

## 2 UNDERSTANDING THE SITE

This section provides a brief account of the Site by zooming in from Lamma Island, then Yung Shue Ha Village, and finally the Village Houses at Lot 123 R.P. and Lot 124. A historical timeline denoting the development and significant incidents related to the Site in a chronological manner is presented. The information described in this section will form the materials for the assessment of significance of the Site in Section 3.

### 2.1 Statutory Designation

The Site and its associated structures in the vicinity have no historical grading. It is not protected by the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance (CAP.53).

### 2.2 Lamma Island

#### 2.2.1 Location and Name

Located to the southwest of Hong Kong Island, Lamma Island is the third largest island in Hong Kong after Lantau Island and Hong Kong Island (see Fig. 1). The original name of Lamma was *Pok Liu Chau* (博寮洲) or simply *Pol Liu* (博寮), which is believed to be a direct translation from the words “舶寮” meaning “foreigners who came to China for business”<sup>1</sup>.

The Island may have gained this name from its designated use as a stopover place for foreign merchants before proceeding to Guangzhou. Although *Pok Liu* is no longer adopted as the name of the Island, the term is still used in the Chinese name of East Lamma Channel (東博寮海峽), and West Lamma Channel (西博寮海峽).

The current English name “Lamma” is a direct translation of the Chinese name “南丫” which addresses the location and shape of the Island. “南” means south, the location. “丫” is a Chinese character derived from pictogram representing “a crotch of a tree” for which the form of the Island resembles. Lamma is literally and morphologically “a crotch in the south”.

Lamma Island is part of the Islands District that has the smallest land-based non-institutional population among districts (C&SD of HKSAR, 2013, p.FB3). According to the 2011 Census, there were 5,900 inhabitants on the Island.

<sup>1</sup> 中國評論學術出版社《宋代對外貿易“海上絲綢之路”的

佐証“南海一號”》

### **2.2.2 Transportation and Road**

Lamma is accessible by ferry from Central and Aberdeen that takes about 30 to 40 minutes. There are two major ferry piers. The first one is at Yung Shui Wan (榕樹灣) that is located at the northwest of the Island. The second one is Sok Kwu Wan (索罟灣) at the middle of the Island.

Lamma Island is car-free except the small trucks bearing the Village Vehicle (VV) registration mark intended for the transport of goods.

Settlements on the Island are connected by pedestrian walkways. Some of them form Lamma Island Family Walk (南丫島家樂徑) that links tourist spots such as Yung Shue Wan Main Street, *Lamma Winds* (南丫風采發電站), and Hung Shing Yeh Beach (洪聖爺灣泳灘) etc. together.

### **2.2.3 Topography and Settlements**

Most parts of Lamma Island are covered by hills. Flat lands are mainly found at Yung Shue Wan (see Fig. 3) and Sok Kwu Wan, where major settlements are concentrated. Lamma Island is generally divided into the North and South administrative areas with Lo So Sing (蘆鬚城) as the watershed. There are nineteen villages on the island<sup>2</sup>, namely Pak Kok San

Tsuen (北角新村), Pak Kok Kau Tsuen (北角舊村), Tai Peng (大坪), Yung Shue Long (榕樹壟), Yung Shue Wan, Sha Po Village (沙埔村), Tai Yuen (大園), Tai Wan San Tsuen (大灣新村), Tai Wan Kau Tsuen (大灣舊村), Ko Long (高壟), Wang Long (橫壟), Lo Tik Wan (盧荻灣), Luk Chau (鹿洲), Lo So Sing, Sok Kwu Wan, Mo Tat Wan (模達灣), Mo Tat (模達), Yung Shue Ha (榕樹下) and Tung O (東澳) (see Fig. 3).

### **2.2.4 Clans**

Major clans on Lamma Island include Chans (陳氏), Chows (周氏), Ngs (吳氏), Fongs (方氏) and Tsangs (曾氏)<sup>3</sup>. According to local villagers, the Chows reside in many places including Pak Kok San Tsuen, Yung Shue Long New Village, Sha Po New Village, Tai Wan San Tsuen, Wang Long, Yung Shue Ha, and Tung O. The Chans mainly reside in Lo So Sing.

