

Assessment of Tung Ping Chau for spa and resort development

Interdepartmental Committee on Development of Tourism in the Northern New Territories (“the Committee”)

Background

The Committee has studied Tung Ping Chau in areas of :

- (a) resort development;
- (b) development of hostel accommodation and food and retail sales;
and
- (c) conservation of history, heritage and setting up of house
museums. (c) is still on-going.

Key comments

- The island is remote and lacks transportation connections.
- The lack of water supply, sewerage treatment and electricity supply is a key constraint impeding developments on Tung Ping Chau. The island’s status as a protected area greatly limits the infrastructural options available. Substantial resources will also be required to provide the infrastructure necessary for development.
- There is a lack of suitable sites for development, with the island being mostly country park and private land. An unused ex-military camp site on Government land and outside country park area is considered the only possible site for developing new projects. The site, however, is considered rather small thus limiting its potential.

Recommendations

- In terms of the island’s potential for resort development, it is recommended that simple, low-density accommodation such as a hostel complemented by nature-based recreational facilities is more suitable, using the unused ex-military camp site. The necessary infrastructure will be required. A non-profit organization will be a suitable operator..
- The timing for the proposed development of local-operated hostel accommodation using village houses is considered not right at this stage. There is a general lack of interest among the locals to take part due to the substantial investment required for rebuilding their

houses to meet licensing conditions. The locals' interest, however, is expected to increase with visitation growth. The development of food and retail services hinges on the availability of basic infrastructural facilities.

- As regards the conservation of history, heritage and setting up of house museums, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) has commissioned a consultancy study to explore suitable development options. The consultants' initial recommendation is to focus more detailed investigation into the establishment of (a) a heritage resort using the ex-military camp site together with an adjacent site currently occupied by Hong Kong Police; and (b) a house museum which would be a new purpose-built structure replicating the design and style of a typical heritage house on Tung Ping Chau. (b) has been recommended after assessment of it alongside other options using existing or historical buildings against a set of criteria including cost, environmental implications, statutory requirements etc. The LCSD's consultancy study is expected to be completed in end April 2005.

Consultancy Study on the Development of New Tourism Infrastructure – Spa & Resort Facilities

Key comments

- High infrastructure costs will be required for resort development.
- Tung Ping Chau is located within the hazard zone of the Daya Bay Nuclear Power Plant which may impart the impression of it being unsafe.
- There may be public concern about developing spa and resort on Tung Ping Chau.

Recommendation

- It is more suitable for Tung Ping Chau to provide the “outward bound” type of simple accommodation targeted mainly at the local market.

Tourism Commission
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