THE FUTURE OF FRONTIER CLOSED AREA

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_________________ _________________
Professor S. M. Li Dr. C. S. Chow
Chief Adviser Second Examiner

Continuous Assessment: _______________
Product Grade: _________________
Overall Grade: _________________
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Student’s signature

Department of Geography
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Abstract

Frontier Closed Area is a remote area. However, the Shenzhen City’s CBD is nearby the Frontier Closed Area. The information and fact are collected and observed in order to lead the public more familiar with it.

In recent years, there have extensive discussion on the future of Frontier Closed Area. Their opinions can be categorized as two different aspects; (1) maintain the Frontier Closed Area policy as usual in order to combat the cross-boundary crime and to protect the special natural and cultural heritage; (2) abolish the Frontier Closed Area policy or reduce its coverage in order to strengthen the cooperation with Shenzhen by the means of build up a cross-border industrial zone.

By weighting the views of the future development on Frontier Closed Area of different medium, it found that developing ecotourism or maintaining the present situation is the best approach on the development on Frontier Closed Area. Anyway, the Government should carry out more assessments on developing the FCA before getting a conclusion of development.
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1: BACKGROUND OF FRONTIER CLOSED AREA

Frontier Closed Area (FCA) is located in the northern part of New Territories in Hong Kong. It spanned the area of Mai Po, Lok Ma Chau, Lo Wu, Man Kam To, Ta Kwu Ling and Sha Tau Kok from east to west.¹ (Map 1.1a). The Hong Kong British Government introduced the FCA policy in 1951 and this area was first statutorily defined as FCA by way of a Government Gazette Notice in June of the same year².

The total coverage of existing FCA is about 28 square kilometer. About 28% of the land is private owned, and approximately 29% (2.25 km²) of this private land is “Mainland Owned”.³,⁴ The area comprises mainly green belt, fishpond, wetland, small mountain, scattered pockets of flatland, and village settlement. (Table 1.1)

There are total of 21 recognized villages⁵,⁶ within FCA and there have

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¹ Public Order Ordinance (Cap. 245A).
² Legislative Council Panel on Security, Paper Number: CB(2)1713/01-02(06), 2-5-2002.
³ Derived from the data of The Public Records Office (PRO).
⁴ “Mainland owned land” is land registered in the names of owners whose registered addresses are in China. The Public Records Office.
⁵ A 'recognized village' is one which is shown on the list of recognized villages approved by the Director of Lands.
⁶ These villages are: Liu Pok (料壆), San Uk Ling (新屋嶺), Muk Wu (木湖), Nga Yiu (瓦窰), Chow Tin Tsuen (周田村), Fung Wong Wu (鳳凰湖), Tong Fong (塘坊), Kan Tau Wai (簡頭圍), Chuk Yuen (竹園), Heung Yuen Wai (香園圍), Ha Heung Yuen (下香園), Tsung
some squatters scatter around. The total population is about 9500, and about
4000 is living in the rural town of Sha Tau Kok and 5500 are living scatter
around in FCA.\(^7\)

### Table 1.1: The land uses distribution of the FCA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural and flat land</td>
<td>8 km(^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetland</td>
<td>7.1 km(^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilly terrain</td>
<td>10 km(^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village settlements and cemetery</td>
<td>2.5 km(^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control points</td>
<td>0.4 km(^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>28 km(^2)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: School of Hotel and Tourism Management, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University and Tourism Commission, *Study Report: Development of Tourism in the Northern New Territories of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.*)

Guo (1996) point out that due to the natural and artificial separations
between different political regions, many border regions have still been
developed ineffectively\(^8\). Similarly, the FCA still has not had any form of
development after the introduction of FCA policy since 1951, and the land use
was under strictly restriction. Commercial and industrial activities were

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\(^7\) Hong Kong Planning Department. “Development Potential of Frontier Closed Area”, Hong Kong 2030 Planning Vision and Strategy stage 3 public consultations working paper No. 32

depressed and it led the villages which were located within the FCA became desolated. The FCA policy also isolate the area from any outside activities include economical, cultural, and personal activities. As a result, the FCA policy generated a phenomenon of little population and land-abandoned scene (Plate 1.1a and b) in FCA. In addition, most of this land do not have any Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) or Development Permission Area Plan (DPAP) (Map 1.1b).

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9 工商日報, 30-8-1972

10 The areas do not have statutory planning are included Country Park, outlying island, some remote and sparsely populated areas and FCA

11 Town Planning Board
Plate 1.1a: Abandoned farmland at Lin Ma Hang

Plate 1.1b: Abandoned farmland near Heung Yuen Wai
Map 1.1a: The location of FCA  (Source: Planning Department)
Map1.1b: Land use planning in the vicinity of FCA
(Source: Planning Department)
1.2: OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this paper are:

1 To give more information of FCA to public to let them more familiar with it.

2 To find out the views of different institutes, organizations, and Government departments on the issue of future developments on FCA, and analyze the importance of their views;

3 To provide my own opinions and recommendations of future developments on FCA.

1.3: LITERATURE REVIEWS

Guo (1996) stated that in the past decades, the economists and geographers have studied the economic and developmental issues both within individual countries (regions) and between countries (regions). Only a small part of these efforts has been focused on the economic and developmental affairs of those countries’ (regions’) peripheral area. It is true in Hong Kong that only few studied on the economic and developmental issues in the border area.

Guo (1996) also mention that the major obstacle to analyzing

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border-regions has been the difficulties in collecting sufficient and compatible data. Even worse, it is inconvenient or impossible for scholars to visit the forbidden frontiers in order to explore in depth the natural and geographical features and socio-economic data due to the special or ideological environments in border region. It is also true in Hong Kong that the entrance restriction under the FCA policy is inconvenient for scholars to visit the frontiers area in order to get the desired information. Because of the inconvenience of access to the FCA, there is lack of academic research, or thesis is talking about FCA. The information of the life, cultural, and environment of FCA is scatter around many books, but there is no literature is talking about FCA and it culture or development.

In December 2002, the Tourism Commission conducts a study report called “Development of Tourism in the Northern New Territories of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region” point out that there are moderate to high tourism development potential in FCA. The traditional villages and its nearby environment have been identified as a high cultural and heritage tourism potential by virtue of unspoiled natural and heritage setting. This study also suggests to develop a low visitation levels, small scale, and low impact tourism to sustain the characteristics of the FCA. It also
recommended what should do by the government to made use of the resources in the FCA to attract tours.

In 2001, “Hong Kong 2030 Planning Vision and Strategy”, a long-term planning framework to guide the development of Hong Kong over the next 30 years, stage 2 public consultations conducted by Planning Department suggests to develop the FCA to make land available for industrial, commercial and residential uses.

In November 2003, the Planning Department launched the “Hong Kong 2030 Planning Vision and Strategy” stage 3 public consultations. In this consultation, it has the working paper study the development potential of FCA. This working paper has a description of the setting, environment, ecology, infrastructure, land ownership, recognized village inside the FCA and its surrounding areas. It also identified the Lok Ma Chau Loop (落馬州河套區), Heung Yuen Wai (香園圍) and Kong Nga Po (缸瓦甫) (Map 1.3) inside the FCA had medium to long-term development potential. It also has comprehensive development advantages and constraints study on these areas.

Although the above studies have comprehensive research on potential tourism and possible future development, it did not have detail description of FCA. In this paper, it will provide a detail description of FCA. Also, it will
evaluate the development of land in the FCA in the future by studying the
various forces that act on the FCA.

After knowing some basic background of FCA and the objective of this
study in Chapter One, Chapter Two are focuses on the description of FCA.
The history, natural and geographical facts and information, and special
character are collected and recorded through field observation in this chapter.

In recent years, whether to develop the FCA or reduce its coverage is
under extensive discussion. Therefore, Chapter two are to find out the views
of different groups on the future of FCA. The selection criteria are the groups
must have influential and decisive power in the planning processes of FCA.
As a result, Security Bureau, Housing, Planning and Land Bureau, Kadoorie
Farm and Botanic Corporation, Tourism Commission, Hong Kong Institute
of Planners, FCA’s residences, Democratic Alliance for Betterment of Hong
Kong, Democratic Party, and Liberal Party were selected.