### **2.2.5 Historical Milestone: 1874 Lamma Island Incident**

On 15<sup>th</sup> August 1874 when only Hong Kong Island and Kowloon were British colony, a group of Hong Kong fishermen entered the waters in the vicinity of Lamma Island. The fishermen were attacked by Chinese navy as the latter believed that the Chinese border had been violated. The event

<sup>2</sup> According to *Approved Lamma Island Outline Zoning Plan No. S/I-LI/9*, there are 19 existing recognized villages on Lamma Island.

<sup>3</sup> Environmental Resources Management *The Baroque on Lamma Project EIA Study: Archaeological Survey Report* (July 2013) p.25

provided an excuse for the British government to expand their territory in Hong Kong for better management and defence. In 1898, The Convention Between Great Britain and China Respecting an Extension of Hong Kong Territory 《中英展拓香港界址專條》 was signed that leased the

New Territories and another 236 nearby islands including Lamma Island to Britain for ninety-nine years. The boundary of Hong Kong today was defined by this Convention (Fig. 4).





Fig 1. Lamma Island lies between Hong Kong Island and Lantau Island. (Source: Google Map, 2013)

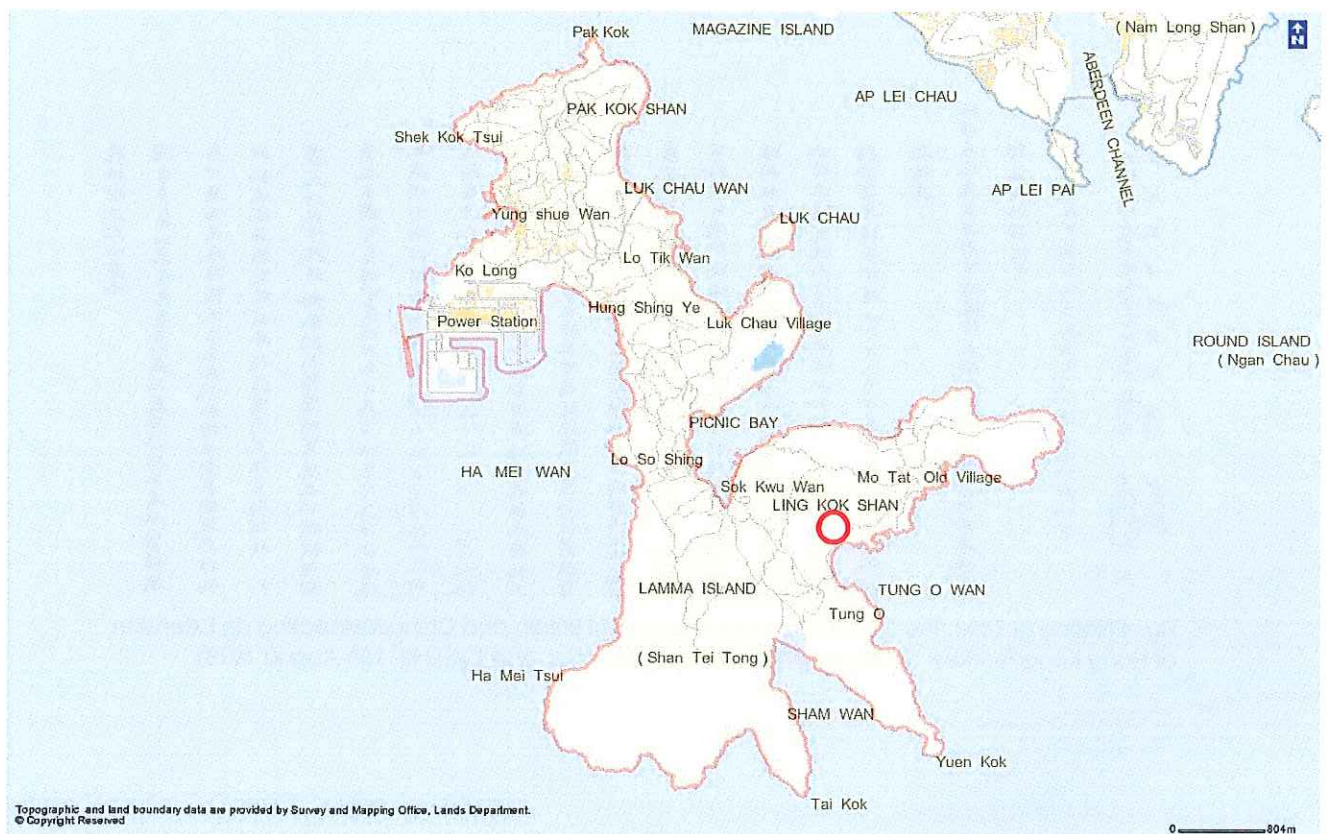


Fig 2. Overview of Lamma Island. Yung Shue Ha is demarcated by the red circle (Source: Lands Department, 2013)





Fig. 3 Many village settlements are found near Yung Shue Wan. (Source: Centamap, 2013)

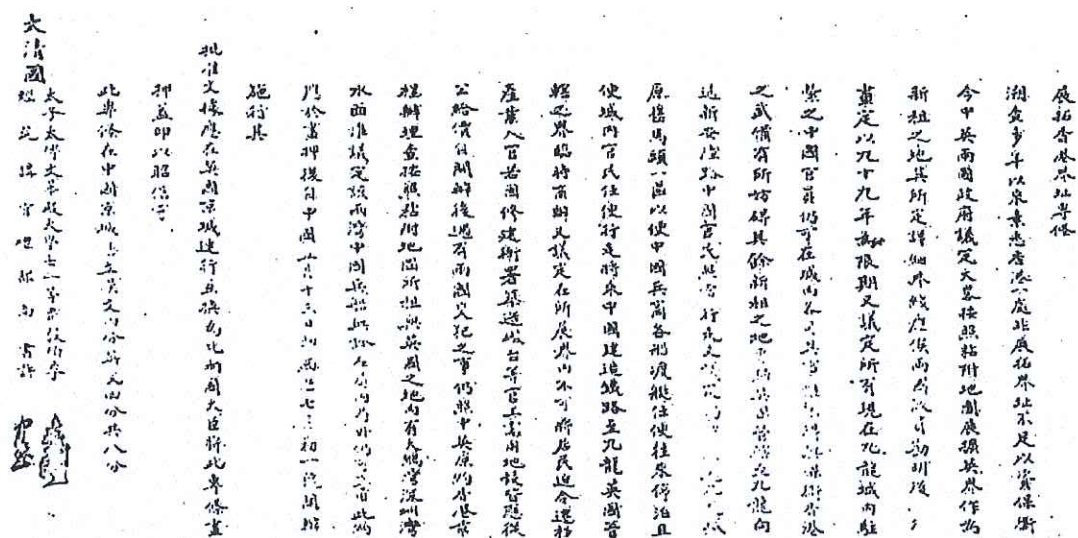


Fig. 4 Notice of 1898, The Convention Between Great Britain and China Respecting an Extension of Hong Kong Territory 《中英展拓香港界址專條》. (Source: 香港工商日報, 13<sup>th</sup> August 1978)

### **2.2.6 Archaeology**

Early human activities during the Middle Neolithic Period (approx. 4000-2200 B.C.) were noted on Lamma Island. It was discovered in 1930s that sea-sand from Lamma Island contained some pottery fragments. This discovery had attracted a few archaeologists, including Fr. D. Finn (芬戴禮神父), to conduct research on the island. Archaeological remains revealed at Sham Wan and Tai Wan suggested that Hong Kong was inhabited by early settlers around 6,000 years ago. Since then Lamma Island has become a popular site for archaeological investigation. Besides Sham Wan, in the vicinity of Yung Shue Ha, Sites of Archaeological Interest have been founded at Mo Tat Wan, and Tung O, etc.

