high landscape value.

3.3 The Area has rich landscape resources including mature woodland, shrubland, grassland, valley, knolls, and streams. There are also natural coastal features such as the estuary and shorelines at Tai Ho Wan. Tai Ho Wan is a major landmark

along North Lantau Highway (NLH), which previously was an open coastal bay before the highway was built. The estuary area of Tai Ho Stream consists of mangrove and inter-tidal mudflats. Along the eastern periphery of Tai Ho Wan, coastal vegetations are found, dominant species include young and scattered patches of *Kandelia obovata*, abundant young *Cerbera manghas*, *Hibiscus tiliaceus* and *Pongamia pinnata*.

- 3.4 Part of Tai Ho Stream is listed as an Ecologically Important Stream (EIS) and is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Tai Ho Stream SSSI is one of the few remaining medium-sized natural streams of its kind in Hong Kong. The stream supports a high diversity of freshwater and brackish-water fishes in Hong Kong with various species recorded, including the rare Largesnout Goby (*Awaous melanocephalus* 黑首阿胡鰕虎魚), the rare Black Sleeper (*Eleotris melanosoma* 黑體塘鱧) and the rare migratory fish Ayu (*Plecoglossus altivelis* 香魚). The Seagrass *Halophila beccarii* (貝克喜鹽草) and Horseshoe crabs (*Carcinoscorpius rotundicauda* 圓尾鬚), a species of conservation importance, have also been recorded in the mudflat within the boundary of Tai Ho Stream SSSI.
- 3.5 Tai Ho also supports the reptile of regional concern Tokay Gecko (*Gekko gecko* 大壁虎), as well as a number of rare/uncommon butterflies including the rare Red Lacewing (*Cethosia biblis* 紅鋸蛺蝶). Two amphibian species of conservation interest, namely Romer's Tree Frog (*Liuixalus romeri* 盧氏小樹蛙) and Short-legged Toad (*Megophrys brachykolos* 短腳角蟾), have also been recorded at Tai Ho.
- 3.6 The area further uphill is densely vegetated woodland and shrubland on the valley sides extending into Lantau North (Extension) Country Park and Lantau North Country Park beyond the Area. A concrete footpath links the NLH to the country parks uphill, going through village settlements at Pak Mong, Ngau Kwu Long and Tai Ho San Tsuen with associated agricultural land.
- 3.7 There are four recognised villages within the Area, namely Pak Mong, Ngau Kwu Long, Tai Ho (also known as Tai Ho San Tsuen) and Wong Kung Tin (also known as Wong Fung Tin). Except Wong Kung Tin at the southernmost part of the Area where no village settlement is found, all other villages in the Area consist of typical 3-storey village houses with ancestral halls (Tsz Tong) and a large area of paved area for ancestral worshipping activities.

4 General Planning Intention

The general planning intention for the Area is to conserve the Area's outstanding natural landscape with unique scientific and ecological values in safeguarding the natural habitat and natural system of the wider area and to preserve historical artifacts, local culture and traditions of the villages. Due consideration should be given to the conservation of the ecologically and environmentally sensitive areas, such as Tai Ho Stream SSSI, when development in or near the Area is proposed. Small House development in recognised villages will be consolidated at suitable locations to

preserve the rural character of the Area.

5 Land Use Zonings

5.1 The proposed land use zoning and planning intention as stated in the Notes and Explanatory Statement of the draft OZP are summarized in the following paragraphs:

5.2 *“Village Type Development” (“V”): Total Area 6.43ha*

5.2.1 The planning intention of this zone is to designate both existing recognised villages and areas of land considered suitable for village expansion. Land within this zone is primarily intended for development of Small Houses by indigenous villagers. It is also intended to concentrate village type development within this zone for a more orderly development pattern, efficient use of land and provision of infrastructures and services. Selected commercial and community uses serving the needs of the villagers and in support of the village development are always permitted on the ground floor of a New Territories Exempted House. Other commercial, community and recreational uses may be permitted on application to the Board.

5.2.2 Except Wong Kwun Tin where there is no existing village settlement, the “V” zones designated for the three recognised villages, namely Pak Mong, Ngau Kwu Long and Tai Ho, are drawn up having regard to the ‘Village Environs’ (‘VE’), the local topography, the existing settlement pattern, the outstanding Small House applications and demand forecast. Areas of difficult terrain, potential natural terrain hazards, dense vegetation, conservation and ecological value, burial grounds and the buffer area for the stream courses are excluded.

5.2.3 No new development, or addition, alteration and/or modification to or redevelopment of an existing building shall result in a total development and/or redevelopment in excess of a maximum building height of 3 storeys (8.23m). As diversion of streams may cause adverse drainage impacts on the adjacent areas and adverse impacts on the natural environment, permission from the Board is required for such works and related activities except public works co-ordinated or implemented by the Government, and maintenance, repair or rebuilding works.

5.3 *“Government, Institution or Community” (“G/IC”): Total Area 0.15ha*

5.3.1 The planning intention of this zone is primarily for the provision of Government, institution or community (GIC) facilities serving the needs of the local residents and/or a wider district, region or the territory. It is also intended to provide land for uses directly related to or in support of the work of the Government, organisations providing social services to meet community needs, and other institutional

establishments.

- 5.3.2 Existing GIC uses include two public toilets located at Pak Mong and Ngau Kwu Long, and Luk Hop Yuen Temple on the eastern side of Tai Ho Wan.