After knowing the views of different groups, it also recognizes the
advantages and constraints of developing the FCA. In Chapter four, I will
draw my own opinions and recommendations of future use of FCA by
weighting their views.
Map 1.3: Potential development areas in FCA (Source: Planning Department)
CHAPTER TWO: DESCRIPTION AND INFORMATION OF FCA

Most people consider the FCA is a secret and remote area. The strictly access control under the FCA policy is a main cause for that. The Hong Kong Police require everybody and traffic must have a valid FCA Permit (Table 2) when access the FCA. The FCA permit is only issued to the people who satisfy the following specified conditions.

1. "Persons who need to maintain a Traditional Link with the local community within the Closed Area because of Family or Historical Ties", are include
   - Persons whose ancestors have been residents of the Closed Area and who need to maintain a traditional link with the local community within the Closed Area;
   - Persons whose ancestors have been residents of Yim Liu Ha, Sai Lau Kong, Ap Chau and Kat O Fisherman Tsuen and who need to maintain a traditional link with the local community within the Closed Area; or
   - Persons who have previously been residents of the Closed Area and have established a link with the local community within the Closed Area, who need to continue to maintain link with the local community within the Closed Area.

2. "Need to access Closed Area" means any one of the following:
   - Persons who need to maintain a traditional link with the local community in the Closed Area because of family or historical ties;
   - Persons who need to transit the Closed Area in order to reach his/her place of abode;
   - Persons who live within the Closed Area;
   - Persons who visit relatives or friends living in the Closed Area;

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13 明報, 13-4-2002
14 Registration of Persons Ordinance (Cap.177B)
15 Closed Area Permit Office, Sheung Shui Police Station.
22

- Has a need to liaise with the local Rural Committee;
- Owns property within the Closed Area;
- Has been appointed to take care of property inside the Closed Area by the owner;
- Requires access the Closed Area for work or business; or
- Is a student attending a school inside the Closed Area and parents/guardians who need to escort such a student.

3. "Need to access Chung Ying Street" means any one of the following:
   - Persons who need to maintain a traditional link with the local community in Chung Ying Street because of family or historical ties;
   - Persons who live or work within Chung Ying Street;
   - Persons who visit relatives or friends living in Chung Ying Street;
   - Persons live in the Closed Area of Sha Tau Kok who need to access Chung Ying Street frequently for legitimate purposes such as shopping.

As a result, only few people know the character and situation of the FCA.

Therefore, it will have a detail description of FCA in this Chapter in order to lead the public familiarize with it.

**Table 2: Sample of FCA permit.**
2.1 HISTORY OF FCA POLICY

2.1.1: The official record:

After Second World War, a large number of illegal immigrants came to Hong Kong from the Mainland. It led to many social problems for the Hong Kong Government, such as crime, housing problem, and unemployment\textsuperscript{16}. The Government introduced the FCA policy in May 1951\textsuperscript{17}. Under the FCA policy, certain area between the populated territory of Hong Kong and the Sino-British border (about 0.5km to 1.5km from the frontier) was declared to be the FCA to provide a buffer zone to help the security forces to maintain the integrity of the boundary between Hong Kong and the Mainland and to combat illegal immigration and other cross boundary criminal activities. Access to the FCA was controlled by the Police through the issue of the FCA Permits based on need\textsuperscript{18}.

2.1.2: Informal record:

Before 1949 (year of establishment of People Republic of China), although there had the British military force patrol along the frontier, the frontier area was not declared as a closed area. The people from the public can

\textsuperscript{16} Public Records Office  
\textsuperscript{17} Security Bureau  
\textsuperscript{18} Hong Kong Police
go there without any restriction\textsuperscript{19}. At that time, people from both sides can across the frontier freely and need not passing through any control point and there was no frontier fence divide the Chinese territories and British territories.\textsuperscript{20} In 1949, the Hong Kong British Government began to build the primary fence along the frontier in order to maintain and demonstrate British sovereignty and controls the movement from both sides\textsuperscript{20}.

At the same year, the Hong Kong British Government introduced curfew in the frontier area. This act was to hinder the activities of the secret agent from Chinese Communist Party and avoiding the rightist people came to Hong Kong by the reduction of movement of people between the frontier\textsuperscript{20}.

In 1951, the Korean War broke out. The North Korea was supported by the Chinese Communist Government. The United Nation put an embargo on the Mainland China\textsuperscript{21}. At that time, the British Hong Kong Government partook the blockade that introduced by the Western countries. In May 1951, Hong Kong government declared to set up the FCA in order to isolate the economic and politic of New China. The FCA policy was maintained from 1951 until now.

\textsuperscript{19} 新報, 19-10-2002.
\textsuperscript{20} The Public Records Office
\textsuperscript{21} Business and Services Promotion Unit
2.2: **THE COVERAGE OF FCA**

The Frontier, measuring about 35 kilometres in length, runs from a point where meridian 114° 30' East intersects the land at high watermark at Sha Tau Kok in the East, through Sha Tau Kok itself, where it is set out on the ground by a series of boundary stones, and then turns northwest, until it comes to the Shenzhen River, the Northern bank of which it follows to Deep Bay in the West\(^{22}\).

The FCA has it northern boundary which coincidence with the Frontier line, and southern boundary line that runs roughly parallel to the Frontier. FCA itself is broadest along Hung Fa Leng (紅花嶺) (2500 m) and narrowest along the railway track (450 m). The waters of Starling Inlet (沙頭角海) is included in the FCA. This one was described statutorily in the Public Order Ordinance (Cap. 245A).

2.3: **THE CHARACTER OF FCA**

**2.3.1: The location of the FCA intersects a road**

- At Sandy Ridge (沙嶺) on Man Kam To Road (Figure 2.3.1a); near Tong Fong Village on Ping Che Road (坪輋路) (Figure 2.3.1b); and by Sha Tau Kok main Police Station, Police check points are maintained continuously\(^{23}\) (Map 2.3.1).

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\(^{22}\) The Public Records Office

\(^{23}\) Hong Kong Police.
At Ha Wan Tsuen (下灣村) (Lok Ma Chau), a Police Checkpoint is maintained from 4 am to 10 pm.

Near Ma Cho Lung (馬草壟), no checkpoint is maintained but the entry point is under observation from Ma Cho Lung Police Post.

At other points along the FCA boundary intersect the road, there are a total of 23 warning signs indicating that entry is prohibited without permit.

2.3.2: Primary Fence

The primary fence (Figure 2.3.2a, b and c) constitutes the physical limit of British sovereignty before July 1997 and it serves to demonstrate the uniqueness of Hong Kong in the context of “one country two system” policy after Hong Kong reunify to China. It was built in 1949 and renovated in 1967. It consists a chain link fence which starts at Mai Po and runs in a North Easterly direction along the South Bank of the Shenzhen River to Lin Ma Hung. Due to the difficult terrain, the fence does not exist between Lin Ma Hung and a point opposite King Hau village (in the Shenzhen side). Therefore, all entrance is not allowed in this section although the people have the Closed Area Permit. The fence recommences at a point southwest of King Hau and runs in an Easterly direction along the South bank of a stream to the north and of Chung Ying Street in Sha Tau Kok (Map 2.3.2). The fence contains a number of gates (Figure 2.3.2d) to allow farmers from China side to enter.

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24 The Public Records Office
25 香港經濟日報 23-01-2002
26 Security Bureau.
cross over to Hong Kong side to farm their fields.

2.3.3: **SNAKE Fence**

Behind the Primary Fence is a secondary triple dannert wire fence which was constructed in 1967 as an anti illegal immigrant measure\textsuperscript{27}. This was known as the SNAKE Fence and it was the line on which major refugee incursions would be controlled. It begins West of Lok Ma Chau and runs eastward (Map 2.2.3). Maturities Thorn is being planted experimentally along this fence in order to increase effectiveness as an obstacle\textsuperscript{27}. Nowadays, the SNAKE Fence is left abandoned.

\textsuperscript{27} The Public Records Office
Plate 2.3.1a: Police check point in Sandy Ridge, Man Kam To Road

Plate 2.3.1b: Police check point on Ping Che Road
Plate 2.3.2a: Primary fence near Sandy Ridge, Lo Wu.

