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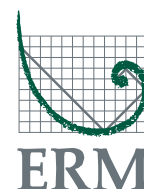
Study on Old Trails in Hong Kong - Executive summary 香港古道研究 -行政摘要

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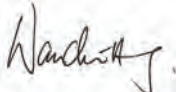
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Study on Old Trails in
Hong Kong –
Executive Summary
香港古道研究 - 行政摘要

February 2014

Reference 0127814

For and on behalf of ERM-Hong Kong, Limited	
Approved by:	<u>Frank Wan</u>
Signed:	 _____
Position:	<u>Partner</u>
Date:	<u>24 February 2014</u>

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 STUDY BACKGROUND

It is widely believed that old footpaths reflect the early pattern of commercial activities, cultural exchanges and communications among villagers, markets and towns in various parts of Hong Kong. In order to have an in-depth understanding of the development and the present conditions of the old footpaths in Hong Kong, the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) commissioned ERM-Hong Kong, Limited to conduct a “Study on Old Trails in Hong Kong” (hereafter referred to as the Study). The footpaths to be covered in the Study are those footpaths which were built before 1899.

1.2 STUDY OBJECTIVES

The overall objectives of the Study are:

- to give an overall understanding of the old footpaths in Hong Kong;
- to record on the current condition of the footpaths; and
- to assess on the cultural significance of the footpaths in local context.

The specific objectives of the Study are:

- to compile a basic inventory of these old footpaths in Hong Kong, including their names and rough alignments;
- to review all available historical archives on the origin, purpose and development of these old footpaths and their roles and functions in their heyday;
- to assess the values and cultural significance of these old footpaths in accordance with internationally recognised conservation charters and guidelines; and
- to identify issues involved in preservation and public enjoyment of these old footpaths.

1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

Following this introductory section, the remainder of this *Executive Summary* comprises the following Sections:

- *Section 2* presents the study methodology; and
- *Section 3* presents the summary of findings.

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2.1 STUDY APPROACH

The Study is divided into four major tasks.

2.1.1 Task A – Desktop Study

A comprehensive desktop study was undertaken to:

- establish a concise definition of old footpaths and boulder trackways in the local context. The target footpaths of the Study are those which were built before 1899;
- conduct a literature review and acquire all available historical archives (e.g. historical maps, plans, photos, aerial photos, etc.) to trace the origin, construction purposes and development of the old footpaths and associated village developments in Hong Kong and their roles and functions in their heyday; and
- compile an inventory of old footpaths in Hong Kong including their names, locations and rough alignments marked on 1:5000 survey plans, among which six of the newly identified old footpaths were selected for basic recording in full consultation with the Government Representative (GR).

During the Desktop Study, available literatures, historical and modern maps, plans, photos, graphics, archives held in tertiary institutions and various government departments and information from internet and interview with experienced hikers were conducted for compilation of a comprehensive inventory of old footpaths in Hong Kong. The findings of the desktop study were presented in the *Desktop Study Report* which was accepted by AMO on 23 July 2013.

2.1.2 Task B – Detailed Study on the Old Footpaths Recorded by AMO

Upon completion of the Desktop Study, a detailed study on the 14 old footpaths recorded by the AMO was conducted to establish the historical, geological, topological, environmental, land ownership and land use background of these footpaths. Specific tasks conducted including:

- Conducted site inspection of these old footpaths, reviewed the current conditions of the old footpaths and their respective immediate environments and features (such as starting point and ending point of each old footpath and the boulder sections on each trail), took photographs of the key features of the footpaths, and indicated the old footpaths on 1:5000 survey plans;

- Tracing of the starting and ending points of each old footpath and the boulder sections on each old footpath for provision of the total length and other data of the footpath through land surveying by marking the alignments of the footpath on the most updated 1:5000 survey plans with coordinates (highlighting those old footpaths made of boulders);
- Site inspection to analyse the construction materials and construction methods of the old footpaths and trace of the builders;
- Recording features along the identified old footpaths (e.g. buildings, temples, bridges, markets, etc.) and study the relationship between these features and the old footpaths;
- Reviewing land status, land use zoning, existing use of the old footpaths and any impending development proposals which may affect the footpaths; and
- Interview with local informants and experienced hikers to record and compile oral history of the footpaths, where possible.