5.4 *“Green Belt” (“GB”): Total Area 166.97ha*

- 5.4.1 The planning intention of this zone is primarily for defining the limits of development areas by natural features and to preserve the existing natural landscape as well as to provide passive recreational outlets. There is a general presumption against development within this zone.
- 5.4.2 The “GB” zone mainly covers agricultural land, hillslopes, natural vegetations and small streams in Tai Ho Valley, Hung Fa Ngan and A Po Long area, and Wong Kung Tin. Some active cultivation activities are found in the agricultural land at Pak Mong, Ngau Kwu Long and Tai Ho villages. Wong Kung Tin, where no village settlement is found, is also included in this zone.
- 5.4.3 As diversion of streams, filling of land/pond or excavation of land may cause adverse drainage impacts on the adjacent areas and the natural environment, permission from the Board is required for such works and related activities except public works co-ordinated or implemented by the Government, and maintenance, repair or rebuilding works.

5.5 *“Coastal Protection Area” (“CPA”): Total Area 4.20ha*

- 5.5.1 The planning intention of this zone is to conserve, protect and retain the natural coastlines and the sensitive coastal natural environment, including attractive geological features, physical landform or area of high landscape, scenic or ecological value, with a minimum of built development. It may also cover areas which serve as natural protection areas sheltering nearby developments against the effects of coastal erosion. There is a general presumption against development in this zone. In general, only developments that are needed to support the conservation of the existing natural landscape or scenic quality of the area or are essential infrastructure projects with overriding public interest may be permitted.
- 5.5.2 This zone covers the coastal areas along Tai Ho Wan which primarily consist of coastal vegetation, tidal mudflats, rocky boulder coasts and part of the mangrove on the western side of Tai Ho Stream’s estuary.
- 5.5.3 New residential development is not permitted under this zone. Redevelopment of existing house may be permitted on application to the Board. In view of the conservation value of the area within this zone, permission from the Board is required for diversion of streams, filling of land/pond or excavation of land that may cause adverse drainage impacts on the adjacent areas and adverse impacts on the

natural environment, except public works co-ordinated or implemented by the Government, and maintenance, repair or rebuilding works.

5.6 “*Conservation Area*” (“CA”): *Total Area 15.41ha*

- 5.6.1 This zone is intended to protect and retain the existing natural landscape, ecological or topographical features of the area for conservation, educational and research purposes and to separate sensitive natural environment such as SSSI or Country Park from the adverse effects of development. There is a general presumption against development in this zone. In general, only developments that are needed to support the conservation of the existing natural landscape or scenic quality of the area or are essential infrastructure projects with overriding public interest may be permitted.
- 5.6.2 Buffers are provided on both sides of Tai Ho Stream SSSI in order to protect the aquatic habitats. This zone also comprises a patch of mature woodland at the south of Pak Mong village with the intention of preserving the woodland with its existing natural character from further disturbance.
- 5.6.3 New residential development is not permitted within this zone. Redevelopment of existing house may be permitted on application to the Board. Works relating to diversion of streams, filling of land/pond or excavation of land may cause adverse drainage impacts on adjacent areas and the natural environment. In view of the conservation value of the area within this zone, permission from the Board is required for such activities except public works co-ordinated or implemented by the Government, and maintenance, repair or rebuilding works.

5.7 “*Site of Special Scientific Interest*” (“SSSI”): *Total Area 4.64ha*

- 5.7.1 The planning intention of this zone is to conserve and protect the features of special scientific interest such as rare or particular species of fauna and flora and their habitats which are designated as SSSI. It intends to deter human activities or developments within the SSSI. There is a general presumption against development in this zone. No developments are permitted unless they are needed to support the conservation of the features of special scientific interest in the SSSI, to maintain and protect the existing character of the SSSI, or for educational and research purposes.
- 5.7.2 This zone covers the designated Tai Ho Stream SSSI. The SSSI, having an area of about 5 ha, covers a natural stream (Tai Ho Stream) with several tributaries running from upland to the lowland estuary. Tai Ho Stream is a medium-sized natural stream supporting a high diversity of freshwater and brackish-water fish in Hong Kong, including the rare Largesnout Goby (*Awaous melanocephalus* 黑首阿胡鰕虎魚) and the rare Black Sleeper (*Eleotris melanosoma* 黑體塘鱧); and is the only known location of the rare migratory fish Ayu

(Pleccoglossus altivelis 香魚) in the territory. At the estuary of the stream, horseshoe crabs (Carcinoscorpius rotundicauda 圓尾蟹), a species of conservation importance, have also been recorded in the mudflat.

- 5.7.3 Diversion of streams, filling of land/pond or excavation of land may cause adverse impacts on the adjacent areas and adverse impacts on the natural environment. In view of the conservation value of the area within this zone, permission from the Board is required for such activities.

6 Advice Sought

Members are requested to express their views on the draft Tai Ho OZP No. S/I-TH/B and Members' views will be conveyed to the Board for consideration.

7 Attachments

Appendix I	Draft Tai Ho OZP No. S/I-TH/B
Appendix II	Notes of the draft Tai Ho OZP No. S/I-TH/B
Appendix III	Explanatory Statement of the draft Tai Ho OZP No. S/I-TH/B

**SAI KUNG AND ISLANDS DISTRICT PLANNING OFFICE
PLANNING DEPARTMENT
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