

**For information
on 23 January 2007**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
PANEL ON PLANNING, LANDS AND WORKS**

**Arrangements relating to the Reconstruction of Old Star Ferry Clock
Tower and Relocation of Queen's Pier in Central**

Purpose

This paper informs Members of the arrangements that are under consideration for the reconstruction of the old Star Ferry clock tower and relocation of the retainable components of the Queen's Pier.

Workflow of Major Public Works Projects

2. We understand the concern of the public over the arrangements relating to the old Central Star Ferry clock tower and the Queen's Pier. As the arrangements related to the old Central Star Ferry clock tower and the Queen's Pier are part of the Central Reclamation Phase III (CRIII) project, we have to explain clearly the general arrangements for such major public works projects in order to let the public understand the reasons behind the arrangements relating to the old Central Star Ferry Pier and the Queen's Pier.

3. Hong Kong is a society which respects the rule of law and due process to ensure that the interests of individuals and the community at large are adequately protected. Since major public works projects usually involve extensive development of land and huge public funds, it normally takes years from the planning to the implementation stages. During the process, relevant statutory procedures and public consultation have to be gone through in accordance with the legal requirements and Government administrative guidelines. The Administration will need to seek comments from the professionals, the affected parties as well as the community through various channels and to incorporate the views received in revising and perfecting the recommendations proposed. Hong Kong is a free and diverse city, and it is not surprising that consensus views could not be reached. The most important point is that,

during the consultation process, the Administration would thoroughly consider the views received and ultimately arrive at a decision that would best accord with the public interests in accordance with the law. Thereafter, the project has to be implemented in full speed in accordance with the finalized timetable.

Central Reclamation Phase III Project

4. The CRIII project is one of the aforesaid major public works projects. The main objective of CRIII is to provide land for essential transport infrastructure (including Central-Wan Chai Bypass, Road P2 network and the Airport Railway Extended Overrun Tunnel) and the reprovisioning of the affected waterfront facilities. The old Star Ferry Pier and the Queen's Pier are affected by these works and the arrangements for the new Star Ferry Pier and the Queen's Pier had been made clear during the consultation stage and were discussed at the Legislative Council (LegCo), the Town Planning Board (TPB), as well as the District Council. The Government has made explicit pledges in response to Members' request. The preservation of the "Queen's Pier" plaques is one of the examples.

5. In 1998, the TPB prepared and published the Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) covering the CRIII area, and consulted the public and considered the objections in accordance with the law. Thereafter, to meet public objections, the TPB reduced the reclamation extent proposed in the OZP from the originally planned 38 hectares to 23 hectares and amended the original land use proposals substantially. The proposed amendments to the OZP were gazetted in July 1999 and the TPB has proposed further amendments to partially meet a further objection. The amended OZP was approved by the Chief Executive in Council in February 2000.

6. During the preparation of this OZP, the TPB considered an objection relating to the relocation of the Star Ferry Pier. The TPB recognized the historical significance and importance of the "Star Ferry" icon as one of the landmarks and major tourist attractions, and agreed that its identity should be recreated in the new Central waterfront. In early 2002, the TPB noted the historical heritage approach proposed by the "Star" Ferry Company Limited when considering the proposed amendments to the OZP, including the reprovisioning arrangements for the Star Ferry Pier. The amendments to the OZP, which included amendments to allow reprovisioning of the Star Ferry Pier and the design concept reflecting the new clock tower icon, were subsequently exhibited

for public inspection in February 2002. The TPB received no objection during the OZP exhibition period. This OZP was approved by the Chief Executive in Council in December 2002 and became the current OZP.

7. The CRIII's reclamation and road works were authorized respectively under the Foreshore and Seabed (Reclamations) Ordinance and the Roads (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance in December 2001. The CRIII project is classified as a Designated Project under Schedule 2 of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Ordinance. Based on the endorsement by the Advisory Council on the Environment, the Director of Environmental Protection approved the CRIII EIA Report in August 2001 and issued an Environmental Permit for the project in March 2002.

8. The Administration reported and introduced the CRIII project to the LegCo Panel on Planning, Lands and Works in June 1999 and March 2002 respectively, including the arrangements for the Star Ferry Pier and the Queen's Pier at the meeting in March 2002. After the endorsement of the Public Works Sub-committee, the Finance Committee of the LegCo also approved funding for the detailed design and for the construction of CRIII project in April 2000 and June 2002, respectively.