Plate 2.3.2b: Primary Fence near Chuk Yuen (竹園) in Ta Kwu Ling.
Plate 2.3.2c: Primary Fence near North Gap.

Plate 2.3.2d: The gate of the Primary fence near Heung Yuen Wai
Map 2.3.2: Location of Primary Fence
Source: The Public Records Office
In spite of these restrictions, life is generally carried on fairly normally in the Frontier Closed Area. There is in addition a degree of “come and go” across the frontier in relation to the cultivation of land, a substantial proportion of which is in the closed area is “Mainland owned”. The present whereabouts of these owners is largely unknown. In practice, such land is controlled by Communes which handle all matters relating to it. For example, compensation for field damaged by government or vehicles running off the Border Road.

2.4: DESCRIPTION OF FCA

This describes in broad terms the geography and main features of the FCA. It is divided into five sections which conform with natural divisions of the area.

The Land Registry
2.4.1: Section 1: Deep Bay to River Indus

Table 2.4.1: Villages and population of Section 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Villages</th>
<th>Population**</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ha Wan Tsuen</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>It was a fishing village in the past.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lok Ma Chau*</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liu Pok*</td>
<td>654</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tak Yuet Lau(得月樓)</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>It used to be an eating-house in pre-war days.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ma Cho Lung</td>
<td>1207</td>
<td>A village was built with assistant of the Lutheran World Federation.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Recognized Village

** Derived from the number of people who have the FCA permit and the address is registry in these villages. Hong Kong Police.

The area lying between Deep Bay and Lok Ma Chau is mainly marshland and fishpond, with a sprinkling of fishponds of abandoned duck sheds, which are all Hong Kong owned. Part of the land inside the Mai Po Inner Deep Bay is Ramsar Site which is a “Wetland of International Importance” listed by the Ramsar Convention30. Any development is prohibited unless it is essential infrastructure development with overriding public interest and shore up by an ecological impact assessment (EIA)31.

At Lok Ma Chau, the San Sham Road (新深路) links up directly with

29 The Public Records Office
30 Agriculture and Fisheries Conservation Department
31 Environmental Protection Department
China in Lok Ma Chau Control Point via a road bridge which provides a primary traffic crossing point\textsuperscript{32} for imports and export.

North-eastward of Lok Ma Chau is Hoo Hok Wai (蠔殼圍), there have extensive fish pond, which is a part of Deep Bay wetland ecosystem. Stretching eastwards of Lok Ma Chau to River Indus is a broad belt of rolling hill country, known as the North Downs, which roughly marks the dividing line between Yuen Long and North Districts. Lying between the North Downs and the Shenzhen River is a broad expanse of brackish water field, a substantial part of which is mainland owned.

2.4.2: Section 2: Lo Wu

Table 2.4.2: Villages and population of Section 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Population**</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lo Wu</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>The village is a cluster of temporary structures. Mainly build with wood.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Derived from the number of people who have the FCA permit and the address is registry in these villages. The Hong Kong Police.

At the right of Lo Wu Station is a line of hill, Sandy Ridge. Lo Wu village is at the foot of this hill. The villagers of Lo Wu, Tak Yuet Lau, and Liu Pok

\textsuperscript{32} Transport Department
can apply for the Railcard (Lo Wu Concession) from KCRC to enjoy concession fare for traveling to or from Lo Wu Station (Table 2.4.2a). The Lo Wu railway station is the principal entry point to China and marks the end of the 22 miles long Hong Kong Section of the Kowloon-Canton Railway (KCR). Travelers wishing to cross into China alight at this station and walk across the Bridge to the other side. Lo Wu Boundary Control Point is one of the busiest frontier control point over the world and the busiest control point in Asia. In 2000, 86.5 million passengers passed through this control point. Lo Wu Station accommodates the usual railway, immigration, and Port Health and Preventives Service facilities.

The Railway Bridge is used in addition by farmers who cross over from the Chinese side to cultivate their fields in Hong Kong. The number involved is below 10, being made up of both males and females. Their land is generally situated to the West of the Railway line.

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33 Immigration Department
34 Hong Kong Fact Sheet: Immigration
Table 2.4.2a: Sample of Railcard.

Table 2.4.3: Villages and population of Section 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Population**</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muk Wu*</td>
<td>206</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nga Yiu*</td>
<td>129</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Uk Ling*</td>
<td>154</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Recognized Village

** Derived from the number of people who have the FCA permit and the address is registry in these villages. The Hong Kong Police.

This section consists of two lines of hills, Sandy Ridge and Vimy Ridge, running parallel to each other in northeast direction, with a strip of flat land to the north between these hills and the Frontier formed by the Shenzhen River. The low-lying land, a substantial part is “mainland owned” and now is given over to mixed cultivation of flowers and vegetables. There are about 5 to 20
farmers cross the frontier daily from Shenzhen to Hong Kong to work on this land. Part of the Sandy Ridge is used as a public cemetery (Map 2.4.3). During Ching Ming and Cheung Yueng festivals members of the public are allowed across to the cemetery without Frontier Closed Area Permits\textsuperscript{35}.

At Man Kam To, the Man Kam To Road links up directly with China via a road bridge in Man Kam To Control Point (Plate 2.4.3a) which provides a secondary traffic crossing point for imports, which mainly consist of food supplies in the form of livestock and other agricultural products.

From Man Kam To, the Border roads run in a southeasterly direction to San Uk Ling Village and then veers north-easterly towards North Gap. Within the triangular shaped area boarded by the two sections of the Border Road and the Primary fence along the River, are located the village of Muk Wu and Nga Yin. The 48” water pipeline (Plate 2.4.3b) which brings in water from Dongjiang (東江) runs to the west of Muk Wu, crossing the Frontier close to the village and run parallel with Man Kam To Road near Sandy Ridge (Map 2.4.3). There is a gate is in the Primary fence when the pipeline crosses the Frontier, but this gate is kept locked at all times. The police are responsible for all gates in Primary fence and have standing order concerning their use.

\textsuperscript{35} Hong Kong Police
Plate 2.4.3a: Man Kam To Control Point

Plate 2.4.3b: The 48” water pipeline at Sandy Ridge
2.4.4: Section 4: North Gap to Kong Shan (崗山)

**Table 2.4.4: Villages and population of Section 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Population**</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ta Kwu Ling</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>Wooden structure area in NW of the Police station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chow Tin Tsuen*</td>
<td></td>
<td>Serious flooding problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fung Wong Wu*</td>
<td></td>
<td>Serious flooding problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tong Fong*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kan Tau Wai*</td>
<td></td>
<td>Next to Ping Che Road Police Check Point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsung Yuen Ha*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heung Yuen Wai*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ha Heung Yuen*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chuk Yuen*</td>
<td>269</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lin Ma Hang*</td>
<td>564</td>
<td>Former Lead Mine nearby</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Recognized Village

** Derived from the number of people who have the FCA permit and the address is registry in these villages. The Hong Kong Police.

Vimy Ridge peters out at North Gap. The land broadens into the lowland of Laffans Plain, which extends from Heung Yuen Wai in the North to Sheung Shan Kai Wat (上山雞乙) in the South. The Border Road continues in an easterly direction passing Ta Kwu Ling Police Station. Except for Chuk Yuen, all the villages in this section lie to the south or east of the Border Road.

Vegetable cultivation is predominant on most of the land with some flower growing (Plate 2.4.4a and b). Shenzhen framers cultivate a proportion of the field in this region, about 20 farmers crosses the frontier from China to Hong Kong daily.
The Primary Fence continues along the south bank of the Shenzhen River which gradually narrows into a small stream. Near the section from Lin Ma Hang to Kong Shan, the fence adjoins the side of the road. The narrow strip of frontier land is not entirely flat. Some part of the fence from Ta Kwu Ling Police Station to Chuk Yuen is on a lower level and concealed from sight from the road. Pak Fu Shan also blocks the Frontier from view. The land adjacent to the Frontier in front of this hill is flat, but is uncultivated and has apparently been abandoned.

