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Subcommittee on West Kowloon Cultural District Development

**Summary of views of deputations on town planning issues
expressed to the Subcommittee after the publication of the
Recommendation Report of the Consultative Committee**

I. Planning principles	
<i>Designing Hong Kong Harbour District</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is important that the district is planned first and foremost as an integral part of the Kowloon area -- and not as a stand alone complex.• The district is an important waterfront and should be planned according to the Harbour Planning Principles.• Developing the urban plan for the whole district (not just the venues) is a responsibility above and beyond, and quite different from, the development and management of the arts and cultural venue complex.• Established planning processes and institutions should be followed.• The plans should be reflected in amendments to the South West Kowloon Outline Zoning Plan and be subject to the approval by the Town Planning Board under section 12 of the Town Planning Ordinance. WKCD should participate in this process as the venue developer.
<i>The Fringe Club</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The planning and design of WKCD and its buildings should blend well with the harbour. The organization suggests that WKCD should be accessible via road and sea, and it is important that WKCD should be visible from the harbour.
<i>The Hong Kong Institute of Architects</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To integrate with the surrounding urban fabric, it is essential that a "Greater WKCD" could function seamlessly. The Government has to partner with WKCD to ensure the connectivity channels for pedestrians, traffic, views, sea breezes, etc., and the design, planning, development and functions of adjacent

I. Planning principles	
	<p>land parcels and waterfront on both sides of WKCD boundary are compatible, well integrated and mutually supporting each other. These requirements should all be reflected in a visionary 3-dimensional urban design master plan for a socially and environmentally sustainable "Greater WKCD".</p>
<p><i>Spring-Time Stage</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organization disagrees that there should not be commercial and residential developments in WKCD. Some existing arts and cultural venues lack pedestrian flow and are segregated from ancillary facilities such as dining facilities, and thus become unattractive as a performance venue. • Overseas experience demonstrates that cultural and museum facilities can be well-integrated with commercial, office, hotel, dining and residential developments. The concept of a "cinema street" where various facilities are available should be seriously considered in planning WKCD so as to attract people to the area.
<p><i>Habitus</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WKCD is positioned as a luxurious commercial and residential district. The planning of WKCD has not taken into consideration the integration with neighbouring districts and the need to facilitate residents of old districts in using the cultural facilities. This is non-conducive to the development of community-based arts and culture. • WKCD can incorporate shops selling metal ware and stationery found in old districts. These shops, often visited by artists, will create job opportunities and facilitate social integration. Culture should be diversified and fixating on ideas like Broadway and West End will not bring any merits.
<p><i>The People's Panel on West Kowloon</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The planning for WKCD should be just. The planning should cover the 330 hectares rather than just the 40-hectare WKCD project site. Facilities that have been promised for the old districts should be realized through the planning of WKCD. There must be sufficient connectivity between WKCD and the neighbouring old districts and there should be interactions between WKCD and the 18 districts in Hong Kong. • The planning for WKCD should be sustainable. There

I. Planning principles	
	<p>should be good balance among density, space and economic values.</p>
<i>Hong Kong Arts Festival Society Ltd.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The interests of entertainment, tourism and business sectors are not always regarded as being aligned with those of the arts community. However, in the development of WKCD, these do come together in a shared interest in enhancing Hong Kong as a whole.
<i>The Hong Kong Institute of Architects</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organization is highly appreciative of the Government's decision to scrap the developer-led mode for the WKCD project. • WKCD should adopt a sustainable and innovative design. Appropriate policies and requirements should be included in the design, planning and development briefs. • To generate creative design and planning ideas, the organization strongly advocates for open design competitions for the WKCD master plan and major development packages, not limited to just the 3 icon facilities.
<i>The Democratic Party</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The planning of WKCD should be led by the community, executed by professionals and coordinated by the Government.
<i>Association of Engineering Professionals in Society</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organization agrees to a phased development of arts and cultural facilities and the provision of land reserve for their future growth. Cultural and non-cultural facilities should be integrated during the phased development to attract people, generate synergy and increase income so that WKCD can be sustainable. • There should be a landmark building to establish the representativeness of WKCD in arts and culture and boost tourism and economic benefits. • Infrastructure development in WKCD should comply with the principle of sustainable development and strive to reduce the effects on the environment.
<i>Hong Kong Construction Association</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WKCD will draw huge crowds at times and the transportation and pedestrian network will have to be carefully worked out under a master plan. The planning, layout and overall aesthetic consideration of iconic structures will be of paramount importance.

