

**Consultative Committee on the  
Core Arts and Cultural Facilities of the  
West Kowloon Cultural District**

**Progress Report of the Museums Advisory Group**

**Purpose**

This paper gives a progress report on the work of the Museums Advisory Group (MAG) since its establishment on 6 April 2006 under the Consultative Committee on the Core Arts and Cultural Facilities of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) and the proposed way forward.

**Advice Sought**

2. Members are invited to
  - (a) note the work done by MAG over the past 2 months since its first meeting on 24 April 2006 ( paragraphs 3 to 5);
  - (b) note some general direction of the views discussed/received so far on the need for museums facilities in WKCD ( paragraphs 6 to 7); and

- (c) discuss the proposed way forward for the coming months (paragraphs 8 to 11).

## **Background**

3. At the first MAG meeting held on 24 April 2006, Members endorsed the proposed work plan of holding open consultative forums and focus group meetings to gauge views on the museum facilities and art exhibition centre in WKCD in May 2006. Members also agreed to take into account overseas experience as far as practicable. MAG would then proceed to study the views collected with a view to coming up with recommendations to the Consultative Committee (CC) for endorsement and subsequently to the Financial Matters Advisory Group for considering the financial implications. In view of the sequential nature of work among CC and its three Advisory Groups (AG), the MAG's work plan has to dovetail with the other two AGs. The MAG aims to complete its task in August 2006.

4. Based on the existing arts and cultural policy (as outlined in Information Paper MAG/02/2006) and having regard to the current museum provision in Hong Kong (Information Paper MAG/03/2006), MAG, guided by its terms of reference, focuses its work on the following: -

- the need for the four museums proposed in the WKCD and the preferred themes of these museums<sup>(Note)</sup>;
- the need to include museums with other themes;
- following confirmation of the themes, the scale and major requirements of each museum as far as practicable; and
- the need for and major specifications of the Art Exhibition Centre.

The previous MAG meetings, informal discussions, focus group meetings, briefings by overseas experts and consultative forums have given rich food for thought in re-examining the original requirements as defined in the IFP.

### **Work Done Since its Establishment**

5. MAG held 10 meetings in the past two months, including two regular meetings, one focus group meeting, two open

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<sup>(Note)</sup> The Invitation for Proposals (IFP) only requires a Museum Cluster comprising four museums of different themes, with at least 75,000 square metres Net Operating Floor Area. The four “preferred museum themes” are:

- Museum of Modern Art
- Museum of Ink
- Museum of Design
- Museum of Moving Image

These themes are not Mandatory Requirement in the IFP.

consultative forums, two briefings by overseas experts and three presentation hearings. The regular meetings aimed to form an overall framework to discuss the themes and the operation mode of MAG. The focus group meeting aimed to have a frank exchange of views with curators in the government and non-government sectors in Hong Kong, particularly on the interface between the proposed new facilities in WKCD and existing facilities. Open consultation forums aimed to gauge views from different sectors and the general public. Some organizations that had submitted written submissions during the consultation period from 17 May 2006 to 16 June 2006 had requested for a face-to-face presentations to MAG. Presentation hearings had been conducted to meet them. The list of regular meetings, focus group meeting, special meetings, open consultative forums, briefings by overseas experts and presentation hearings held by MAG from April to July is at **Annex A**.

### **Some General Direction of the Views Received/Discussed so far**

6. Through discussions at meetings, briefings and open consultative forums referred in paragraph 5 above, it appears that, under a preliminary analysis, some general directions in respect of the museums facilities in WKCD have emerged. They are summarized as follows -

- (a) WKCD should be developed into an integrated world-class arts and cultural, entertainment and tourism district. It should be a district with its facilities suitably clustered together to attract people flow all day, hence creating synergy and vibrancy;
- (b) both the hardware and software of WKCD should be of high standard to commensurate with the goal of developing WKCD into a world-class arts and cultural, entertainment and tourism district;
- (c) the museum facilities in WKCD should aim to meet the needs of the long-term development of arts and culture in Hong Kong and should not simply be considered as building a world-class building without world-class content. Thus, flexibility should be allowed in the facilities for further development or changes in future;
- (d) not only is it necessary to consider from the tourism perspective when examining the need for the museum facilities, but also it is equally important to develop WKCD into an attraction for local people;
- (e) the museum facilities and other arts and cultural facilities should factor in the element of nurturing the emerging artists and developing audience;

- (f) for certain themes that are forward-looking and dealing with the “present” and “future”, “Centres” or “Institutions” should be considered as alternate names to “Museums”;
- (g) it is generally agreed that a popular culture centre/institution is worth a place in WKCD with film as the focal point plus moving image and technology to illustrate Hong Kong’s popular culture such as songs, television and radio programmes; and to inspire the visitors their own creativity;
- (h) it appears that there is a general consensus that Hong Kong has met certain key criteria in developing an ink art museum in terms of availability of world-class collection and expertise in curatorship. However, there are diverse views on whether ink art should be part of a contemporary/modern art museum; and
- (i) the museum facilities should be accompanied by a series of shops and restaurants for revenue-generating purposes, and for attracting people traffic.