A few villages in China, notably Lo Fong (羅坊), are situated close to the Frontier. From these villages people cross over daily to work in the Communes fields or to take refreshment at the shop near the Ta Kwu Ling Police Station. In addition, few farmers from Lin Ma Hang farm land in China directly opposite to the village. Gates in the fence are all left open at all times. There are 3 such gates northwest of and very near to the Police station (Plate 2.4.4c), one gate at Chuk Yuen, one near the old Police Station of Lin Ma Hang, and one at Lin Ma Hang itself (Plate 2.4.4d). Kong Shan is the site of the former lead mine. It has been derelict at 1956. Civilian traffic from Lin Ma Hang village to Kong Shan and Sha Tau Kok is strictly limited.

\[36\] The Public Records Office
Plate 2.4.4a: Flower and vegetable growing near Chuk Yuen.

Plate 2.4.4b: Flower and vegetable growing near Ta Kwu Ling Police Station.
Plate 2.4.4c: Gate near Ta Kwu Ling Police Station

Plate 2.4.4d: Gate near Lin Ma Hang
2.4.5: Section 5: Kong Shan to Sha Tau Kok

Table 2.4.5: Villages and population of Section 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Population**</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>San Kwai Tin*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>There is only one family left in this village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shan Tsui*</td>
<td>406</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kong Ha*</td>
<td>180</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sha Tau Kok</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tam Shui Hang*</td>
<td>610</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muk Min Tau*</td>
<td>160</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsui Hang</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Tsuen*</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tong To*</td>
<td>330</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nga Yiu Tau</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Recognized Village

** Derived from the number of people who have the FCA permit and the address is registry in these villages. The Hong Kong Police.

The range of steep hills from Kong Shan transverses towards and terminates just before Sha Tau Kok at the Frontier village of Shan Tsui. The area between Shan Tsui and Sha Tau Kok comprises flat cultivated vegetable field. The village of San Kwai Tin is to the immediate east of Kong Shan. A small area of cultivated vegetable field lies forward of this village, situated between the Shenzhen River and the Primary fence near San Kwai Tin is the source of the Shenzhen River.

Sha Tau Kok is at the northeast edge of the New Territories. It is a town divided in two by the Frontier which runs along the middle of Chung Ying
Street (中英街) (Plate 2.4.5a and d). The Border Road ends here and meets Chung Ying Street and the Sha Tau Kok Road, which goes southwest to link up with the other roads in New Territories at the Fanling Roundabout. The town is situated on Starling Inlet. It is therefore accessible from the sea and is served by a 1000 feet long pier (Plate 2.4.5b) extending from San Lan Street (新樓街).

The Town Centre is located at Chung Ying Street and San Lan Street. Modern multi storey buildings have recently been completed to the south. The temporary wooden structure at Yim Liu Ha (鹽寮下) and at Tsoi Yuen Kok (菜園角) at southwest of the Sha Tau Kok Town had been cleared at 1988. The residents were resettled at Sha Tau Kok Estate (Figure 2.4.5c), which is the only one public housing estate in FCA.

Local people from both side come and go across the Frontier at Chung Ying Street to farm, shop or visit, without hindrance. It is understood that about 2 farmers from Hong Kong side to farm land China, paying rent to the Communes there in 1972.

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38 The Public Records Office
Plate 2.4.5a: The entrance of Chung Ying Street

Plate 2.4.5b: Sha Tau Kok pier
Plate 2.4.5c: Sha Tau Kok Estate

Plate 2.4.5d. The aerial view of Sha Tau Kok Town
3.1: BACKGROUND ON THE ISSUE OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ON FCA

3.1.1: Functional lost of FCA policy

In the last decade, the amount of illegal immigrant catches in Hong Kong continuously decreased. Furthermore, the illegal immigrant prefer the water route rather the land route in view of the fact that water route is faster and more convenience way to get into Hong Kong. The numbers of illegal immigrant who caught in FCA was decreasing at the same time. Consequently, some people believe that the functions of FCA were lost and the FCA policy can be abolished in order to make land available for development.

3.1.2: The political power had been smooth transited after 1997.

When Hong Kong was still the British colony, it can be understood that the British Hong Kong government set up the FCA to protect themselves with the purpose of political and security. After reunification, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government still needed to maintain the FCA policy in order to sustain the social stability. Nowadays, Hong Kong had been reunified.
more than six years, and the society of Hong Kong is still stable. Hong Kong Government seem that no excuse to continuous the FCA policy and led the frontier area become a wilderness place.

3.1.3: Change of attitude of Security Bureau

The Security Bureau not allowed taking any development consideration in FCA in the past. Last year, the Security Bureau change their attitude that agrees to open the Sha Tau Kok area for eco-tourism[^40] but the antecedent consideration was to ensure that the tourist activities would not reduce the security function. Also, the Security Bureau agreed the “Hong Kong 2030” study to studying the potential development in FCA[^41]. It seem that the abolition of FCA policy cannot be avoided in the near future.

3.2 THE VIEWS OF DIFFERENT GROUPS ON THE ISSUE OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ON FCA

Because the coverage area of FCA is large and the FCA has unique locational advantage on trade with China, thus, whether to open the FCA is under extensive discussion. Different organizations and institutions have different view on this tropic. The different points of view of different

[^40]: 文匯報, 30-3-2002
[^41]: 明報, 20-11-2001
organizations and institutions are as follow:

3.2.1: The view of Security Bureau

Security Bureau is responsible for the security of Hong Kong and safeguards the stability of Hong Kong. The maintenance of FCA policy is one of the duties of Security Bureau. Whether to relax the FCA policy is a key point on the future development of FCA. So, their view is most important factors affect the FCA's future.

There were some meetings held by Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Security to discuss the FCA policy after Handover. After these meetings, LegCo Panel on Security rejected all the request of reducing the coverage of FCA or relaxing the FCA policy.

At the meeting on 3 December 1997, Hon LAU-Kong Wah claimed that the coverage of FCA could be reduced. The Administration adhere the FCA policy and emphasize the need for the FCA and its coverage. Actually, Government had usually reviewed the effectiveness of retaining FCA since the establishment of the FCA in 1951. Under updated evaluation and observation, the eventual answer was that it is a must to retain FCA and change nothing on

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42 LegCo Panel on Security, Paper Number: CB(2)1713/01-02(07), 16-4-2002.
43 LegCo Meetings Minute, 3rd December 1997.
its coverage. It was because its function as a buffer zone to alleviate the illegal immigration and smuggling is effective.

At the meeting at 19 February 1998, the Panel on Security advised that the FCA was still plays an important role on the security of the border. And it was no room to reduce the boundary of FCA. It was because the establishment of FCA was come out from a deliberately consideration, its coverage was established by considering the topography, road and infrastructure network and population within the area. That mean it was the most suitable way to determine the coverage and it was not appropriate to reduce the coverage.

At the meeting on 13 May 1999 and 14 February 2001, the Administration did not accept the suggestion that allow tour to visit Chung Ying Street in order to boost the tourist industry. The Administration stressed that development of tourism in FCA involved not only the provision of ancillary facilities but also security consideration. Any form of development will increase the passenger flow and in turn reduce the effectiveness of FCA. In view of these considerations, the Administration did not allow tours visit to Chung Ying Street.

In 2002, the development the FCA was raised in the discussion of “Hong

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44 LegCo Meetings Minute, 19th February 1998.
45 LegCo Meetings Minute, 13th May 1999.
46 LegCo Meetings Minute, 14th February 2000.
Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy” at the meeting of the Panel on Planning, Lands and Work. The attitude of Security Bureau on FCA Policy becomes less strictly. It agreed took into account of FCA as the potential development area. But the antecedent consideration was to ensure that the opening up of the FCA would not dilute the security function and the status of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region under the principle of “one country, two systems”.

Security Bureau stress that while the problem of illegal immigration has been under control in recent years, the number of illegal immigrants intercepts in the FCA still stands at about 200 every month⁴⁷ (Table 3.2.1). Therefore the illegal immigration is still a security concern and need to maintain vigorous efforts against this crime by Security Bureau.