### **2.2.7 Industries**

Dialogue regarding large scale quarrying on the Island started as early as 1901 (see Fig. 5), a few years after the commencement of the governance of the Island by the British government. It might have been the reason for the use of granite as the major building material for village houses on Lamma. Permit to quarry stone at Sok Kwu Wan was

granted in 1931 (see Fig. 6).

By mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, most of the local villagers have adopted farming, beekeeping, firewood chopping, charcoal production etc. Lamma kilns produced charcoal for junks and barges and were mainly found at the south of Lamma Island with the presence of woodland for the production of charcoal at Yung Shue Ha, Mo Tat, Tung O etc. (see Fig. 7).

Given the tortuous shorelines and deep water in Lamma Island, fishing is relatively difficult and not as prosperous as those observed in Aberdeen and Cheung Chau. With a lack of local industries, many male villagers resorted to become sailors. It was not until 1960s -70s that the improving Hong Kong economy led to a growing demand for seafood that villagers in Lamma started to practice fish culture. They set up fish farm at Sok Kwu Wan and Lo Tik Wan, and sold the cultured fish to urban restaurants. The fish culture had also benefited local restaurants by attracting visitors to Lamma to enjoy the fresh seafood. Many other industries also began at around the same time, including production of cow leather, plastic, plywood and rattan, etc.



Public Works Department  
*Early* Public Works Office,  
923 Hong Kong, 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 1900.  
"Quarry Farm 1901."  
Sir,  
I have the honour to enquire if the  
hill sides and unoccupied land on  
Lamma Island is Crown property  
valuable quarries could be opened  
here and, if there is no objection, I  
propose to include one in the farm  
for 1901.  
I have the honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your obedient servant  
sd/ R.D. Ormsby.  
Director of Public Works.  
The Honourable  
The Colonial Secretary

Fig. 5 1901 letter from Director of Public Works to enquire about quarrying on Lamma Island.  
(Source: Public Records Office, HKRS No. 58 1/15 (28))

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DISTRICT OFFICE,  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT,  
HONG KONG.

**No. S. 56.**—It is hereby notified that the following Sale by Public Auction of the right to quarry stone on Crown Land will be held at the Office of the District Officer, South, Post Office Buildings, Hong Kong, at 11 a.m., on Friday, the 27th day of February, 1931.

The Purchaser will be granted a permit to Quarry Granite for the term of ONE year from the 1st day of January, 1931, subject to the Special Conditions hereunder specified.

PARTICULARS OF THE QUARRIES.

Quarry No.	Locality.	Boundary Measurements.	Estimated Area in square feet.	Upset Annual Crown Rent.
Lamma No. 1.	Sok Kwü Wan.	As per plan deposited in the District Office of the Southern District of the New Territories, Hong Kong	50,000	\$ 23

SPECIAL CONDITIONS.

1. The area to be quarried is shown on a plan deposited in the Office of the District Officer, South, Post Office Buildings, Hong Kong.

2. The highest bidder shall immediately after the sale deposit in the Office of the District Officer, South, Hong Kong, a sum equivalent to three months' rent of such Quarry as security for the rent and the fulfilment of these conditions. He shall then be entitled to and shall sign, on demand, a permit from the Crown to quarry granite on the piece of ground comprised in such permit for ONE year from the 1st day of January, 1931, at the rental at which the same was purchased and payable quarterly in advance on the 1st day of each quarter: such permit being in the printed form deposited in the Office of the District Officer, South.

Fig. 6 Extract of Government Administrative Report 1932 regarding the auction of the right to quarry stone in Sok Kwu Wan (Source: Hong Kong Government, 1931).



## CHARCOAL BURNING IN HONG KONG

In his compendious work on China published in 1878 Archdeacon Gray of Canton wrote:

“As coal is not used for domestic purposes, charcoal is in great demand, and charcoal-burners are to be seen daily on the hills. The hillsides of Pun-yu, Fa-yune, and Tsung-fa — districts of Kwun Tung — are studded with their fires; and on the slopes of the Lew-Shan range of mountains in Kiang-Si, the charcoal burners constitute the population of almost all the villages. The houses of these landowners may be at once recognised by the vast piles of charcoal in front of them.”