2.1.3 *Task C – Basic Recording of Newly Identified Old Footpaths*

In addition to the 14 old footpaths recorded by the AMO, 6 of the newly identified old footpaths from Desktop Study were selected for basic recording. The 6 footpaths selected were based on their respective historical, architectural, social and cultural significance in local context and in full consultation with the GR. Basic information gathered for these footpaths included their names, locations, rough alignments (using hand held GPS with approximately $\pm 5\text{m}$ accuracy), length, a brief background and photos.

2.1.4 *Task D – Cultural Heritage Value Assessment*

An assessment of the values and a statement of significance of the identified old footpaths in Hong Kong as a group and individually has been conducted in respect of its historical, architectural, social and cultural aspects, which took into account the local conditions and internationally recognised conservation charters, guidelines and reports.

In assessing the significance of the old footpaths, each footpath is given a designation of significance, with reference to similar parameters adopted for assessing the standing buildings and the *Historic Buildings Assessment Criteria* adopted by AMO for graded historic buildings.

Constraints and opportunities that may involve in preservation of the identified old footpaths and feasible measures to promote and enhance public enjoyment of the old footpaths are identified.

The results of *Tasks B to D* are presented in the *Final Study Report*, which was accepted by AMO in February 2014.

3.1 DESKTOP REVIEW

A *Desktop Study Report* presenting the key findings of the archival search and literature review has been prepared and accepted by the AMO on 23 July 2013. The *Desktop Study Report* defined the old footpaths in both international and local context.

According to the internationally recognised charters and guidelines on cultural or heritage routes, the term “cultural route” is defined as “any route of communication which is physically delimited and is also characterised by having its own specific dynamic and historic functionality to serve a specific and well-determined purpose”. In principle, it should be composed of tangible elements of which the cultural significance comes from exchanges and a multi-dimensional dialogue across countries or regions, and that illustrate the interaction of movement, along the route, in space and time. In local context, the “old footpaths” (古道) are defined as any footpath built before British colonialisation (i.e. before 1898 on the New Territories, 1859 on Old British Kowloon and 1841 on Hong Kong Island); and especially any such footpath still retaining its original character (i.e. with a cobbled, or boulder or mud surface).

Further to the recommendation as presented in the *Desktop Study Report*, it was considered that either “old routes” or “old footpaths” better terms than “old trails”. For consistency, “old footpaths” is used in this Study.

Old footpaths have been classified into three categories in the Desktop Study, which are major routes that carry through traffic to major centres, through routes linking market towns, and minor routes of local importance that link a village with its neighbour, or a village with its fields, or some site of local significance.

The Desktop Study reviewed the 14 old footpaths ⁽¹⁾ recorded by the AMO (see Table 3.1). Their locations are shown in Figure 3.1.

Table 3.1 Basic information of the Old Footpaths Recorded by AMO

Site Code	English Name	Chinese Name	Category ^(a)
A1	Ho Chung Trackway	蠔涌古徑	B
A2	Hok Tau Reservoir-Cheung Uk Boulder Trackway	鶴藪水塘至張屋古石徑	C
A3	Sun Leung Tam Trackway	新娘潭古徑	B
A4	Lung A Pai-Siu Om Shan Trackway	龍丫排至小麓山古徑	C

(1) A new item namely Hoi Ha Trackway has been recently recorded by AMO. There are a total of 15 old footpaths recorded by AMO as at November 2012. The scope of this Study only covers the 14 old footpaths listed by AMO before November 2012.