Security Bureau also worry that, although the Police try their best to intercept the illegal immigrant in FCA by fence duties, ambushes, and patrols, the effectiveness of such deployment will be influenced by the width and size of the FCA. The smaller the FCA, the easier it would be for the illegal immigrants to merge with the population, and hence the more difficult it would be for interdicting and seeking out illegal immigrants⁴³. Similarly, there

⁴⁷ LegCo Panel on Security, Paper Number: CB(2)1713/01-02(07), 16-4-2002.
would be more chances for smuggling and other cross boundary criminal activities. The likely increase in developments and traffic in the boundary areas arising from the reduction of the FCA coverage would provide more hiding places for criminal to escape the FCA after crossing the boundary. For that reason, Security Bureau hope that the effect of abolished or reduce of FCA coverage will have deliberately consideration in the “Hong Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy” about the development of FCA.

Table 3.2.1: Number of illegal immigrants intercepts in the FCA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of illegal immigrants intercepted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>2404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>2264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>2233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>1440</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.2: The view of Housing, Planning and Land Bureau.

One of the responsibilities of Housing, Planning and Land Bureau is for the town planning of future. It will give suggestions and launch extensive consultation before the start of definite planning, the example is the “Hong

48 Housing, Planning and Land Bureau
Kong 2030 Planning Vision and Strategy” study. If the Housing, Planning and Land Bureau no intention and target to develop an area, this area will not have large-scale statutory development. Therefore, the chance of developing the FCA increase because the “Hong Kong 2030 Planning Vision and Strategy” study have the suggestion of the development on FCA.

Housing, Planning and Land Bureau reveal that the FCA is indeed important for maintain frontier security and fight against the illegal immigration. Therefore, during the planning process, it needs to consider the security factor on the one hand. On the other hand, it needs a more open mind to investigate the possible development in FCA. But the Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands, Michael Suen, point out that the FCA is mainly mountainous area, also there have high ecological value places and have many indigenous villages and private land. In addition, there are lacks of infrastructure. Then the lands that are developable are limited. Thus, there will have a wide discussion on which part of FCA can use for development and how to make use of the special advantage of FCA to strengthen the linkage with China in “Hong Kong 2030” study.

In this moment, there is no final planning about the use of the FCA. It is

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40 Housing, Planning and Land Bureau
only suggest that the Lok Ma Chau Loop, Kong Nga Po, and Heung Yuen Wai have relatively high development potential. But whether or not to develop, how to develop and when to develop these areas are waiting for the result of the “Hong Kong 2030” study.

3.2.3: The view of Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden Corporation (KFBC)

KFBC was became statutory body with the enactment by a Legislative Council Ordinance in 1995. For many years before, and until now, it has made a major practical involvement in biodiversity conservation and the rural environment in Hong Kong. It believes the introduction of a comprehensive conservation policy would represent a major opportunity to improve Hong Kong’s overall sustainability. Their environmental policy and expertise on biodiversity conservation were widely accepted by the Government.

KFBC believe that the shortage of land in Hong Kong, and the favoring of property and infrastructure development over conservation concerns, a large proportion of habitats also face severe threats. The habitats are also faced with

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50 School of Hotel and Tourism Management, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University and Tourism Commission, Study Report: Development of Tourism in the Northern New Territories of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

51 KFBC, 2004. About KFBC.

increasing fragmentation caused by infrastructure and housing developments. If the FCA were opened for uncontrolled development, it would have the risk of total terrestrial fragmentation of Hong Kong from the rest of China\textsuperscript{49}. KFBG Executive Director Mr. Manad CHAKRABORTY pointed out that there have three ecologically significant points inside the FCA that do not have any conservation measures which need protect urgently\textsuperscript{53}, in accordance with a survey\textsuperscript{54} report conducted by Department of Ecology and Biodiversity of Hong Kong University. Those three points are:

1. Sha Tau Kok Fung Shui Woodland

2. A fresh water stream in inner Lin Ma Hang, it is important for bats, fresh water fishes and the former Lead Mine is Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)\textsuperscript{55}

3. Fishpond and marshes in Ma Cho Lung are important for fresh water fish and bird, and is the extension of Mai Po Natural Reserve. Due to the effect of FCA policy, these areas have been protected indirectly. These sites will be under stress and unrecoverable damage if there is any change of the FCA policy. Only the government has comprehensive policy and

\textsuperscript{53} 明報, 4-1-2003


\textsuperscript{55} SSSIs may be land based or marine sites which are of special interest because of their flora, fauna, geographical, geological or physiographic features. SSSIs are identified by the Agriculture and Fisheries Conservation Department and the Planning Department maintains a register of sites. Once identified, SSSIs are shown on statutory and departmental plans prepared by the Planning Department.
way on protecting the ecological value of FCA, otherwise the Government should preserve the present situation.

3.2.4: The view of Tourism Commission

The Tourism Commission was established in May 1999 in Economic Services Bureau, Government Secretariat. It is headed by the Commissioner for Tourism. The mission is to provide a leadership and guide the Government in mapping out the tourism development policy and strategy and enhance co-ordination in developing tourism. The Tourism Commission is mainly responsible for formulating and co-coordinating implementation of policies, plans and strategies for tourism development. At the same time, it leads and coordinates the work of other Government bureaus and departments on policies and initiatives which have impact on tourism development. Major areas of responsibility of the Tourism Commission are listed in Table 4.2.4. Therefore, their tourism development policy and strategy is one of the main factors in affecting the future development on an area.

Table 3.2.4: Responsibility of the Tourism Commission. (Source: Legistravel)

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56 Tourism Commission
57 Legislative Council Panel on Economic Services Paper Number: CB(1)347/00-01(01), 27-11-2000
A study report conducted by Tourism Commission\textsuperscript{58} mention that the western part of FCA i.e. near Mai Po should continuous the purpose of ecotourism destination. The ultimate goal is to develop this area as an international ecotourism center. In order to achieve this goal, it needs to continue the development of ecotourism facilities and attractions. As the same time, it needs to maintaining the access restriction and continuing to limit use to this area.

\textsuperscript{58} Tourism Commission and School of Hotel and Tourism Management of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University “Development of Tourism in the Northern New Territories of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region” 2003.
In the area between Lo Wu and Sha Tau Kok, it was found that there have extensively retained traditional agricultural and cultural heritage values which are evocative of Hong Kong’s pre colonial past and the villages there have many houses which were build by traditional architectural style have high tourism potential. The scenically contrast between Hong Kong rural development and urban development seen across the border in the Shenzhen also an attractive factor to attract tours (Figure 3.2.4a and b). However, this area only has high tourism potential for small scale, up market activities which focus on cultural heritage, traditional agriculture and active nature based tourism. In order to maintain the cultural and scene of this area, it was suggest that the access to the public would remain restricted in order to retain these essential characters of this area.
Plate 3.2.4a: The scenically contrast between Hong Kong and Shenzhen at Lok Ma Chau (Source: Apple Daily)

Plate 3.2.4b: The scenically contrast between Hong Kong and Shenzhen at Man Kam To
3.2.5: The view of Hong Kong Institute of Planners (HKIP):

Hong Kong Institute of Planners (HKIP) is a statutory body with the enactment of the Hong Kong Institute of Planners Incorporation Ordinance in 1991 by the LegCo. HKIP is the professional planning institute representing the planning profession in Hong Kong. It is also one of the professional bodies which meet to discuss matters of common interest in LegCo. One of their main objectives (Table 3.2.5) is to promote and safeguard the interests of the community by monitoring the development and the environment in Hong Kong. As a result, their professional recommendations on planning issue can affect the decision making of the Government.

The HKIP strongly emphasizes that our city is limited in terms of land resources. Since community’s views against reclamation have been made very clear and large-scale resumption of land in the New Territories will certainly encounter property right issues, local opposition, compensation and disputes. This would be a prolonged process with unpredictable time span for completion. Therefore, a sustainable strategy on growth must be put in place to guide the use of our land.

59 HKIP, 2003. *Introduction of HKIP.*
Table 3.2.5: The objectives of the Hong Kong Institute of Planners.
(Source: HKIP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To promote and safeguard development and the environment in Hong Kong in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the best interests of the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To raise the status and to safeguard the interests of the town planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>profession and those engaged in it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To promote the community's awareness of the contribution of town planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To promote education and research in town planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To provide for registration by the Institute professionally qualified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>town planners and to ensure their competence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To secure the confidence of the community in the employment of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recognized town planners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To promote co-operation and understanding with other institutes and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>associations with similar objectives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In view of the sustainable strategy on growth, the HKIP recommend the Government to make the best use of land that is already serviced by existing infrastructure before considering the development of virgin sites in the New Territories. This means future land needs should first be met by increasing the density of developable land within the existing urban area.

