

Draft Pak Lap Outline Zoning Plan amended

The Town Planning Board today (April 3) announced amendments to the draft Pak Lap Outline Zoning Plan (OZP).

In response to the Court's rulings on a judicial review against the decision of the Chief Executive in Council made to approve the three draft OZPs for Pak Lap, Hoi Ha and So Lo Pun and the decision of the Board made to submit the three draft OZPs to the Chief Executive in Council for approval, the Board has reviewed the issue on the genuine need for Small House development in respect of the Pak Lap OZP.

The Board has now made amendments to the Pak Lap OZP as outlined in the Schedule of Amendments. The amendments mainly involve rezoning of an area to the south of the village cluster at Pak Lap from "Village Type Development" to "Government, Institution or Community (1)" ("G/IC(1)") and an area further to the south of the village cluster at Pak Lap from "G/IC" to "Conservation Area". Opportunity is also taken to amend the Notes and Explanatory Statement of the OZP to reflect the above amendments and to update the general information of various land use zonings and the planning circumstances, where appropriate.

The draft Pak Lap OZP No. S/SK-PL/3, incorporating the amendments, is now available for public inspection during office hours at the Secretariat of the Board; the Planning Enquiry Counters of the Planning Department in North Point and Sha Tin; the Sai Kung and Islands District Planning Office; the Sai Kung District Office; and the Sai Kung Rural Committee.

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Any person may make written representation in respect of the amendments to the Secretary of the Board on or before June 3. Representations made to the Board will be available for public inspection.

Copies of the draft Pak Lap OZP are available for sale at the Map Publications Centres in North Point and Yau Ma Tei. The electronic version of the OZP can be viewed at the Board's website (www.info.gov.hk/tpb).

Update on dengue fever

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (April 3) reported the latest number of dengue fever (DF) cases, and strongly urged the public to maintain strict environmental hygiene, mosquito control and personal protective measures both locally and during travel.

From March 27 to April 2, the CHP recorded one imported DF case. The patient had been to Indonesia during the incubation period.

As of yesterday (April 2), a total of 19 cases of DF had been recorded in 2020, all of which were imported cases from countries including the Philippines (seven), Indonesia (five), Malaysia (two), Thailand (two), Vietnam (two) and Cambodia (one).

The CHP has been closely monitoring the latest DF situation in neighbouring and overseas areas. According to the Health Commission of Guangdong Province, as of February 29, 15 cases have been recorded in Guangdong in 2020. In Taiwan, as of yesterday, 49 imported cases (none local) have been recorded in 2020.

Detailed information on the latest DF situation in Hong Kong as well as neighbouring and overseas countries and areas has been uploaded to the CHP's website

(www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/df_imported_cases_and_overseas_figures_eng.pdf). Members of the public should stay vigilant and carry out effective mosquito prevention and control measures.

â€œApart from [general measures](#), travellers returning from areas affected by DF should apply insect repellent for 14 days upon arrival in Hong Kong. If feeling unwell, seek medical advice promptly and provide travel details to the doctor," a spokesman for the CHP said.

The public should take heed of the following advice on mosquito control:

- Thoroughly check all gully traps, roof gutters, surface channels and drains to prevent blockage;
- Scrub and clean drains and surface channels with an alkaline detergent compound at least once a week to remove any deposited mosquito eggs;
- Properly dispose of refuse, such as soft drink cans, empty bottles and boxes, in covered litter containers;
- Completely change the water of flowers and plants at least once a week. The use of saucers should be avoided if possible;
- Level irregular ground surfaces before the rainy season;
- Avoid staying in shrubby areas; and
- Take personal protective measures such as wearing light-coloured long-sleeved clothes and trousers and apply insect repellent containing DEET to clothing or uncovered areas of the body when doing outdoor activities.

DEET-containing insect repellents are effective and the public should take heed of the tips below:

- Read the label instructions carefully first;
- Apply right before entering an area with risk of mosquito bites;
- Apply on exposed skin and clothing;
- Use DEET of up to 30 per cent for pregnant women and up to 10 per cent for children*;
- Apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent; and

- Re-apply only when needed and follow the instructions.
- * For children who travel to countries or areas where mosquito-borne diseases are endemic or epidemic and where exposure is likely, those aged 2 months or above can use DEET-containing insect repellents with a DEET concentration of up to 30 per cent.

The public should call 1823 in case of mosquito problems and may visit the following pages for more information: the DF page of the [CHP](#) and the [Travel Health Service](#), the latest [Travel Health News](#), [tips for using insect repellents](#), and the CHP [Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#).

