

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
PANEL ON DEVELOPMENT**

PWP Item No. 4171CD — Revitalization of Tsui Ping River

**Follow-up Actions Arising from the Discussion
at the Meeting on 26 February 2019**

Supplementary information requested by the Panel on Development on 26 February 2019 is provided below:

(a) elaboration on the results of the revitalization of the Kai Tak River in beautifying the environment and enhancing the diversity of river ecology

The Drainage Services Department (DSD) and the Civil Engineering and Development Department have reconstructed the Kai Tak Nullah in the Wong Tai Sin District and the Kai Tak Development Area respectively from 2011 to 2018 to improve its flood conveyance capacity.

Various greening and ecological enhancement measures have been introduced into Kai Tak Nullah to revitalize it into an urban green river corridor. Approximately 2.2-kilometre long riverside planters to enhance the river bank environment have been provided. To mimic natural rivers, the Kai Tak Nullah project also included the resurfacing of the open channel and installation of artificial rocks along the river banks with pocket planters. In order to improve the instream habitat, ecological enhancement measures such as submerged planting of approximately 280 square metres, fish shelters and flow deflectors have been provided on the riverbed. DSD is now conducting a post-completion ecological survey to evaluate the ecological related enhancements. The interim survey results collected in 2018 showed an increase in the number of bird species from 21 to 28 and the abundance of birds has risen from 84 to 233, when compared with the conditions in 2010 before rehabilitation works commenced; and more fishes in the proximity of the fish shelters and flow deflectors were found.

Moreover, four new riverside viewing locations have been provided in the Wong Tai Sin section of the Kai Tak Nullah project. With a view to improving the walking environment between Morse Park and Kai Tak River, beautification works for Morse Park, widening of Tung Tai Lane footbridge from 1.8 metres to 4 metres and provision of glass railings have been carried out. For the riverside along the section within the Kai Tak Development Area, landscaped riverside open spaces will be provided for public enjoyment.

(b) the Administration’s enforcement actions against illegal connections of sewers to stormwater drains linking the King Yip Street Nullah (and include such information in the submission to the Public Works Subcommittee)

The following supplementary information is provided in the submission to the Public Works Subcommittee:

DSD has been closely collaborating with the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) to tackle expedient connections (ECs) in the catchment of the King Yip Street Nullah¹ since the planning stage of the project. An extensive EC survey was jointly carried out by DSD and EPD in the catchment and its adjacent areas between 2014 and 2015. The survey identified 30 ECs, including 13 cases in the King Yip Street Nullah catchment, mainly involving residential buildings, restaurants and shops. All cases were rectified in 2016.

DSD has continued to facilitate EPD’s investigation of illegal discharge and follow up on the EC cases referred. Between 2016 and 2018, EPD further identified 16 ECs in the Kwun Tong District, including two connecting to the King Yip Street Nullah, and 14 of them have been rectified while the remaining two cases are being dealt with.

EPD is responsible for enforcing the Water Pollution Control Ordinance (Cap. 358) to combat illegal discharge. In following up each case, EPD will trace the discharge, identify the polluting source and gather evidence, including collecting water samples to ascertain a polluted discharge. EPD will initiate prosecution against the suspected discharger if there is sufficient evidence. For ECs in buildings, EPD will refer those cases to the Buildings Department for following up and overseeing the rectification works by the responsible parties pursuant to the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123).

Between 2014 and 2018, EPD successfully prosecuted 196 cases in the territory for violating the Water Pollution Control Ordinance. Nine of them are in the Kwun Tong District, including five cases in the King Yip Street Nullah catchment. The nine cases were mostly related to illegal discharges by construction activities and restaurants.

¹ The catchment of the King Yip Street Nullah includes the Tsui Ping, Sau Mau Ping, Yuet Wah and Shun Tin areas, etc.

(c) a comparison of the feasibility and merits of the proposed revitalization of Tsui Ping River and the decking of the existing King Yip Street Nullah

The feasibility and merits between the proposed revitalization of Tsui Ping River and the decking of the existing King Yip Street Nullah are elaborated below.