Old Footpaths Recorded by AMO		
古物古蹟辦事處所記錄的十四條古道		
A1	Ho Chung Trackway	蠔涌古徑
A2	Hok Tau Reservoir-Cheung Uk Boulder Trackway	鶴藪水塘至張屋古徑
A3	Sun Leung Tam Trackway	新銀潭古徑
A4	Lung A Pai-Siu Om Shan Trackway	龍丫排至小龜山古徑
A5	Wun Yiu Trackway	碗窰古徑
A6	Lau Shui Heung-Kat Tsai Shan Au Trackway	流水響至桔仔山坳古徑
A7	Luk Keng-Tsat Muk Kiu Boulder Trackway	鹿勁至七木橋古石徑
A8	Pak Kong-Mui Tsz Lam Trackway	北港至梅子林古徑
A9	Shui Ngau Shan Trackway	水牛山古徑
A10	Tai Lam Chung-Shap Pat Heung Trackway	大欖涌至十八鄉古徑
A11	Ho Pui Trackway	河背古徑
A12	Ngong Ping-Shek Pik Trackway	昂坪至石壁古石徑
A13	Yi O-Fan Lau Boulder Trackway	二澳至分流古石徑
A14	Hung Shing Ye Trackway	洪聖爺古徑

Six Newly Identified Old Footpaths for Basic Recording		
六條新發現並進行了基本記錄的古道		
N1a	Tai Po Route (Kowloon City to Sham Chun: Kowloon City to Shing Mun Sub-Section)	大步徑(九龍寨城至深圳: 九龍寨城至城門分段)
N1b	Tai Po Route (Kowloon City to Sham Chun: Shing Mun to Tai Po Market Sub-Section)	大步徑(九龍寨城至深圳: 城門至大埔墟分段)
N2	Lai Tung Route (Sha Tau Kok to Sham Chun)	黎洞徑 (沙頭角至深圳)
N10	Kowloon Route (Kowloon City to Sham Chun: Kowloon City to Yuen Chau Kok ferry pier Sub-Section)	九龍徑 (九龍寨城至深圳: 九龍寨城至圓州角碼頭分段)
O8	Tai Che to Ho Chung Old Footpath	大嶺至蠔涌古道
H1	Tai Long Wan Village to Chai Wan Route	大浪灣村至柴灣路徑