7. There is a view that the Government should develop a comprehensive cultural policy and vision before we decide on what facilities are most appropriate for WKCD. It was suggested that detailed studies, analyses and debates should be conducted

and international arts and cultural institutions should be invited to express their views. On the other hand, many respondents to MAG's consultative forums, focus group meeting and presentation hearings expressed their wish that WKCD project should proceed as soon as possible, as Hong Kong is losing its comparative advantage to neighboring countries in developing world-class museums and other arts and cultural facilities in certain themes such as ink art. They are of the views that the hardware and software of arts and culture in WKCD are complementary and should be developed together as soon as practicable.

### **Proposed Way Forward**

8. Towards the end of the one-month consultation period, the Secretariat had received over 30 written submissions. Moreover, we had sought advice from members of the Public Affairs Forum (an online forum to canvass views on major public issues, operated by HAB). Over 60 responses were received. The Secretariat would prepare an analysis and prepare a paper summarizing the gist of these comments for MAG to consider. MAG will hold a regular meeting on 4 July 2006 to analyse the findings. The need for an art exhibition centre will be debated in August. The general directions of the views discussed at MAG meetings and received through consultative forums and the written submissions will be taken into consideration in preparing the papers.

9. In view of the general direction emerging that traditional museums might not be the optimum mode of operation for the museum facilities in WKCD, MAG has decided to make overseas reference as far as practicable. In this connection, the Secretariat has arranged three more briefings by overseas experts to be held in July.

10. In addition, an overseas visit is being arranged to facilitate MAG Members to have a first-hand experience in visiting and to have a direct exchange with the persons-in-charge of the renowned museums in the world. In view of the budget constraints, MAG convenor and members agreed that all expenses related to the visit such as air tickets and hotel accommodation will be borne by members themselves.

11. After internal debate and making reference to relevant overseas experience, MAG will report to CC in August its recommendations on issues specified in the terms of reference.

**Secretariat, Museums Advisory Group**

**June 2006**

**List of Regular Meetings, Focus Group Meetings, Open Consultative Forums, Briefings by Overseas Experts and Presentation Hearings held by Museums Advisory Group (MAG) from April to July 2006**

**MAG Regular Meeting**

1 <sup>st</sup> Meeting	Monday, 24 April 2006
2 <sup>nd</sup> Meeting	Monday, 15 May 2006
3 <sup>rd</sup> Meeting*	Tuesday, 4 July 2006

**Focus Group Meeting**

- Meeting with Curators in government and non-government sectors on 23 May 2006

**Open Consultative Forums**

- 1<sup>st</sup> session at Lecture Hall, Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre, Kowloon Park, Kowloon on 29 May 2006
- 2<sup>nd</sup> session at Fringe Club Theatre, Ground Floor, Hong Kong Fringe Club, 2 Lower Albert Road on 30 May 2006

**Briefings by Overseas Experts**

- 1<sup>st</sup> briefing by Dr David Elliott, Director, Mori Art Museum in Tokyo on 11 May 2006
- 2<sup>nd</sup> briefing by Dr Michael Knight, Deputy Director for Strategic Programmes and Partnerships and Senior Curator of Chinese Art, Asian Art Museum in San Francisco on 9 June 2006
- 3<sup>rd</sup> briefing\* by Mr Tony Sweeney, Director/Chief Executive Offer, Australian Centre for Moving Image on 10 July 2006
- 4<sup>th</sup> briefing\* by Ms Yuko Hasegawa, Chief Curator, Museum of Contemporary Art in Tokyo who was the former Chief Curator of the 21 century Museum of Contemporary Art in Kanazawa on 11 July 2006

- 5<sup>th</sup> briefing\* by Ms Kate Brennan, Chief Executive Officer, Federation Square in Melbourne on 11 July 2006

### **Presentation Hearings**

- The Ink Society on the ink art museum theme on 6 June 2006
- The Hong Kong International Film Festival on the moving image museum theme, Hong Kong Federation of Design Associations on the design museum theme, Para-site Art Space and Hong Kong International Association of Art Critics on the modern and contemporary art museum theme on 13 June 2006
- Individual artists on the modern and contemporary art museum theme on 21 June 2006

\*meeting/briefings not yet held