I. Planning principles	
<i>Ms HO Loy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As the West Kowloon Reclamation area was originally planned to provide more open space for residents living in the old districts in West Kowloon, the WKCD project should address their needs and integrate with the neighbouring districts.

II. Connectivity with other districts	
<i>Hong Kong Christian Institute</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be good road and transport connectivity with neighbouring districts to ensure easy accessibility for all. The facilities in WKCD should be accessible to all.
<i>Mr CHAN Kin-shing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be good connectivity with neighbouring old districts, in particular Tsim Sha Tsui and Jordan, and various kinds of pedestrian access facilities and public transport facilities, including ferries, should be available.
<i>Local Action/Community Cultural Concern</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The old and new areas should be connected so that residents can easily access WKCD. However, the existing WKCD site is surrounded by expensive property developments and separated from the old areas by massive roads. There should be complete integration with neighbouring areas in planning WKCD.
<i>Professional Property Services Limited</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is concern over the connectivity and the integration of WKCD with the rest of Hong Kong. People should enjoy easy access to the waterfront and to the facilities on it. Accessibility and the movement of large numbers of people should not be underestimated.
<i>The Hong Kong Institute of Architects</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WKCD is an integral part of our city and should be treated as so. Connectivity and interactions with urban areas near and far will bring enhancements and synergies benefiting the entire city. Its harbourfront presence is expected to add charm and vitality to our harbour and urban scenes.
<i>Professional Commons</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct and easy connections between WKCD and its less affluent neighbouring areas will encourage cultural diversity and enhance the usage of facilities. Innovative and environmentally friendly means of access should be incorporated in the Master Layout Plans.
<i>Ms HO Loy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The transport links between WKR and Hong Kong Island West should be planned.
<i>Zonta Club of Hong Kong</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The thoroughfares leading to the WKCD vicinities will need to be reviewed to cater for possible substantial increase of road traffic.

II. Connectivity with other districts	
香港小童群益會長沙灣中心	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transport facilities should be improved to increase the accessibility of WKCD from neighbouring districts.

III. Development parameters and development mix	
<i>Professional Commons</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed gross floor areas for the Core Arts and Cultural Facilities and residential developments in WKCD will likely result in less vibrant daytime activities and lower financial returns for the retail/dining/entertainment facilities. The currently proposed development mix may not be the most conducive to the vibrancy of WKCD. • Private residential development can be reduced by one-third and unnecessary communal facilities, for example, fire service complex, can be removed. By so doing, 14 000 square meters of open space can be released. A "creativity jam" with an area of 5 000 square meters can also be provided.
<i>Community Cultural Concern People's Democracy Foundation 基層發展中心</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government should designate land for constructing public rental housing when planning for WKCD so as to allow grass-roots citizens to establish a grass-roots community in that district. • In order to avoid segregation of WKCD by property developments and to ensure that the general public can enjoy the facilities in WKCD, the Government should stop land sale in WKCD. The proposed office premises, luxury residential flats and hotel developments in WKCD should be rented out through long-term leases.
<i>Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The institute does not have strong views on the proposed plot ratio and building height limits for WKCD. On the 20% Gross Floor Area (GFA) limit for residential developments in WKCD, the institute considers that given that land resources are precious in Hong Kong, the institute wonders whether the Government has conducted any study on the best development mix for the project. • As the Government would propose to incorporate development parameters into the relevant Outline Zoning Plan very soon, the Government should seriously reconsider the optimum development mix and development parameters at this stage for the overall benefit of the public.
<i>The Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Retail/Dining/Entertainment space to be designated in WKCD should be genuinely ancillary and limited to servicing the patrons of the venues within WKCD. All other land for residential, office and hotel developments in WKCD should be disposed of in the open market under