As a result, HKIP reveal that developed areas such as Sheung Shui and Fanling are already physically very close to the border, whether Hong Kong needs a ‘frontier development area’ is questionable. Furthermore, the frontier area is subject to a large number of factors make its development potential
limited. These include environmental impacts, access restraints, and the need of access control to serve security policy needs, existing villages and topographical constraints. Therefore, they would like to see more justifications for this development need before this idea be taken further.

But HKIP accepts the criteria adopted by "Hong Kong 2030 - Planning Vision and Strategy (Third Stage Public Consultation)" in assessing the suitability of certain land uses at the FCA. They agree that the FCA is not apparent any urgency in development. However, for its long term potential, trade expo appears to be more appropriate to tap the unique locational advantages at the Lok Ma Chau Loop.60

3.2.6: Populace in FCA

The populace in FCA is the main stakeholder when relaxing the FCA policy. The Government should consider the effect of development on them before planning. If the Government abolishes the FCA policy, this area could acquire development, and the land can sell or rent without restriction. Therefore, they all along strive for abolishing or reducing the coverage of

60 HKIP
FCA. Since the FCA policy directly affects their life, land value, and the income, they are enthusiastic in asking for abolishing the FCA policy.

At early 70’s, many villagers who lived in Sha Tau Kok strongly claimed to deregulate the FCA policy. These villagers thought that the FCA policy was an unfair regulation since the treatment on people and land were completely different between FCA and the outside areas. They pointed out that the FCA did not have any form of development after the introduction of FCA policy in 1951, and this was a kind of discrimination. They thought they had the right to be treated as other and the Government should abolish the inequitable FCA policy. Furthermore, they desired the Government could care and concern their needs and wants.

Some of the residents who lived in FCA for a long time mentioned that the FCA policy had caused great inconvenience since it’s introduced. Everyone had to show his or her FCA permit when accessing the police post has caused so much inconvenience to them and waste of time. Moreover, the valid period of the FCA permit is usually few months to maximum five years. They need to renew the FCA permit regularly in the police station and causes bother to them. And it also affects developments of surrounding areas. They hope that government can release the FCA policy.
The residents of Chow Tin Village mention that, their village had been established for a number of hundreds years, there have a lot of village houses which age more than hundred years. In peak period from 50’s to 60’s, there were six to seven thousands people lived in the village around FCA. At present, there are only six to seven hundreds people are still living there. Despite the entrance restriction and traffic inaccessible of FCA, lack of infrastructures and no development opportunity are other reasons affect the people migrate out from FCA. Most of them have tried to apply for changing original land use from The Lands Department and Town Planning Board, but it did not work due to the restriction of the FCA Policy.

3.2.7: The view of different political parties:

This part will find out the view of the big three political parties, i.e. Democratic Alliance for Betterment of Hong Kong, The Democratic Party, and Liberal Party, in LegCo, on the issue of the future development of FCA. Their platform is also to fight for the greatest interest for the public in any aspects

and to represent and articulate the views of the people of Hong Kong. Their view is important because they can use their influential power to debate any issue concerning public interests in LegCo.

3.2.7a: Democratic Alliance for Betterment of Hong Kong

Democratic Alliance for Betterment of Hong Kong consider that due to the different policy on the frontier region between Hong Kong and Shenzhen, the impacts and developments on frontier region on both places are totally different. In the Shenzhen side, there is a large-scale development accompanied with rapid growth of population, also the town have well planning. Lo Wu district, it is now the central business district (CBD) of Shenzhen city. In addition, three free trade zones, Futian Free Trade Zone, Shatoujiao Free Trade Zone, and Yantian Port Free Trade Zone, had been developed. Conversely, the frontier on Hong Kong is a restricted area by the effect of FCA policy. It is a remote and isolated region.

In fact, they had suggested that FCA have to be abolished two years ago. They also suggested Hong Kong should cooperated with Shenzhen government to develop a trans-frontier economics zone. This zone is not only

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62 Shenzhen Administrative Bureau of Free Trade Zones
located in Lok Ma Chau Loop, but also the total area of FCA. The trans-frontier economics zone should not only industrial development, but also commercial, tourism, residential, free trade zone, and technological research institute. Allow the FCA becomes the important economic co-operation region between both places. In turn, make use of the professional and the technological foundation to accelerate the economic development. It will attract a lot of investments and commercial activities, in addition, construction projects and job opportunities. These all are favorable to Hong Kong.

Owing to the support of Central Government, the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) was signed on 30 June 2003 in Hong Kong. Democratic Alliance for Betterment of Hong Kong also urge the Government to make use of this opportunities to abolishes the FCA to accelerate the co-operation between Guangdong Province and Hong Kong. The Hong Kong Government should inject more resources on the large-scale development of FCA. The development ought to stress on the Lok Ma Chau Loop and the Ta Kwu Ling region.

3.2.7b: The view of Democratic Party

They indicate that natural conservation was seldom taken into
consideration during land use planning in the past. Often, the environmentalists or Green groups found the area had high conservation value after the Government approval of development. The cases of Long Valley and Sha Lo Tung are typical examples. At that time, the government should invest extra resources and capitals to implement protection and remedy measure. Simultaneously, it also raises the conflicts between Green groups and developers. In turn, it affects the development schedule. Therefore, Democratic Party thought that Government should introduce a well-planned conservation strategy before implementing any forms of developments. In addition, Government need to find out the areas that have high ecological value and assign these areas can only use as conservation propose. These sites cannot have any form of development and the development cannot too close to these protected areas. Likewise, the existing SSSI, the historical and cultural heritage, wetlands, archaeologically sites, Country Parks, and Marine Parks should not be encroached by development.

Due to the above mention, the Democratic Party not totally disagrees the development of FCA in view of environmental conservation. But the Government should carefully considerate the effects in every aspects when open up of FCA. Since the FCA is an important conservation belt. It contain a
lot of wetland, fishponds, Fung Shui Woodland, and river, those have high conservation value. Democratic Party point out that the Government should launch the ecological research in FCA firstly, collecting information and establishing the protection sites which have high ecological conservation values before development studies. The Democratic Party wishes that the FCA only have low-density development and the scale should not be large.

3.2.7c: The view of Liberal Party

Liberal Party consider that after the Shenzhen River improvement project come to an end, Hong Kong gained a piece of land in Lok Ma Chau Loop with area about 96 hectare, but the Government do not have any active consideration on how to utilize this land and left this land abandoned. Liberal Party thinks that Lok Ma Chau Loop is a high potential place for development since it is in Hong Kong-Shenzhen frontier and close to Lok Ma Chau Control Point and Lok Ma Chau Spur Line. Thus, Liberal Party suggests that to establish a frontier industrial region in Lok Ma Chau Loop. The Government can slacken the entrance policy in Lok Ma Chau Loop region. The Chinese citizens can go to Lok Ma Chau Loop industrial region by simple registration and the Hong Kong citizens can freely go to this region. With the help of this special arrangement of entrance policy, the commercial and industrial
activities will set up here. Irrespective which type of activities in the frontier industrial region, they will enhance the demand of ancillary services such as logistics, banking, insurance, and accountancy. This will boost the consumption and the economic development in Hong Kong and increase the status of Hong Kong over the world.
CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ON FCA.

In view of the fact that there is a great controversy on the issue of the future use of FCA. Different institutes, groups, and government departments have conflict on this issue. The supporters who consent to abolish the FCA policy to allow developments are too emphases on the short term economic grow. Although there are some suggestions of releasing the FCA may bring some benefits to economy, but they neglect the value of preserve of FCA. My points of view and recommendations are as follow:

1. Lack of developable land:

The natural landscape of FCA is a mountain belt (Hung Fa Leng) in the east, an extensive wetland (Mai Po) in the west, and an undulating land and fishponds (near Ma Cho Lung) in the middle. Consequently, the land in the east and the west of FCA is not suitable for development. The 21 recognized villages within FCA with a sizable private land could not be a neglect factor for development as well. Additionally, the Sandy Ridge Cemetery near Lo Wu, the Lin Ma Hang Lead Mine SSSI and the Fung Shui Woodland cannot be developed. Apart from the land mention above, the land that is suitable for development are very limited and scattered.
2. Huge investment:

Currently, there are lacks of infrastructure in the FCA. Some of the residents are still without water supply and use the well water to satisfy the water need. The roads are substandard with single lane carriageway. There are also no sewerage treatment facilities. The road, water supply, electricity supply should be upgrade or rebuild in order to meet the demand of large-scale development. The communication network, Town gas supply and drainage system should be built before the development. All of these involve a huge investment. But most important is that it is not worth to invest huge money on such scatter and small land.

