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## Ancient village awaits modern embrace

By CAITLIN WONG

WHEN the last bus from Tung Chung to Silvermine Bay pulled out at 7.30 last night there was only one passenger on board.

As it ran along the only road that links the ancient village with the rest of Lantau Island the bus left behind about 2,000 villagers, most of them farmers and fishermen. There are few young people, most of them having had to leave to find work.

By early next century, that village will be a modern city with a 150,000 population.

In the place of shanty huts and derelict stone houses will rise skyscrapers and shopping malls, although conser-

vationists are likely to fight to preserve a fort built in 1817, which still has a row of cannons keeping vigil over the Pearl River.

Tung Chung rural committee chairman, Mr Chong Chu-choi, yesterday welcomed the plan.

"The land is all derelict and the aged are left with no means of living, except for fishing. So I hope the airport will bring prosperity to us," he said.

However, fishermen living off fish farms in the area are concerned that the colossal reclamation involved in the project will destroy their fishing grounds.

They say they are too old to start looking for new jobs.

Mr Lo Shing, 57, is the third generation of his family to live and fish in Tung Chung.

He could only shrug his shoulders helplessly yesterday when asked about his feelings on the project.

"What can I do? I can have no say," he said.

"All that I'm concerned with is we'll be given a place to live and have our future guaranteed."

Mr Ng Chung-kei, 37, has more at stake. He owns a fish farm and operates a ferry service between Tung Chung and Tuen Mun.

"I've invested a lot of money in my business and I hope my future will be guaranteed," he said.