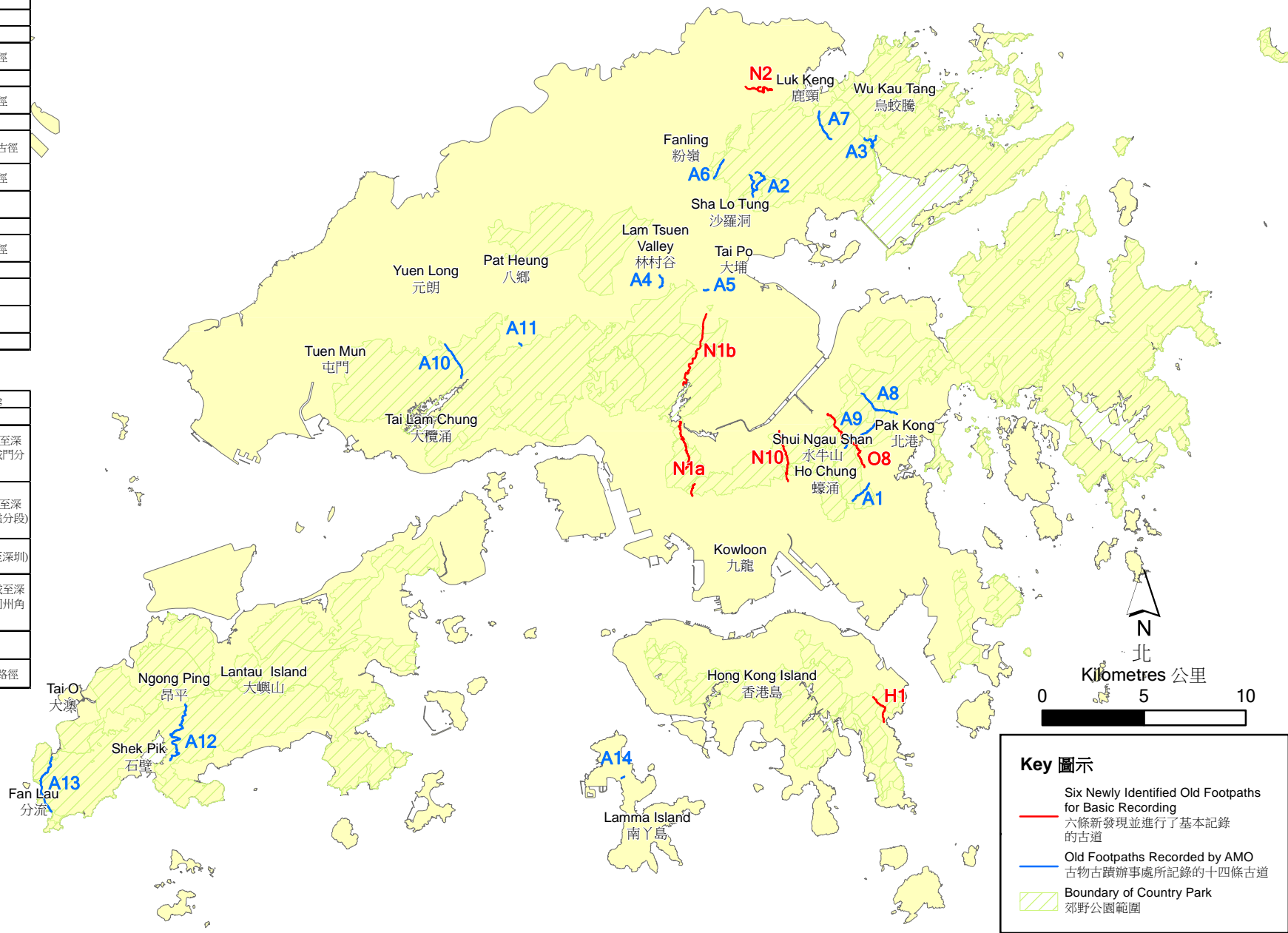


Figure 3.1
圖3.1
Location of 14 Old Footpaths Recorded by AMO and 6 Newly Identified Old Footpaths
古物古蹟辦事處所記錄的十四條古道及六條新發現的古道之位置圖

Site Code	English Name	Chinese Name	Category ^(a)
A5	Wun Yiu Trackway	碗窑古徑	C
A6	Lau Shui Heung-Kat Tsai Shan Au Trackway	流水響至桔仔山坳古徑	B
A7	Luk Keng-Tsat Muk Kiu Boulder Trackway	鹿勁至七木橋古石徑	B
A8	Pak Kong-Mui Tsz Lam Trackway	北港至梅子林古徑	B
A9	Shui Ngau Shan Trackway	水牛山古徑	B
A10	Tai Lam Chung – Shap Pat Heung Trackway	大欖涌至十八鄉古徑	B
A11	Ho Pui Trackway	河背古徑	C
A12	Ngong Ping – Shek Pik Trackway	昂坪至石壁古石徑	B
A13	Yi O – Fan Lau Boulder Trackway	二澳至分流古石徑	B
A14	Hung Shing Ye Trackway	洪聖爺古徑	C

Note:

(a) A – Major Routes; B – Through Routes; C – Minor Routes as defined in the *Desktop Study Report*

Apart from the 14 old footpaths recorded by AMO, the Desktop Study also identified other old footpaths. An inventory of old footpaths in Hong Kong has been prepared. The inventory were identified as a list of potential surviving old footpaths recorded on historical maps that have been identified as still being in existence and have not yet been destroyed or disturbed by any modern developments. Such potential surviving old footpaths were identified through literature review, hiking trails database, internet information, from oral history obtained by the historian, interview with hikers and adventurers, though past hiking experience of the Study Team and though overlaying historical maps on current 1:5000 survey maps for analysis. The presence of intact boulders paved footpaths and other physical indicators such as the presence of historic plaques, direction stones/way markers (問路石), ruins, abandoned village houses or historical graves have been taken into account in evaluating if these footpaths are potential old footpaths. An inventory of of approximately 95 old footpaths have been identified in the *Desktop Study* and 6 of these old footpaths (see Table 3.2) were selected for basic recording. Their locations are shown in Figure 3.1.