9. The Court of Final Appeal (CFA), in handing down the judgment in January 2004 on the judicial review sought by the Society for Protection of the Harbour Limited, established that any reclamation in the Victoria Harbour needed to satisfy the "overriding public need" test. The Government immediately reviewed the CRIII project after the CFA judgment and found that the project fully met the "overriding public need" test laid down by the CFA. We submitted our report to the LegCo in June 2004, explaining in detail why and how the project met the "overriding public need".

10. During the period from 2000 to 2002, the Central and Western District Council and the Antiquities Advisory Board were briefed about the CRIII project, and the relocation arrangements for the Star Ferry Pier and the Queen's Pier, as well as the overall setting of the new Star Ferry Pier. Detailed information of these consultations was given in the paper submitted to the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works in September 2006 and elaborated in subsequent concerned Panel meetings on the issue. The information is not repeated in this paper.

11. The above shows that the Government has satisfied all the statutory requirements and consultation procedures before finalizing the

CRIII project. After receiving funding approval from the Finance Committee of LegCo, the contract was signed and the works were implemented in phases. At present, part of the reclamation works and the majority of the reprovisioned waterfront facilities have been completed. The whole project is expected to be completed in mid 2009. As over half of the project has been completed and the arrangements for the old Star Ferry Pier and the Queen's Pier are part of the entire project, we could not ignore the legal requirements, contractual commitments and consequences of breaching the contract and stop the project lightly.

Retaining the Components of Old Star Ferry Clock Tower and Queen's Pier

12. The Administration understands that the nostalgic feelings attached to the old Star Ferry clock tower and the Queen's Pier. We have utilized the advanced laser scanning technology to store 3D images of the Star Ferry Pier (including the clock tower) and the Queen's Pier and kept the plans. We have retained the clock faces, chimes and mechanical parts of the Star Ferry clock tower. We will identify a suitable location to reconstruct the clock tower and will also discuss with the Star Ferry Company on how to reassemble the chimes in the new clock tower.

13. For the Queen's Pier, in his Letter to Hong Kong on 23 December 2006, the Chief Executive has pledged that the Government will keep the retainable components of the Pier as far as practicable, and find a suitable place for relocation. Our professional departments are discussing with the professionals to consider the arrangements, with a view to salvaging the retainable components as far as practicable. Our initial thinking is to dismantle the metal wares and non-structural parts one by one carefully and keep them properly. The metal wares and non-structural parts include the bollards, balustrades, baluster columns, handrails, the Chinese and English "Queen's Pier" plaques, other directory signs, navigation lights, precast concrete landing steps, planters and concrete benches, etc. As regards the concrete roof slab and columns of the Queen's Pier, our professional departments will discuss with professionals to jointly consider the best way to salvage these structural elements.

Study on the Reconstruction of the Old Star Ferry Clock Tower and Relocation of the Queen's Pier

14. The design ideas and locations for the reconstruction of the old Star Ferry clock tower and the relocation of the retainable components of the Queen's Pier will be considered in the Central Reclamation Urban Design Study to be commenced by the Planning Department shortly. The Study will include public engagement activities to be held in April and August 2007, which will solicit views from the LegCo and the District Council, professional bodies, relevant stakeholders and the public. We will brief the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works on the results and recommendations of the Study, and seek funding approval of the Finance Committee of the LegCo for reconstructing the old Star Ferry clock tower and relocating the retainable components of the Queen's Pier.

15. The objective of Planning Department's Central Reclamation Urban Design Study is to refine the existing urban design framework for the Central harbourfront. Apart from formulating planning/design briefs for key development sites, the Study will also refine the existing urban design framework including the enhancement of the waterfront promenade and other public open spaces. The waterfront promenade included in the CRIII project is also a part of the Study. Our vision is to make use of the unique opportunity arising from the CRIII project to develop a vibrant waterfront promenade along the north shore of Hong Kong Island extending from the Central Business District to Wan Chai for easy access and enjoyment by the public.

**Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau
Civil Engineering and Development Department
Planning Department
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