

Chapter 2 Overview of the Northern New Territories



2.1 Facilities and Services

24 A number of localities offer commercial tourism, recreation and food service facilities. A review of secondary sources (websites and print material) has identified the following facilities:

- Tung Ping Chau (including the Tung Ping Chau Marine Park) - pier, informal accommodation, food services, weekend ferry service.
- Sha Tau Kok - urban centre with shops, restaurants, pier, bus and mini bus service
- Luk Keng - dai pai dong, parking, mini bus service, recreational fishing
- Kat O - pier, restaurants and some retail outlets
- Plover Cove - parking, picnic areas, bus and mini bus service
- Tai Po - access point, KCR station, retail shops, restaurants, museums and some other historical attractions, market, large urban waterfront park.
- Tai Mei Tuk - restaurants and food service outlets, washrooms, recreation centre, limited parking
- Hoi Ha - restaurants, grocery stores, scuba-diving courses, information centre, campsite
- Tap Mun - restaurants and some other service shops, informal accommodation
- Mai Po Marshes Nature Reserve - built tourist attraction and Field Study Centre and Wildlife Education Centre
- Bride's Pool – Nature Trail, waterfall, barbeque sites, washrooms, weekend bus access
- Wu Kau Tang – historical villages, parking, weekend shuttle bus
- Tin Shui Wai – Hong Kong Wetland Park
- Ap Chau – restaurants and shops
- South shore of Tolo Harbour – various recreation areas



Dai pai dong at Luk Keng

- 25 The area boasts a wide variety of recreational assets, focussing on nature-based and eco-recreation. A review of secondary sources (websites and print material) has identified the following assets:
- Tung Ping Chau - important ecological habitats, coral communities and seaweed beds, important geological localities, circular country trail and linking paths, picnic areas, camp sites, information boards, way markers, shelters and washrooms.
 - Sha Tau Kok – A Chau Egret, mangrove communities
 - Kat O – hiking trails
 - Yan Chau Tong Marine Park - swimming, boating, water sports
 - Outer islands - boat docking and hiking trails
 - Hoi Ha – scuba diving courses; corals, including 52 stony coral species; a wide variety of animal species of scientific interest; free ecotourist guide on weekends; WWF marine life centre under construction; glass bottom boat
 - Plover Cove Reservoir - hiking trails, picnic grounds, camping sites; Tai Mei Tuk Water Sports Centre, and barbecue stoves; boat hire, scenic lookout;
 - Tai Po – bicycle hire, restaurants; shops; museums; Tai Po waterfront park
 - Tap Mun - flying kites, fishing, wave-watching, camping and star-watching;
 - Long Valley - birdwatching
 - Country Parks – hiking
- 26 There are currently four long distance hiking trails in Hong Kong (the MacLehose Trail, The Hong Kong Trail, The Lantau Trail and The Wilson Trail). Only part of one trail, the last two stages of the Wilson Trail, passes through the Study Area. Stage 9 begins where the trail enters the Pat Sin Leng Country Park in the southwest near Cloudy Hill, then circles around by Hok Tau Reservoir to climb the Pat Sin Leng escarpment and follows the crest from west to east. The trail then descends from the summit of Shun Yeung Fung at 591 m to Hsien Ku Fung where Stage 9 ends. Stage 10 of the trail follows the old paved trackway northwards to terminate at Shek Pam Tam, to the south of Luk Keng (Nam Chung).
- 27 There are 37 designated camp sites in the Hong Kong Country Parks. Seven of these are located in the Study Area, namely:
1. Kang Lau Shek on Tung Ping Chau
 2. Sam A Chung in the Plover Cove Country Park
 3. Hok Tau in the Pat Sin Leng Country Park
 4. Lau Shui Heung in the Pat Sin Leng Country Park
 5. Sham Chung in the Sai Kung West Country Park
 6. Lai Chi Chong in the Sai Kung West Country Park
 7. Hoi Ha in the Sai Kung West Country Park

2.2 Areas of Special Ecological Value

- 28 According to WWF Hong Kong, there are several biodiversity hotspots in the Northern New Territories that should remain protected in perpetuity and be appropriately managed. Below are some of the examples:-
- 29 Extracted from the brochure “*Mai Po Inner Deep Bay – Ramsar Site*”, the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay, locating in the northwestern New Territories and area covering 1,500 hectares was listed as a “Wetland of International Importance” under the Ramsar Convention on 4th September 1995. The Ramsar site is a natural shallow estuarine area, with extensive inter-tidal mudflats, dwarf mangroves, *gei wai* (tidal ponds) and fishponds. Thirteen globally threatened bird species live there, including one third of the world population of Black-faced Spoonbills. The 46-hectare reedbeds at the Ramsar site are the largest in Hong Kong and Guangdong Province. Over 400 species of insects are living there. In addition, the Ramsar site regularly supports 49,000 – 68,000 waterbirds in mid-winter and 120,000 – 130,000 waterbirds for the whole year. In January 2001, some 55,000 waterbirds were recorded there.