III. Development parameters and development mix	
	Government's normal land sale mechanism.
<i>Hong Kong Arts Centre</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With reference to the area of the retail, dining and entertainment (RDE) facilities in the Hong Kong Arts Centre at the ratio of 1:1 to the area of the performing venues, the organization considers that the ratio of 16% of the total GFA for RDE facilities against 36% of the total GFA for arts and cultural facilities in WKCD is on the low side and suggests to increase GFA for RDE facilities to relieve the pressure on land sale.
<i>Mr CHAN Kin-shing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential developments are unnecessary in WKCD. The gross floor area for residential developments can be redeployed for hotel, commercial, office and exhibition venue developments.
<i>Local Action/ Community Cultural Concern</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reclaimed land in West Kowloon should be used for reducing the population density and providing more open space for the neighbouring areas. There should not be any luxury residential developments and large scale commercial developments. A WKCD park should be constructed instead.
<i>Hong Kong Institute of Real Estate Administrators</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed plot ratio of 1.81 is reasonable to keep developments along the Victoria Harbour at a lower density. • The Government can consider appropriately raising the plot ratio for sites at fringe areas of WKCD to attract developers to acquire sites with higher returns to compensate for the costs of developing lower density developments in WKCD. • The proposed height limit of 50 to 100 mPD is reasonable to maintain a varying height profile, balanced distribution and gradation of the developments at the harbourfront. • In developing the Master Layout Plan, the Government should be innovative in areas like zoning; calculation and exemption of gross floor area and site coverage; and distribution, transfer and conversion of plot ratio and site coverage. The traditional method of first zoning the plots and then formulating lease conditions may not meet the requirements of the master planning. • There should be a heavy-weight landmark in WKCD.

III. Development parameters and development mix	
<i>The Hong Kong Institute of Architects</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is important for the Government to define all the external conditions as early as possible, so that WKCD can be planned and designed in response to these external conditions.• Rigid and unsympathetic building laws cause severe detriments to creative ideas. It is essential to devise a mechanism to encourage the adoption and realization of creative design.
<i>Association of Engineering Professionals in Society</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The organization has no objection on the 20% gross floor area limit for residential developments and the maximum plot ratio of 1.81. However, there should be flexibility in building height and layout. The design should take into consideration of wind direction to avoid creating the wall effect.• WKCD should cater for the needs of the general public by providing waterfront promenades, parks, meadows and open-air cultural piazzas.

IV. Open space	
<i>Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The institute notes that out of the 23 hectares of open space in WKCD, only 15 hectares would be at the ground level. The ground-level open space represents some 27% of entire site area of WKCD. The institute considers that this percentage is on the low side. • The institute agrees that the residential, hotel and office development sites should be disposed of by the Government under the normal land sale mechanism.
<i>Hong Kong Arts Centre</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While appreciating that there will be more than 20 hectares of public open space in WKCD, the organization hopes that the Government will not plan the open space in isolation, but would give attention to the interaction among different spaces, people and the natural environment. The existing policy on public space is more concerned about regulating people's behaviour in public space rather than offering free living space for the public. If quality public space is to be provided in WKCD, research relating to space and activities has to be conducted and spatial planning should take the results of the research into consideration. An expert group should be formed to discuss and study public space planning for WKCD. • There are insufficient details on the connection between the public space in WKCD and adjoining areas and the modes of connection. WKCD should not be segregated and there should be good pedestrian and vehicular connection with adjoining areas.
<i>The Democratic Party</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be more public space on the ground for leisure activities.
<i>Hong Kong Construction Association</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a strong desire for a free and accessible open space that is to be made available to the citizens and visitors of Hong Kong.
<i>Professional Commons</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of open space should not rely on the private sector. Options should be explored to allow for more quality public open space which should not be dispersed and be provided at ground level.
<i>Zonta Club of Hong Kong</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WKCD should incorporate as much parkland as possible to provide green space for people to go and relax and admire the natural beauty of the harbour.