3. Other developable land:

In the northern New Territories, there still have many lands suitable for development, such as Fanling North, Kwu Tung North and Ping Che and the non-FCA part of Ta Kwu Ling. These sites are also close to Shenzhen (about 3 to 6 km away the frontier) and have a large piece of flatland. These locations have better infrastructure, such as road network, public transport, and electricity supply. According to the view of HKIP, the Government should make the best use of land that is already developed or planned with low
conservation values before considering the development of virgin sites in Hong Kong. By doing so, to initiate development is more convenience and the Government can save a lot of resources and capital when compare with the development of FCA.

4. The function of FCA:

At present, the FCA indeed has a well function of anti illegal immigrant and anti cross boundary criminal. There are average 4 to 5 illegal immigrants was intercepted inside the FCA each day. The illegal immigrants and the smuggling can be easily detected in FCA since there have few hidden places and the security force can investigate these crimes more easily. If these illegal immigrants can escape out of FCA easily and merge with the population, it would be more difficult to seeking them out. As a result, this will give a great pressure on the social order. Therefore, maintain the FCA policy is necessary and it cannot be abolished.

5. Reduce the effectiveness of Shenzhen River improvement project:

During the rainstorms, flooding in the rural low-lying areas and natural floodplains in the northern part of the territory will not be uncommon.
especially in the FCA. The usual capacity of a natural river is roughly sufficient only to meet a biennial flood. In order to increase its capacity to meet the flood under design extreme events, the river needs to be trained by straightening, widening and provision of linings. In order to due with the flooding problem of the Shenzhen River that has bothered Hong Kong and Shenzhen for decades, the Shenzhen River Regulation Project Stage I works started in May 1995. Stage II and III also started in May 1999 and November 2001 respectively. People on both sides of the Shenzhen River downstream of Lo Wu to the Deep Bay estuary all have better protection from the risk of flooding caused by the Shenzhen River nowadays. After the completion of the whole project, the flood protection standard of the Shenzhen River will be raised to one in 50 years return period.\textsuperscript{63}

The Drainage Services Department point out that over the years, intensive development associated with urban development has taken place in the floodplains. This has turned large areas of natural ground into hard paved areas and rainwater, which formerly was retained, now quickly becomes surface flows. The extension of built-up areas in close proximity to the major watercourses has also reduced their flood carrying capacity and has further

\textsuperscript{63} Drainage Services Department
aggravated the flooding problem.

In fact, almost all of the FCA is the catchments area of Shenzhen River. If we left it open for development, it would increase the amount of surface runoff and reduce the flood carrying capacity of the river improvement project. It will lead to greatly reduce the effectiveness of Shenzhen River improvement project and increase the risk of flooding in the New Territories.

6. High ecological and conservation value:

The environment in FCA is mainly nature with little human disturbance after more than 50 years protected by the FCA policy. There have numerous infrequence species of vegetation and wild animals living there. These species are included birds, dragonflies, butterflies, trees, bryophytes, reptiles, bats, and freshwater fishes (Appendix 1). The riparian habitats on both sides of the freshwater stream, the Fung Shui Wood, the wetland, and the natural woodland are important for those living things. Any forms of development will bring an unrecoverable damage to them.
Plate 4.1: Flooding in Chow Tin Village and Fung Wong Wu at Ta Kwu Ling in 2002 (Source: Drainage Services Department)
Plate 4.2: Flooding in Man Kam To in 1993  (Source: Drainage Services Department)

Plate 4.3: Shenzhen River near Liu Pok after the improvement project  
(Source: Drainage Services Department)
7. High potential for ecotourism:

The cultural and natural heritage in FCA is unique and delicate. Any development there would cause disturbance to the ecological balance and change of the cultural of the area. The retained traditional agricultural, traditional architectural style, and cultural heritage values which are redolent of Hong Kong’s pre colonial past would be disappeared after development. The only way to preserve the cultural and natural heritage is to develop ecotourism.

The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) defines ecotourism as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people.” This means that those who implement and participate in ecotourism activities should follow the following principles:

- Minimize impact
- Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect
- Provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts
- Provide direct financial benefits for conservation
- Provide financial benefits and empowerment for local people
As there have high ecological and conservation value that mention in Point 6, accompany with the well preserve cultural heritage, constituting the most important green corridor and cultural region in Hong Kong. Thus, it contributes the most important elements for ecotourism. Develop ecotourism in FCA is the best choice since it can minimize the impact of human activities on environment, as the same time can provide income for the indigenous villagers.

8. The need of “Border Industrial Zone” in FCA is questionable:

From the traditional point of view, a border region is generally know as a geographic space in proximity to a fixed border line inside which significant socio-economic effects due to the existence of a border are felt. Cihai (1988) defines that the geographic scope of the border trade covers an area of as far as 15 kilometers from the border. Li Qing (1991) also define the border region should be geographically determined in term of either administrative division or inter-regional relations of social cultures. According to their definition, Sheung Shui, Fanling, and Tai Po can also be classified as border region.

According to the experience of US-Mexico border development, the locations

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64 Rongxing Guo, 1996, Border-Regional Economics
of Frontier Free Trade Zones are not close to the frontier line. All the Free Trade Zones are located within 20 km from the frontier line. The frontier of US and Mexico has over 2000km, but only have 13 pairs of cross-boundary twin cities (Fig 4). The cross-boundary twins cities are build on flatland and never build on the high ecological value sites since they have a lot of land to choose. Most of the Free Trade Zones are located in these cities.

Accordingly, in Hong Kong, we need not to willful to develop the Border Industrial Zone in FCA. It will have same consequence if it builds on the other site. In spite of this, the land border of Hong Kong and Shenzhen only has 26km. There are no suitable land to develop Frontier Industrial Zone is not strange.
9. Aesthetic scene:

FCA is the product of the unique history of Hong Kong. There would not have FCA if Hong Kong were not a British’s colony in the past. The FCA policy directly contributes to form an extensive natural green belt between two large cities (Hong Kong and Shenzhen). It is difficult to retain a large piece of land as green belt in a large city during planning process. In point of this, the Hong Kong government should continue to retain this green belt and let the future generations can enjoy it.

The residential density of Hong Kong is incredibly high and crowded
living environment cause the government to development more and more land to solve the problem of overcrowding. Almost all the land in Hong Kong Island and Kowloon and the flatland in New Territories are build up. Hong Kong is also highly urbanized city. In such a highly developed and urbanized city have a remote and isolated FCA is an interesting phenomenon. At the both size of Shenzhen River, the north shore is the highly developed Shenzhen City's CBD, and the south shore is the desolate FCA with mainly fishponds and farmland. Constitute a sharp different but exciting landscape.

Guo (1996) mention that, nevertheless, after the border-related barriers are removed, border region can substantially benefit from the cross-border trade and cooperation in term of goods, capital, technology, information, etc. In fact, the cross-border activities between China and Hong Kong are well developed. The Mainland China is Hong Kong’s largest trading partner. In the first half of 2003, total trade with the Mainland amounted to HK$702 billion. Therefore, the suggestions that develop the FCA in order to increase the cooperation between China and Hong Kong have no urgent need.

To conclude, the FCA will not have development in the near future.

67 Hong Kong Background Information, Hong Kong Government, Trade, Industry, and Tourism
According to a focus meeting on future of FCA\textsuperscript{68}, non-development of the FCA was the mainstream of view expressed at the meeting which was same as my point of view. Besides, I judge that the alternative uses of FCA, including ecotourism or maintenance of it present status, as better uses for the FCA. Moreover, the Government should carry out more assessments to make certain the engineering, environment and financial feasibility of developing the FCA before getting a conclusion of development.