[Temporary suspension of public libraries computer system](#)

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department today (April 3) announced that maintenance work for the Hong Kong Public Libraries computer system will be carried out from 0.30am to 11.59pm on April 10, during which the following services will be suspended:

- library mobile app services and Internet renewal services; and
- other online library services, including the library catalogue, borrowers' record enquiries, reservation of library materials and Internet and Digital Service Workstations and electronic resources (e-Books and e-Databases).

Details can be obtained from the website at www.hkpl.gov.hk/en/library-notices/library-notices-list.html. For enquiries, please call 2921 0208.

[Fourteen building plans approved in January](#)

The Buildings Department approved 14 building plans in January, with five on Hong Kong Island, five in Kowloon and four in the New Territories.

Of the approved plans, four were for apartment and apartment/commercial developments, four were for commercial developments, two were for factory and industrial developments, and four were for community services developments.

In the same month, consent was given for works to start on five building projects which, when completed, will provide 69 953 square metres of gross floor area for domestic use involving 735 units, and 7 856 sq m of gross floor area for non-domestic use. The department has received notification of commencement of superstructure works for eight building projects.

The department also issued 16 occupation permits, with five on Hong Kong Island, one in Kowloon and 10 in the New Territories.

Of the buildings certified for occupation, the gross floor area for domestic use was 27 978 sq m involving 711 units, and 12 215 sq m was for non-domestic use.

The declared cost of new buildings completed in January totalled about \$1.5 billion.

In addition, seven demolition consents involving seven building structures were issued.

The department received 2 285 reports about unauthorised building works (UBWs) in January and issued 862 removal orders on UBWs.

The full version of the Monthly Digest for January can be viewed on the Buildings Department's homepage (www.bd.gov.hk).

LegCo Secretariat releases Research Brief on “The 2020-2021 Budget”

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The Legislative Council Secretariat (the Secretariat) today (April 3) released a Research Brief on "The 2020-2021 Budget".

The Financial Secretary delivered his third Budget of the current-term Government on February 26 and reported a fiscal deficit of HK\$37.8 billion in 2019-2020 financial year. The budget deficit is expected to more than triple to HK\$139.1 billion in 2020-2021, mostly due to a new package of relief measures of HK\$122 billion, or 4.3 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2019, to combat COVID-19.

Within this largest fiscal relief package in the history of Hong Kong, 28 per cent are tax refunds and 9 per cent are targeted for enterprises. For the rest of 63 per cent, they are universal cash payout scheme (CPS) which pays HK\$10,000 to all permanent residents aged 18 or above in Hong Kong and other initiatives to support lower-income families, both bringing forth stronger income redistributive effect than the previous five Budgets.

There are concerns over the practical arrangement of CPS, in view of the past practice of taking about 19 months to complete cash payout. This is deemed to be much longer than that of only 4-10 months in Macao and Singapore. The administrative cost of about HK\$140 per successful application under CPS also appears to be on the high side.

Globally, many governments have introduced pandemic-induced fiscal relief packages in February to March 2020 to combat COVID-19. These packages exceed 10 per cent of GDP in many advanced places, including the United Kingdom (22 per cent), the United States (11 per cent) and Singapore (11 per cent). Majority of them are loan guarantees assisting enterprises to survive amidst business shutdown.

After recording fiscal surplus for 15 years in a row, Hong Kong's fiscal balance is expected to stay in red for the next five years. Some are concerned about local fiscal discipline, while others view it as a good use of the accumulative fiscal surplus of over HK\$1.13 trillion for rainy days. But the risks of structural deficits in the longer term cannot be dismissed, due to profound impacts of ageing on demand for social services, shrinking workforce and intertwined relationship between tax base and the structure of income distribution. Also, there is more overseas skepticism over Hong Kong as a global financial centre and best place to do business after social unrest last year, which might have implications for local tax base in the longer term.

Meanwhile, public housing plays a key role in social mobility, with greater poverty alleviation effect than the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance. Yet the share of housing in public expenditure halved from 10.2 per cent in 1997-1998 to 5.0 per cent in 2019-2020, along with a plunge in the supply of public rental housing (PRH) flats. As supply of PRH flats is forecast to hover at a low average annual level till 2023-2024, its adverse impact on income disparity will still be felt in the medium term.

The Legislative Council will resume the Second Reading debate on the Appropriation Bill 2020 at its meeting of April 22 and Members will speak on the Bill.

The Research Brief is prepared by the Secretariat's Research Office of the Information Services Division with a view to enhancing information support for Members. It is a concise summary aiming at explaining a subject matter which may be of interest to Members and the general public.

The Research Brief is now available on the Legislative Council Website at www.legco.gov.hk/research-publications/english/1920rb01-the-2020-2021-budget-20200403-e.pdf.