IV. Open space	
<i>Action Group on Protection of the West Kowloon Culture District</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The organization is concerned that not enough open space would be provided in WKCD and whether the open space would be provided at ground level for easy access by the residents in the neighbouring districts.
香港小童群益會長沙灣中心	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The provision of open space should cater for the needs of different social strata. More open space instead of office and residential developments should be provided.

V. Compatibility between cultural facilities and residential/office/hotel developments	
<i>Professional Property Services Limited</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst the residential, office and hotel sites will be disposed of by Government in the usual way, the developments on these sites should be compatible with the overall design and ambiance of WKCD. As WKCDA will be responsible for the master plan but will they have any control over the developments on them? If not, how will this necessary compatibility be safeguarded?
<i>The Democratic Party</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention should be given to the clustering effect of cultural, leisure, commercial and residential districts; and integrated development of cultural and non-cultural projects.
<i>The Hong Kong Institute of Architects</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organization takes a strong view that residential and commercial developments in WKCD should contribute meaningfully to the promotion of arts and culture. This should be a key criterion in scheme selection. • An urban design led visionary master plan of much wider perspectives and greater depths is essential. To ensure compatibility with the overall WKCD goals, master development plans for all individual packages should be scrutinized.
<i>Hong Kong Institute of Real Estate Administrators</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developers should join hands and place the overall interests of the WKCD project above individual interests by integrating cultural and non-cultural facilities to create a synergy effect. A successful WKCD as a whole will help raise the cost recovery rate of individual facilities.
<i>Hong Kong Institute of Planners</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of cultural facilities with residential and commercial developments and the need to manage the vehicular and pedestrian traffic generated from these developments present a big challenge for the planning of the district.
<i>Museum of Site</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organization has doubts on whether cultural projects and residential and commercial activities can simply be intermingled under one umbrella.

VI. Other comments	
<i>The Lion Rock Institute</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The best use of the land should be decided by the community. Selling the land in West Kowloon and allowing the community to develop commerce and industry that the community consider appropriate will be most beneficial for Hong Kong.
<i>Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The institute agrees that the residential, hotel and office development sites should be disposed of by the Government under the normal land sale mechanism.
<i>The Hong Kong Institute of Architects</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organization supports setting up the Planning Office to commence early preparatory work. Relevant professionals in planning, design, and so on should be deployed to the Planning Office.
<i>The Ink Society Ltd</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organization supports the Administration's decision to take the commercial land component out of the purview of WKCD to address concern that developers would be involved in the operation of arts and cultural facilities. Under this arrangement, WKCD could focus on the arts and cultural aspects.
<i>Zuni Icosahedron</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given that the Planning Office would be responsible for the important tasks to co-ordinate efforts in preparing for the establishment of WKCD and to undertake initial tasks such as those relating to the preparation of the outline zoning plan, the Government should brief and consult LegCo on the details of the Planning Office, including the scope of responsibilities and functions, staff expertise, monitoring system and the concrete operation timetable.
<i>Designing Hong Kong Harbour District</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communal and utilities facilities in the whole district should be zoned as such and kept separate from the venue complex (managed by WKCD) and the various commercial sites. These facilities should be managed by the respective departments and owners and be kept free from additional rules and regulations otherwise imposed by WKCD.
<i>Action Group on Protection of the West Kowloon Culture District</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organization is concerned that the iconic buildings in WKCD would only be "screen-type" buildings without unique characters.