\textsuperscript{68} HK2030: Planning Vision & Strategy State 3 Public Consultation Focus meeting of Frontier Closed Area
Appendix 1

List of sites of Ecological/Conservation Value in FCA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Ecological/Conservation Value</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wetlands</td>
<td></td>
<td>The wetland in Mai Po has been designated as a Ramsar Site and the wetland and fishponds in the area are within the Wetland Conservation Area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mai Po Marshes and Fishponds within the Wetland Conservation Area</td>
<td>Mai Po Marshes and the contiguous fish ponds within the WCA are important wetland habitat for birds. A number of bird species of conservation concern have been recorded in this area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoo Hok Wai and Ta Sha Lok</td>
<td>A wetland area with large number of active fishponds, reinstated ponds (Shenzhen River Stage 2) and marshes. It is adjacent to the Wetland Buffer Area (&quot;WBA&quot;) and has a good field record of wetland birds, including species of conservation concern. Two rare dragonflies, Rhodotheres rufa and Urothemis signala, have also been recorded in this area.</td>
<td>An area of conservation importance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other wetlands of ecological/conservation importance</td>
<td>There are other isolated wetlands of ecological/conservation importance within the FCA. These wetlands are identified as having high ecological value in the SUSDEV and Terrestrial Habitat Mapping and Ranking based on Conservation Value Study.</td>
<td>Any brackish or freshwater marshes over 1 ha in size or wetland sites identified by SUSDEV 21 and Terrestrial Habitat Mapping and Ranking Based on Conservation Value Study as having high ecological value within the FCA.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ecological Mitigation Areas
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Ecological/ Conservation Value</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lok Ma Chau Bend</td>
<td>The site is a mitigation area for the fishpond loss due to the Shenzhen River Regulation Project. Aquatic plants have been established along the &quot;Bend&quot; and the site has been reinstated and largely covered by vegetation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological mitigation area near Yuen Leng Chai (wetland)</td>
<td>Two fishponds temporarily affected by the construction works of the Shenzhen River Regulation Project Stage 3 (near Yuen Leng Chai) will be restored and enhanced after the completion of the construction works as an ecological mitigation measure.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fung Shui Woods/Woodlands</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nam Hang Woodland (south of Man Kam To Police Station)</td>
<td>It is natural, large in size and dominated by species native to Hong Kong. It is adjacent to two fishponds and several bloodworm ponds. The woodland provides an important breeding ground for many species, especially birds and mammals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodlands near Muk Wu Tsuen</td>
<td>They are considered to have ecological importance. They are natural and fairly large in size and could provide breeding and resting ground for species that feed in the adjacent agricultural lands. Two rare butterfly species, Horaga albimacula and Mycalesis cangaica, have been recorded in this area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chow Tin Tsuen Fung Shui Wood</td>
<td>A fung shui wood (0.2 ha) with some signs of human disturbance but without serious damage to the vegetation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kan Tau Wai Fung Shui Wood</td>
<td>A fung shui wood (0.4 ha) with some signs of human disturbance but without serious damage to the vegetation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Ecological/Conservation Value</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
</tr>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsung Yuen Ha Fung Shui Wood</td>
<td>A fung shui wood (0.5ha) with few signs of human disturbance at its edge. A tree species of conservation concern, <em>Aquilaria sinensis</em>, has been recorded.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heung Yuen Wai Fung Shui Wood</td>
<td>A large fung shui wood (1.9 ha) with some signs of human disturbance but without serious damage to the vegetation. A tree species of conservation concern, <em>Aquilaria sinensis</em>, has been recorded.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tong To Fung Shui Wood</td>
<td>A fung shui wood (0.7 ha) with some signs of human disturbance but without serious damage to the vegetation. Tree species of conservation concern, <em>Aquilaria sinensis</em> and <em>XYlosma longifolium</em>, have been recorded.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muk Min Tau Fung Shui Wood</td>
<td>A large fung shui wood (2.3 ha) with few signs of human disturbance. The fung shui wood is found on a flat land and is considered rare in Hong Kong. Tree species of conservation concern, <em>Aquilaria sinensis</em> has been reported in the fung shui wood. Some rare bryophytes (<em>Hyphaceae</em>) have also been observed at the stream. A rare reptile, <em>Hemidactylus garnotii</em>, uncommon butterflies, <em>Iraota tmolcon</em>, <em>Neoptelhecops zalmora</em>, <em>Delias hyparete</em> and a mammal, <em>Hystrix brachyura</em> (Chinese Porcupine), have been recorded in this area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheung Tam Shui Hang Fung Shui Wood</td>
<td>A fung shui wood (2.0 ha) with few signs of human disturbance. A rare reptile, <em>Opisthotropis balteata</em>, an uncommon butterfly, <em>Delias hyparete</em>, and tree species of conservation concern, <em>Aquilaria sinensis</em> and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Ecological/ Conservation Value</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shan Tsui Fung Shui Wood</td>
<td><em>Xylosma longifolium</em>, have been recorded. <em>Manis pentadactyla</em> (Chinese Pangolin) has also been reported in this area.</td>
<td>A fung shui wood (1.1 ha) with some signs of human disturbance but without serious damage to the vegetation. Tree species of conservation concern, <em>Aquilana sinensis</em> and <em>Xylosma longifolium</em>, have been reported. Rare and uncommon butterflies, <em>Catocalysps strabo</em> and <em>Neopithecops zalmora</em>, have been recorded in the adjacent abandoned field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lin Ma Hang Fung Shui Wood</td>
<td>A large fung shui wood (2.2 ha) behind the village is well preserved from disturbance. <em>Aquilana sinensis</em> and <em>Xylosma longifolium</em>, tree species of conservation concern, have been recorded.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Habitat of Ecological Interest/Importance**

<p>| Starling Inlet coastal waters and mudflat | Main feeding site for Great Egrets and Little Egrets nesting on A Chau. One of the largest mangrove stands in HK with a diverse benthic macrofauna community. Seagrass (<em>Halophila beccare</em>) are also found in the shallow coastal waters. The mudflat and seagrass habitats are ranked as of high conservation value in the SUSDEV 21 study. |                                                                                                                                                            |
| Hung Fa Leng (Robin’s Nest)          | It is a site of botanical significance and known for its diversity of plant species. There are extensive areas of woodland in the village up to the 300 meter level. The area is highly scenic and identified as strategically significant in the TDS conservation strategy. A large population of locally |                                                                                                                                                            |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Ecological/Conservation Value</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SSSI</td>
<td>rare tree Xylosma longifolium has been reported.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Chau SSSI</td>
<td>It is an important habitat of birds including Night Heron, Little Egret, Great Egret, Black-headed Gull and Herring Gull. The site also provides a breeding site for passage migrants.</td>
<td>An existing SSSI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lin Ma Hang Lead Mine SSSI</td>
<td>One of the most important bat colonies in Hong Kong. The galleries at this site provide a resting and breeding site for a number bat species.</td>
<td>An existing SSSI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lin Ma Hang Stream</td>
<td>A freshwater fish hotspot supporting 15 species of primary freshwater fish including several species of conservation concern (<em>Channa asiatica</em>, <em>Mastacembelus armatus</em>, <em>Rasbora steineri</em> and <em>Rasborinus lineatus</em>), <em>Rhyothemis triangularis</em> a dragonfly species of conservation concern, has been recorded in this area.</td>
<td>The riparian habitats on both sides of the stream are also important to protect the stream and freshwater fish inhabiting in it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Habitats of high ecological value identified by SUSDEV 21 and Terrestrial Habitat Mapping and Ranking Based on Conservation Value Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lowland Forests</td>
<td>There are patches of lowland forests within the FCA. This type of habitat is considered to have high ecological value by the studies.</td>
<td>The lowland forests over 1 ha and identified by SUSDEV 21 and Terrestrial Habitat Mapping and Ranking Based on Conservation Value Study should be zoned “CA”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Shrublands</td>
<td>There are patches of mixed shrublands within the FCA. This type of habitat is considered to have high ecological value by the studies.</td>
<td>The mixed shrublands identified by SUSDEV 21 and Terrestrial Habitat Mapping and Ranking Based on Conservation Value Study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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