

Wan Chai Development Phase II Review – Harbour-front Enhancement Review – Wan Chai, Causeway Bay and Adjoining Areas: Outcome of Public Engagement at the Envisioning Stage

1. Reference is made to a letter from the Legislative Council dated 30th May 2006 inviting the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors (HKIS) to express its views on the subject matter.

2. As a matter of principle, HKIS takes a holistic approach towards the planning and development of the Wan Chai, Causeway Bay and Adjoining Areas, taking into account social, economic, transport, land-use planning and environmental considerations. HKIS is agreeable to the following derived sustainability principles for the subsequent evaluation of Concept Plans to be developed in the Realization Stage:
 - (a) Create a vibrant and attractive waterfront that is continuous and accessible for all;
 - (b) Ensure pedestrian connectivity between the hinterland and the waterfront;
 - (c) Improve traffic conditions;
 - (d) Ensure land and marine use compatibility;
 - (e) Enhance identity by conserving natural and cultural heritage;
 - (f) Enhance environmental quality along the waterfront; and
 - (g) Enhance visual amenity, landscape and quality of space.

3. It is clear from various transport studies¹ that the existing east-west corridor (i.e. along the Connaught Road Central/Harcourt Road/Gloucester Road) serving the central business district is already operating beyond its maximum capacity. HKIS is thus agreeable to the proposed Central - Wan Chai Bypass which being built in the form of an underground tunnel will be essential as a measure to relieve traffic congestion along the aforesaid east-west corridor.

¹ These include the Third Comprehensive Transport Study and the Report of the Expert Panel on Sustainable Transport Planning and Central – Wan Chai Bypass.

4. It is noted that the Government has spent substantial efforts in studying alternative alignments of the proposed trunk road to ensure compliance with the Court of Final Appeal decision relating to reclamation. HKIS would like to point out that this, however, is more than a trunk road project; rather, it should aim at enhancing the harbour-front areas. As the relevant capital cost is more than 20 billion dollars, the Government should ensure that the vision of the Harbour would become an attractive, vibrant, accessible and sustainable world-class asset. In this regard, how the proposed trunk road integrates with the land-use planning and design of harbour-front areas is a critical issue that the Government should pay particular attention.

5. HKIS will be very pleased to give its further comments on the captioned subject during the Realization Stage and Detailed Planning Stage.

The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors

Submitted for the LegCo Meeting on 26 June 2006