1. Flood protection needs and safety considerations

For decking over a nullah, a large volume of supporting structures (including columns and/or partition walls) will have to be constructed to support the top slab and its loading. These supporting structures will reduce the cross-section area of the nullah and adversely affect the flood conveyance capacity. If the King Yip Street Nullah is decked, its flood conveyance capacity is expected to drop by around 13%. Substantial modification works to the nullah will then be required to maintain its original flood conveyance capacity. Given that the existing nullah is sandwiched between two busy roads, namely King Yip Street and Wai Fat Road, modification works to widen the existing nullah while maintaining the existing traffic flows and without affecting the adjoining developments would not be possible.

For the proposed revitalization scheme, the nullah will remain as an open channel with localized decking at a much smaller scale to provide cross-river walkways and landscaped decks to improve connectivity and walkability.

Decking the nullah will also impose constraints on the routine inspection and maintenance. Maintenance provisions on the deck, such as desilting openings and access shafts, have to be allowed for operation and maintenance. Moreover, a decked nullah is a confined space environment which poses higher risk to workers working inside and more stringent safety precautionary measures will have to be implemented to safeguard the workers. By contrast, inspection and maintenance of an open channel will be much easier and less costly.

2. Planning and urban design considerations

The existing King Yip Street Nullah was built over 50 years ago. It is one of the few open nullahs in the urban areas that remain. Given that the nullah abuts the Kwun Tong Business Area and a residential area and its inherent riverine characteristics, it possesses excellent conditions to become a precious public space in the area. Based on the experience of the revitalization of Kai Tak

Nullah, suitable greening and ecological enhancement works within a nullah will bring about ecological benefits and biodiversity, which a nullah decking scheme cannot provide.

While a nullah decking scheme may appear to create more space, the usage of such space will be limited to those with minimal load imposed. As a number of open spaces (including Kwun Tong Recreation Ground, Tsui Ping River Garden, Laguna Park and Kwun Tong Promenade) are already provided in the vicinity, the revitalization of the King Yip Street Nullah into a green river corridor can provide a different experience to users as compared to open spaces on ground. The project can also effectively link up the various open spaces and provide approximately 1-kilometre long riverine experience connecting to the waterfront.

3. Public aspiration and stakeholders engagement

During the planning and design stages of the project, DSD conducted two stages of public engagement to collect public views. DSD disseminated project information to different stakeholders and set up various channels for the public to express their views. The Kwun Tong District Council, the Task Force on the Kai Tak Harbourfront of the Harbourfront Commission, the general public and various stakeholders responded positively. They supported the proposed revitalization scheme which would foster a water-friendly culture and urged for early implementation of the project.

The proposed scope of works will keep the disturbance to the public to a minimum while achieving the goal of transforming an existing concrete open channel into a green and vibrant river with environmental, ecological and landscaping upgrading to improve the overall environment. The revitalization scheme also respects the comments and suggestions of those participated in the various public engagement activities.

4. Time and Cost Implications

While no detailed design has been carried out for the nullah decking scheme, for the purpose of a rough cost comparison, we assume that a deck with supporting structures would be erected above the King Yip Street Nullah. By making reference to the construction costs of previous nullah decking projects of similar nature, the estimated construction cost of the decking option is expected to be some 40% higher than the revitalization scheme. Construction works causing obstruction to normal water flow in the nullah have to be avoided during the wet season (i.e. peak flow time). With the extensive nullah decking works envisaged, the construction period is also expected to be much longer when compared with the revitalization scheme.

(d) the Administration's response to the request for exploring under the revitalization of Tsui Ping River project the provision of a suitable area for kids to ride balance bikes

We have also reviewed the suggestion to construct balance bike tracks at the central median of Wai Fat Road put forward at the Panel on Development meeting. The site is cut into several segments by the piers of Kwun Tong Bypass and subject to noise and exhaust fumes from traffic on both sides. As such, we do not recommend developing the site into a venue for balance bikes for children. There is no other suitable area for providing balance bike tracks and supporting facilities within the project boundary.

**Development Bureau
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