Table 3.2 Recommended Six Old Footpaths for Basic Recording

Site Code	English Name	Chinese Name	Category ^(a)
N1a	Tai Po Route (Kowloon City to Sham Chun: Kowloon City to Shing Mun Sub-Section)	大步徑(九龍寨城至深圳: 九龍寨城至城門分段)	A
N1b	Tai Po Route (Kowloon City to Sham Chun: Shing Mun to Tai Po Market Sub-Section)	大步徑(九龍寨城至深圳: 城門至大埔墟分段)	A
N1c ^(b)	Tai Po Route (Kowloon City to Sham Chun: Tai Po Market to Shum Chun	大步徑(九龍寨城至深圳: 大埔墟至深圳分段)	A

Site Code	English Name	Chinese Name	Category ^(a)
	Sub-Section)		
N2	Lai Tung Route (Sha Tau Kok to Sham Chun)	黎峒逕 (沙頭角至深圳)	A
N10	Kowloon Route (Kowloon City to Sham Chun: Kowloon City to Yuen Chau Kok ferry pier Sub-Section)	九龍逕 (九龍寨城至深圳: 九龍寨城至圓州角碼頭分段)	B
O8	Tai Che to Ho Chung Old Footpath	大輦至蠔涌古道 ⁽¹⁾	C
H1	Tai Long Wan Village to Chai Wan Route	大浪灣村至柴灣路徑	C

Note:

- (a) A – Major Routes; B – Through Routes; C – Minor Routes as defined in the *Desktop Study Report*
- (b) During the field survey of N1c, as the possible routing cannot be identified, survey for N1c was considered not feasible. Thus, the field survey for the alternative route H1 was conducted.

Four of the 6 selected old footpaths (N1a, N1b, N1c and N2) are classified as major routes with highest social and cultural significance; one of the 6 old footpaths, N10, is classified as through routes. It is considered part of the Kowloon Route recorded in *Xin'an Gazetteer* which is believed to have higher level of intactness when compare to Kam Tin Route and Kwun Yam Route based on the Desktop Study and the analysis of historic maps and current maps. In addition, this N10 route may be the route mentioned in *Xin'an Gazetteer* that was constructed in 1792 with funding source from local donations. Another old footpath selected for basic recording is O8. It has been identified by hikers or adventurers and was recommended for basic recording as:

- (a) the hiking route is provided by hikers which provide valid information for Study Team to follow on site;
- (b) photographic records from hikers indicate the presence of boulder paved section of the route;
- (c) photographic record with other physical indicators support the footpath is of potential historic significance such as villages, stone built walls and the route connects to a number of old villages;
- (d) this old footpath is located in close proximity to the old footpaths A1 and A9 recorded by the AMO; and
- (e) similar routing can be found on historic maps.

Field surveys of the 14 old footpaths recorded by the AMO were conducted from 11 February to 8 April 2011 as part of the detailed study and the field surveys of the 6 newly identified old footpaths were conducted on 2 March 2012 and 6-15 November 2012.

(1) 吳灞陵,《香港 九龍 新界旅行手冊1951》,香港:華僑日報,1951:100-105。

The findings of the detailed study on the 14 old footpaths recorded by the AMO and the basic recording information of the 6 newly identified old footpaths are presented in the *Final Study Report*. 16 of them are located in the New Territories (for commuting either between the New Territories and Kowloon or the markets/towns / villages within the New Territories), one of them is located at the Hong Kong Island and three of them at the Lantau and Lamma Islands.