Gray may be right in implying that charcoal was in great demand for domestic use at the time he wrote, but observation and enquiries in New Territories' villages show that wood has long been in general use at the kitchen stove and even in the portable earthenware stoves known as *fung lo* (風爐) in this area.

The observant traveller on the local hills can still find evidence of charcoal burning in the past, but first-hand information is now hard to come by. This note only deals with a few areas where I am familiar with the older local people.

On Lamma, for instance, an old person born in Yung Shue Long Village about 1887 recalls that there were a lot of charcoal burners on the island when she was a girl, mostly outsiders who employed the village women and girls to carry the charcoal from the kilns to the waiting junks or to barges towed by steamboats. These Lamma kilns were mostly situated in the more wooded south of the island, at the village localities of Mau Tat, Yung Shue Ha and Tung O. Too young to help, she followed her mother and her aunt there from their village in the northern part of Lamma. Along with other villagers, they were paid 2 cents (*sin*) a day for the work.

Fig. 7 Extract from the journal Charcoal Buring in Hong Kong. (Source: Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch Vol.11, 1971)

### 2.2.8 Education

Before any public school was set up on Lamma, there were only private schools that operated in village houses. The earliest private schools were probably the ones at Tai Peng Village and Tai Wan Village in the north, which began operation soon after 1912. According to Government Administrative Report 1922 there were two subsidized schools on Lamma that were at Tai Peng Tsuen and Lo So Shing then. 48 boys were enrolled in the former, and 17 in the latter. No girls were admitted to these schools (see Fig. 8).

The first public school was the Northern Lamma School opened in 1949, the same year when the private school at Tai Peng Village closed down. The increasing number of students led to the opening of new public schools at Tai Peng and Pak Kok in 1964. A public school was also set up at Mo Tat Village in the south in 1932. A Government subsidized school was established in 1950 at Lo So Sing.

Up till now no secondary school has ever been set up on the island and so all village kids have to get out of Lamma if they want to pursue further education after primary schooling.

### 2.2.9 Lamma Power Station

In the late 1970s, a new power station was planned at Po Lo Tsui (菠蘿咀) by the Hongkong Electric Company Limited to replace the one in Ap Lei Chau (鴨脷洲). The construction of power station drew a number of engineers and workers, many of whom were foreigners, from the town to Lamma Island. They worked and settled on the Island, making themselves the first influx of western population on the island that was formerly populated mainly by Chinese settlers. Stage I development of the Lamma Power Station was completed in 1984. Since then Lamma Island was much liven up. Its population increased from around 2,000 to 4,000 between 1991 and 1996<sup>4</sup>. Stage II development of the Station was completed in 1991, and Stage III in 1997.

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<sup>4</sup> 明報周刊《島居南丫》(2234期)



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Table IV.

Subsidised School in the New Territories, 1922.