Gei wai interpretation

- 30 Yan Chau Tong Marine Park has a long coastline covering a total sea area of 680 ha. It is unique in its diverse mangrove community, sea grasses, and corals. Lai Chi Wo Beach was designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest in 1979.

- 31 Tung Ping Chau is an important ecological site. It has extensive coral formations and is rich in seaweeds. Its fringing coral formation, measuring 1.8 sq. km, is one of the largest in Hong Kong and supports over 30 hard and soft coral species, over 130 species of fishes, over 40 species of seaweed, over 100 species of marine invertebrates;. The coastline of Tung Ping Chau is also characterized by distinctive sedimentary rock formations and geological features, which are of high scientific and educational value.



Rock beddings on Tung Ping Chau

- 32 Hoi Ha Wan is unique in its coral diversity (more than 50 hard coral species have been identified) and possesses a dynamic sand beach. It is also important for its diversity of coastal habitats such as mangroves and rocky shores.
- 33 The stream courses together with the 30m buffer on both sides of the streams in Sha Lo Tung have been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), possessing a rich diversity of plant and animal life. Sha Lo Tung is a unique area for dragonflies, recording 72 species, representing almost 67% of the total number of species known in Hong Kong. Sha Lo Tung is host to four endemic species and it is the only site in the world to support two *Macromidia* species which were described as new to science. It is also the only locality to provide a breeding habitat for six other rare species.

2.3 Cultural Assets

- 34 The area abounds with numerous abandoned and partly abandoned villages in various states of repair. Many are intact or have managed to retain much of their pre-colonial character. In addition, traditional Chinese cultural artefacts are evident, ranging from temples and ancestral halls to cannons, other fortifications and personal belongings left in abandoned houses.
- 35 The study area has rich cultural heritage, including:
- 29 recorded walled villages, divided into 5 major categories by clan surname: Tang, Pang, Hou, Man, and Liu but some lie outside the study area.
 - 6 villages on Kat O inhabited by members of the Lam, Tsang, Chow, Yau, Cheung, and Chung clans.

Walled villages are classified into two categories: local and Hakka

Table 3 Examples of villages in the study area

<i>Walled Village</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Surname</i>	<i>Walled Village</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Surname</i>
Shan Ha Wan	H1	Tsang	Tan Chuk Hang Lo Wai	P1	Lau
Kei Ling Ha Lo Wai	H2	Ho	San Uk Chai	H2	Chan
Pan Chung	P3	Mak	Man Uk Pin	P3	Chung
Tai Po Kau San Wai	P2	Tang	Lo Wai (Sheung Wo Hang)	H2	Lee
Zhong Sam Wai (Tai Hang)	P1	Man	Ha Wo Hang	H1	Lee
Fooi Sha Wai (Tai Hang)	P1	Man	Ma Tseuk Leng San Uk Ha	H1	Cheung
Fanling Zhing Wai	P1	Pang	Kuk Po Lo Wai	H2	Ho
Lo Wai (Lung Yeuk Tau)	P1	Tang	Heung Yuen Wai	H1	Man
She Wat Wai	P1	Tang	Tai Wu	P3	To
Tung Kok Wai	P1	Tang	Tai Tau Leng	P3	Tang
Wing Ling Wai	P1	Tang	Sheung Shui Wai	P1	Liu
San Wai (Lung Yeuk Tau)	P1	Tang	Hakka Wai	H2	Wong
Hung Leng	P3	Tsang, Yip	Lo Wai (Ho Sheung Heung)	P1	Hou
			Ping Kong	P1	Hou
			Yan Sau Wai	P1	Man
			Shek Wu Wai	P1	Man

Legend:

P1 = Local village with city wall

P2 = Local rectangular village

P3 = Local village without city wall

H1 = Hakka village with city wall

H2 = Hakka village without city wall

Source: Sit, V.F.S. (2001). Hong Kong: 150 Years, Development in Maps. Hong Kong: Joint Publishing (H.K.) Co., Ltd. pp. 108-9

- 36 Other areas of cultural interest identified during the secondary research phase include:
- Tung Ping Chau – Chau Tau village and associated temples, intact historical village
 - Sha Tau Kok - Kang Yung Study Hall in the Hakka village of Sheung Wo Hang built by the Li clan of the area in the early Qing Dynasty and rebuilt during the Qianlong reign (1736-1795) and renamed Kang Yung Study Hall; Chung Ying Street, the open boundary between Hong Kong SAR and the mainland China
 - Luk Keng – a zone of villages with 10 ancestral halls and temples
 - Villages on Kat O - inhabited by members of the Lam, Tsang, Chow, Yau, Cheung and Chung clans; old cannon; Pak Kung shrine; Lam, Tsang and Chow Clan halls built in the early Ching Dynasty; Tin Hau temples; Water & Moon Temple
 - Hoi Ha village - lime kilns
 - Sha Lo Tung villages – intact historical villages
 - Tai Po - Island House , Tai Wong Yeh Temple, Hong Kong Railway Museum, Man Mo temple
 - Tap Mun – Tin Hau temple
 - Long Valley – wet agriculture
 - Lung Yeuk Tau Heritage Trail
 - Lai Chi Wo – a nearly abandoned, but intact walled village
 - Sam A Tsuen – abandoned, but intact village and village houses
 - Villages in the FCA, including – Chow Tin, Fung Wong Wu, Tsuen Yuen Ha – mostly intact villages
 - Heung Yueng Wai – fortified tower
 - Ho Sheung Heung (north of Long Valley), large ancestral hall
 - San Tin – ancestral halls



Lai Chi Wo village

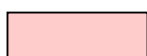
2.4 Access

Table 4 summarizes the transport access to the study area.