It is found that some sections of 5 old footpaths recorded by AMO (Ho Chung Trackway, Hok Tau Reservoir-Cheung Uk Boulder Trackway, Lung A Pai-Siu Om Shan Trackway, Shui Ngau Shan Trackway and Hung Shing Ye Trackway) were found to be inaccessible due to abundant vegetation coverage which blocked access. In spite of the attempts to explore alternative routings, the sections of the old footpaths were still unidentifiable. Site inspection results indicate that there are three types of tracks, mud, boulder and reworked. The length of the 14 old footpaths recorded by the AMO and the 6 newly identified old footpaths ranges between 203m and 5,156m, amongst which the shortest being the Hung Shing Ye Trackway and the longest being the Ngong Ping – Shek Pik Trackway. With regard to the total length of the boulder sections, the longest being the Pak Kong-Mui Tsz Lam Trackway (1,999m) and the shortest being the Wun Yiu Trackway (111m) among those old footpaths recorded by the AMO. Among those 6 newly identified old footpaths, the longest being the Tai Che to Ho Chung Old Footpath (2,587m) while the Lai Tung Route (Sha Tau Kok to Sham Chun) has no boulder section.

The physical conditions of each old footpath including location of alignments and boulder sections, coordinates of the starting/ending points, landforms and detailed photographic recordings were recorded and detailed in *Final Study Report*. Generally speaking, among the 14 old footpaths recorded by the AMO, boulders found in Ho Chung Trackway, Hok Tau Reservoir-Cheung Uk Boulder Trackway, Sun Leung Tam Trackway and Yi O-Fan Lau Boulder Trackway are in better condition while those in Ho Pui Trackway and Hung Shing Ye Trackway are in poor condition. While part of the Hok Tau Reservoir-Cheung Uk Boulder Trackway, Lung A Pai-Siu Om Shan Trackway, Ho Pui Trackway and Hung Shing Ye Trackway are located outside the Country Park area, all the remaining Trackways are located within the designated areas of Country Parks, and are thus generally maintained in a better condition.

Features observed along the 14 old footpaths include building structures (village houses, ancestral hall and a western style building), stream crossing bridges and drains, tunnel portals/caves, burial sites (graves/urns), stone tablet, pillbox structure and artefacts (granite water gate and stone mortar).

Among the 6 newly identified old footpaths, only two short sections of the Tai Po Route ((Kowloon City to Sham Chun: Kowloon City to Shing Mun Sub-Section) and (Kowloon City to Sham Chun: Shing Mun to Tai Po Market Sub-Section)) still kept with boulders. The Lai Tung Route (Sha Tau Kok to Sham Chun) and Tai Long Wan Village to Chai Wan Route have been modernised or

heavily disturbed with limited boulder path remained underneath. The Kowloon Route (Kowloon City to Sham Chun: Kowloon City to Yuen Chau Kok ferry pier Sub-Section) and Tai Che to Ho Chung Old Footpath are in good condition with intact boulder path sections.

Statements of significance of the old footpaths in Hong Kong have also been established in respect of historical, architectural, social and cultural aspects for the old footpaths both as a group in Hong Kong as well as for each one of them. As a group, the network or patterns of communication of the old footpaths provides important evidence as to how and by what routes Hong Kong's early villages and market towns were interconnected which demonstrate the traditions, culture, ingenuity, creativity and beliefs of the rural people of Hong Kong. A thorough assessment of each footpath's values and significance finds that the Ho Chung Trackway and Sun Leung Tam Trackway have attained the highest level of significance and are thus regarded as more significant than the rest of the footpaths in Hong Kong. However, there are constraints/limitations that might occur in the course of preservation of the old footpath arise from issues relating to the lack of detailed study on old footpaths, authenticity of boulder paved footpaths and the difficulty on physical protection of old footpaths which have been detailed in the *Final Study Report*.

In spite of the constraints/limitation mentioned, there are still ways to explore the opportunities and feasible measures to promote and enhance public enjoyment of old footpaths such as conducting further studies/researches on old footpaths to fill in information gaps; preparation of education materials to promote old footpaths to public, and departmental collation to promote old footpaths as a cultural tourism element of Hong Kong with the provision of old footpaths associated facilities and amenities such as information boards/plaques and direction signs along the old footpaths to enhance public awareness of old footpaths. Details are presented in the *Final Study Report*.

In short, old footpaths in Hong Kong have been witnessing the traditional way of life of our ancestors living in the old Hong Kong. Having played an important role in the old days, these old footpaths are material evidence to understand the cultural heritage of Hong Kong. Therefore, it is recommended that these footpaths should be well protected.