No.	Address	Roll	Average Attendance	Total Subsidy Paid
1	Shui Lan Tin .....	83	65	\$ 660
2	Unlong, L.M.S. Girls' School.....	40 (Girls)	37	180
3	Saipan Wai, Un Long.....	36	32	180
4	Ping Shan (Wong Kat Wan) .....	26 (2 Gls.)	21	180
5	Kau Wa Kang .....	30 (1 Gl.)	26	150
6	Nam Yuen, Tsuen Wan .....	41	36	150
7	Tsing I Island .....	36	28	180
8	Cheung Chau (Lo Mo To) .....	53	48	180
9	Tai Hang, Taiipo .....	19	17	180
10	Lung Yeuk Tau, Fanling .....	21 (1 Gl.)	18	180
11	Mang Kung Uk, Saikung .....	53 (2 Gls.)	47	180
12	Pak Tam Chung, Saikung .....	36 (2 Gls.)	31	150
13	Wo Mie, Saikung.....	26 (4 Gls.)	24	180
14	Lo Ma Chau (Man Cheungting).....	24 (1 Gl.)	20	120
15	Un Kong .....	14	11	120
16	Sheung Tsuen .....	19	14	120
17	Tai Wai, Un Long .....	17	16	120
18	Ying Lung Wai, Un Long .....	19	16	120
19	Tsung Uk Tsuen, Ping Shan.....	17	13	120
20	Ma Wau .....	20 (2 Gls.)	18	120
21	Cheung Chau, L.M.S Girls' School .....	25 (Girls.)	20	120
22	Free School .....	37	33	120
23	Tai Ping Tsuen, Lamma Island.....	48	43	120
24	Taiipo Market Girls' School .....	33 (10 Boys)	27	120
25	Taiipo Market Boys .....	37	29	120
26	Tsung Uk Tsuen, Taiipo.....	21	17	120
27	Ping Long, Lam Tsuen .....	38	32	120
28	Taiopotau .....	13	12	120
29	Tai Wai, Sha Tin ..	28 (1 Gl.)	26	120
30	Fanling, (Hau Teng Hang) .....	25	17	120
31	Tsung Am Tong, Fanling .....	17	13	120
32	Sheung Shui (Lui Hee Tin).....	29	24	120
33	Ho Chung.....	29	22	120
34	Cheung Kwan Au .....	25	23	120
35	Yim Tin Tsai .....	20	17	120
36	Taiipo Tsai .....	19 (1 Gl.)	15	120
37	Chik Kang .....	16	15	120
38	Sha Kok Mie .....	30	25	120
39	Yau Tin, Au Tau.....	23	16	110
40	Lam Hau, Ping Shan .....	16	13	110
41	Tsz Tin, Castle Peak .....	18	14	110
42	Sau Hui, Tuen Mun .....	24 (9 Gls.)	18	110
43	Lo So Shing, Lamma Island .....	17	16	110
44	Ng Tung Chai, Lam Tsuen .....	20	19	110

Fig. 8 The above table listed out some of the subsidized schools in the New Territories, 1922. No. 23 Tai Ping Tsuen, and No. 43 were on Lamma. (Source: Hong Kong Government, 1922)

## 2.5 Timeline

- 4000-2200 B.C.** Excavations by Father Daniel J. Finn in 1930 showed that human activities were noted as early as in the Neolithic and Bronze Ages
- 618** During the *Tang* and *Song* dynasties, Lamma was designated by the Imperial Maritime Trade Commission as a stopover place for the foreign merchant ships before proceeding to Guangzhou
- 1661-1669** The Coastal Evacuation Order was enforced in the entire Hong Kong to stifle the supply of the Anti-Manchu troops in Taiwan. Population and economy of Lamma was significantly affected
- 1819-1866** Yung Shue Ha Village was established
- 1874** On 15<sup>th</sup> August the Lamma Island Incident took place that made British government consider the need to expand their territory in Hong Kong for better management and defence
- 1898** The Convention Between Great Britain and China Respecting an Extension of Hong Kong Territory 《中英展拓香港界址專條》 was signed on 9<sup>th</sup> June. The New Territories and 235 islands including Lamma Island were leased to Britain
- 1900** Proposal to include the hillsides and unoccupied crown land as a Quarry Farm 1901 was raised
- 1903** 22<sup>nd</sup> June was fixed as the date after which all persons in occupation of land on Lamma without authorized grant from the Crown would be deemed trespassers



## 2.5 Timeline (cont.)

- 1905** Survey result of the New Territories including Lamma was released. Ten Demarcation Districts (D.D.) with 4,693 holdings were recorded on the Island
- Two row of village houses at Lot no. 114-119, and 120-128, D. D. 9 were indicated on the survey map 1905
- 1911** According to Census of the Colony for 1911, on Lamma there were 826 inhabitants of whom 331 were males and 495 were females. Yung Shue Ha had 32 inhabitants: 16 males and 16 females
- 1931** On 27<sup>th</sup> February, the one-year permit to quarry granite at Quarry No. Lamma No.1 Sok Kwu Wan of an estimated area of 50,000 square feet was auctioned
- 1932-1933** Father Finn commenced archaeological excavation on Lamma Island that was also the pioneering archaeological research in Hong Kong
- 1930s** Pottery fragments were discovered in sea-sand that led to archaeological research of Lamma Island
- 1941** During the Second World War, the Japanese *Kamikaze* pilots set up at base on Lamma Island
- 1952** Romer's tree frog (*Liuixalus romeri*, 盧氏小樹蛙) was first discovered by the herpetologist Mr. J. D. Romer around Sok Kwu Wan. It is endemic to Hong Kong
- 1963** Because of the drought, some villagers became sailors to earn a living
- The back row of village houses were no longer indicated on the survey plan of 1963 implying their collapse