Table 4 Transport access

Destination	Transportation	Pickup Point	Drop-off Point	Remarks
Kat O	Water Taxi	Wong Shek Pier	Kat O	3 passengers only
	Launch	Ma Liu Shui	Kat O	Max 30 passengers
Tap Mun	KMB 96R	Diamond Hill MTR Bus Terminus	Wong Shek Pier Bus Terminus	Holiday service only
	KMB 94	Sai Kung Bus Terminus	Wong Shek Pier Bus Terminus	
	Ferry	Wong Shek Pier / Ma Liu Shui	Tap Mun	
	Water Taxi	Wong Shek Pier	Tap Mun	
Tung Ping Chau	Ferry	Ma Liu Shui	Ping Chau Pier	Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays only
Hoi Ha	KMB 96R	Diamond Hill MTR Bus Terminus	Wong Shek Pier Bus Terminus	Holiday service only
	KMB 94	Sai Kung Bus Terminus	Wong Shek Pier Bus Terminus	
	Ferry	Wong Shek Pier	Wan Tsai Peninsula	Walk about 30 minutes to Hoi Ha Village
	KMB 94	Sai Kung Bus Terminus	Ko Tong Station	Walk about 40 minutes to Hoi Ha Village
	KMB 96R	Diamond Hill MTR Bus Terminus	Pak Tam Chung	Holiday service only
	Minibus 7	Pak Tam Chung	Hoi Ha	Sundays and public holidays only
Yan Chau Tong	Water Taxi	Wong Shek Pier / Ma Liu Shui	Lai Chi Wo Pier	
Mai Po Nature Reserve	Green Taxi	Yuen Long	Mai Po	
	KMB 76K	Yuen Long	Mai Po Village	20 minutes walk to the Reserve
Hong Kong Wetland Park	Free Shuttle Bus	Kingswood Plaza at Tin Shui Wai	Wetland Park Phase 1	Sundays and public holiday only
Bride's Pool	KMB 275R	Tai Po KCR	Bride's Pool Bus Terminus	Holiday service only
Lai Chi Chong	KMB 299	Shatin Central Bus Terminus	Shap Sze Heung	
	Minibus 807K	University KCR	Nai Chung, Shap Sze Heung	
	Ferry	Ma Liu Shui	Lai Chi Chong	
Plover Cove	KMB 75K	Tai Po KCR	Tai Mei Tuk Bus Terminus	

	KMB 275R	Tai Po KCR	Bride's Pool Bus Terminus	Holiday service only
Sam Mun Tsai	KMB 74K	Tai Po KCR	Sam Mun Tsai	
	Minibus 20K	Tai Po KCR	Sam Mun Tsai	
Sha Lo Tung	KMB 75K	Tai Po KCR	Yue Kok	Pass through Fung Yuen to Sha Lo Tung
Tai Mei Tuk	KMB 75K	Tai Po KCR	Tai Mei Tuk Bus Terminus	
Hong Kong Railway Museum	KCR	Any station	Tai Wo / Tai Po station	Walking distance from KCR station
Man Mo Temple	KCR	Any station	Tai Wo / Tai Po station	Walking distance from KCR station
Tai Po Waterfront Park	KMB 71K	Tai Wo Bus Terminus	Fu Shin Estate Bus Terminus	
	KMB 275R	Tai Po KCR	Yuen Shin Road	Holiday service only
	KMB 72A	Tai Wai Bus Terminus	Yee Nga Court	
Yuen Chau Tsai, Island House & Tai Wong Yeh Temple	KCR	Any	Tai Po station	Walking distance from KCR station
Liu Man Shek Tong Ancestral Hall	KCR	Any	Sheung Shui station	Walking distance from KCR station
Lok Ma Chau	KMB 76K	Sheung Shui KCR	Lok Ma Chau	
Luk Keng	Minibus 56K	Fanling KCR	Luk Keng	Pass through Yim Tso Ha Egretty
Lung Yeuk Tau	Minibus 54K	Fanling KCR	Lung Yeuk Tau	
Sha Tau Kok	KMB 78K	Fanling KCR	Sha Tau Kok	
Tai Fu Tai Mansion	KMB 76K	Sheung Shui KCR	Yuen Long (West) Bus Terminus	
	Minibus 56K	Fanling KCR	Siu Hang Tsuen / San Wai	
Wun Tsuen Seen Koon & Ping Yuen Tin Hau Temple	KMB 79K	Sheung Shui Bus Terminus	Wun Tsuen Seen Koon	
	Minibus 52K	Fanling KCR	Ping Che	



Connecting Point