



BY FAX AND EMAIL

Your ref: L/M to TD NR 146/169-4

Transport Department
Urban (Kln.) & NT Regional Offices
7th & 8th Floors, Mong Kok Government Offices,
30 Luen Wan Street, Kowloon.
(Fax: 2381 3799 / 2398 7430, Email: tdenq@td.gov.hk)

20th July, 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Proposals for Relaxation of Traffic Restrictions to promote
Tourism and other Development in South Lantau**

1. Green Power, being a charitable local green group, would like to draw your attention to the impacts of the above-captioned proposals on the residents, road safety, water supplies, environment, ecology and tourist assets of Lantau.

Road access crucial to conservation of natural and tourist assets

2. Having recognized and confirmed by the Government, Lantau comprises high-quality landscape and ecologically sensitive natural environment which should be preserved for nature conservation and sustainable recreational and visitor uses. Therefore, strict and enforceable measures regarding transport should be in tandem with this principal planning intention for preserving Lantau as a conservation area.

3. In Hong Kong, restriction of vehicles access to roads is one of the most effective measures to preserve the high-quality landscape and ecologically sensitive natural environment. For example, stringent control of vehicle access to High Island Reservoir area at Tai Mong Tsai Road, Sai Kung Country Park Visitor Centre helps protect the tourist spots and water gathering ground in Sai Kung East and West Country Park.

4. On the contrary, cancellation of traffic restriction, such as that with the release of Frontier Closed Area, promptly brings about uncontrollable and non-enforceable environmental vandalism and nuisance that leads to pollution, illegal dumping, visual blight and incompatible developments in Sha Tau Kok. Although other ordinances are currently in place aiming at prevention of environmental vandalisms, they are in many cases ineffective or difficult to enforce, resulting in irreversible loss of valueable natural and tourist resources.

Maintain stringent road restrictions on Lantau

5. Similar environmental vandalisms have been happening in Tung Chung River valley on Lantau, mostly in Shek Lau Po and Shek Mun Kap, since the relaxation of traffic restriction of Tung Chung Road. Although such cases have been complaint to the Administration, minimal enforcement actions were taken that the vandalisms are hard to restore.

6. Regarding the above-captioned proposals, Green Power opines all roads in South Lantau and Tung Chung Road south of Shek Mun Kap should be maintained as Closed Roads in order to protect the ecology, natural and tourist resources. If environmental vandalisms on Lantau persists or exacerbates, the Closed Road measures should be extended.

Road safety

7. Lantau Closed Road Permits should be strictly enforced. Vehicles permitted to use all roads in South Lantau & Tung Chung Road west of Ma Wan New Village should be tightly controlled, especially for heavy vehicles and construction trucks and machineries, to safeguard bikers and pedestrians, and lower the risks of flytippings and incompatible developments.

8. Green Power is concerned that the above-captioned proposals will impose higher safety risk on bikers and pedestrians using roads in South Lantau and Tung Chung Road. We urge that the driving speed of all vehicles must be limited.

Environmental impacts

9. Daily quota for tour coaches and private cars to access all roads in South Lantau and Tung Chung Road should not impose unfavourable environmental impacts e.g. air and water pollution, noise nuisance & etc. Without imminent reasons, no quota for private cars to access all roads in South Lantau and Tung Chung Road should be issued on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays. The vehicular access to obsolete sections of old Tung Chung Road should be strictly controlled to prevent flytipping.

Protection of potable water

10. Many roads sections on Lantau run through the water gathering grounds of reservoir. Any flytippings, most likely occur in remote road sections, will pollute the potable water source. Existing restriction measures of vehicular access on Lantau are effective and efficient to protect water quality of reservoir in view of the remote and extensive water gathering grounds. Such measures should be maintained.

11. The criteria to issue Lantau Closed Road Permit should be publicly consulted with stakeholders, including green groups, cycling and hiking associations.


Effective enforcement

12. In order to enforce traffic restriction measures effectively and for the sake of road safety, a comprehensive surveillance system must be in place that includes

- (a) control of vehicle number on Lantau Closed Roads according to environmental and transport carrying capacity and road safety,
- (b) allocating sufficient enforcement personnel, and conducting regular daily patrol of Closed Roads,
- (c) installation of traffic surveillance CCTV and automated vehicular speed detection devices on Closed Roads on Lantau.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

Yours faithfully,



Dr. CHENG Luk-ki (Division Head, Scientific Research and Conservation)

c.c.

Transport & Housing Bureau (Email: sthoffice@thb.gov.hk)

Environment Bureau (Email: sen@enb.gov.hk)

Development Bureau (Email: sdev@devb.gov.hk)

EPD (Email: enquiry@epd.gov.hk)

Planning Department (Email: kkling@pland.gov.hk)

WSD (Email: enoch_ts_lam@wsd.gov.hk)