## 2.5 Timeline (cont.)

- 1966** Heavy rainstorms in Hong Kong led to serious landslides. On 12<sup>th</sup> June a stone house at Yung Shue Ha collapsed causing three deaths. In Yung Shue Wan, seven corpses were exposed at the site of an old leather factory that was said to be the battlefield of Chinese Northern Navy (北洋水師) and pirates in early 19<sup>th</sup> century
- 1968** Mo Tat Wan Site of Archaeological Interest was first recorded. It was investigated by the Antiquities and Monuments Office and the Hong Kong Archaeological Society in 1970s and 1980s
- 1969** Aquaculture started to be developed by fishermen on Lamma
- 1970s** Bronze Age settlement was unearthed at Sham Wan, one of the five most important archaeological sites in Hong Kong
- 1978** Rock extraction commenced at the quarry area at the northern coast of Sok Kwu Wan
- Excavation report on Sham Wan Site of Archaeological Interest regarding the investigation between 1971 and 1977 was published. Stone tools, pottery shards of periods including Neolithic period, Bronze Age, Qin, Han Dynasties etc.
- 1984** Lamma Power Station (南丫發電廠), a coal-fired power station in Po Lo Tsui built by Hongkong Electric started operation. It is signified by the three chimneys, nicknamed *three incense sticks* (三支香)
- 1990s** Hiking trail was established



## 2.5 Timeline (cont.)

1995	Quarrying operation at Sok Kwu Wan ceased and rehabilitation programme commenced. The site was subsequently named as Ex-Lamma Quarry Area (ELQ)
1997	Hong Kong was handed over to the People's Republic of China on 1 <sup>st</sup> July  Lamma Power Station was in full service
1997-1998	Field investigation was conducted at Tung O Site of Archaeological Interest where cultural remains including kiln debris, coarse pottery shards, and celadon shreds were yield
1999	Shum Wan Restricted Area that covers the sandy beach and the nearby shallow water has been zoned a Site of Special Scientific Interest since June as it is a breeding site for Green Sea Turtles
2002	The Government issued the <i>Planning and Development Study on Hong Kong Island South and Lamma Island</i>
2006	<i>Lamma Winds</i> , the first commercial-scale wind turbine in Hong Kong began operation on 23 <sup>rd</sup> February
2008	Construction of sewage disposal system began
2011	Planning application for The Baroque on Lamma proposing a comprehensive development of a marina, a resort hotel, residential units etc. was made to Town Planning Board
2012	Seven containers of polypropylene plastic pellets were lost from the cargo ship <i>Yong Xin Jie 1</i> when it ran into Typhoon Vicente on 23 <sup>rd</sup> -24 <sup>th</sup> July causing the spill incident. Clean-up campaign took place at Tung O

## **2.5 Timeline (cont.)**

### **2012 (cont.)**

In the evening of 1<sup>st</sup> October, National Day of the People's Republic of China ferry collision at the water near Yung Shue Wan resulted in 39 deaths and 92 injuries

In December Planning Department released the options for a housing project at ELQ with an estimated population that varies from 2,800 to 7,000 for public engagement. ELQ is comprised of 20 hectares of platform area, 1 kilometre of shoreline and a man-made lake. The proposal hopes to provide low to medium density housing, and tourism infrastructure

### **2014**

Estimated completion of the 0.4 hectare land reclamation at Yung Shue Wan for man-made beach, walking trail, emergency exit and commercial facilities etc.