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The Conservancy Association

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CA Submission to Legco Panel on Planning, Lands and Works Insitu Preservation of Queen's Pier

Background:

1. After the demolition of the clock tower of the old Star Ferry Pier, the Chief Executive, Mr. Donald Tsang admitted publicly that it was a wrong doing of the Government for not been able to tape the strong feeling of the public in preserving the clock tower. He then promised to preserve the Queen's Pier.
2. The Secretary of Planning and Lands, Mr. Michael Suen then promised to form a working group to work out ways to preserve the Queen's Pier at the current location at a Legislative Council meeting on 23 January 2007.
3. CA has been expressing very strong opinions in preserving both the Star Ferry Pier and the Queen's Pier intact. CA has submitted two conceptual technical proposals to preserve the two piers intact to the Legislative Council. Because of that, CA was invited to be a member of the working group led by the CEDD (Civil Engineering and Development Department).

CA views expressed in the working group

4. The working group met three times after the meeting of the Legislative Council on 23 January 2007. The first meeting was convened on 31 January 2007. The second and the third meeting were held on 19 and 23 March 2007. An informal meeting between CA and the Administration was held on 23 February 2007.
5. At all these meetings, the Administration did not put up any preservation proposal but simply offered counter arguments against proposals of CA and HKIA submitted at the Legislative Council on 23 January 2007. CA elaborated its proposal to allow the Administration to temporarily move the Queen's Pier to make way for the works and relocate it back to the original (current) location upon completion of reclamation and other engineering works. CA also expressed a strong view that the Administration has the responsibility to put up proposals to preserve the Queen's Pier intact.
6. CEDD maintained that it is not possible to preserve the Queen's Pier intact at

the current location because it would involve re-arranging all the planned infrastructures which may cause unpredictable delay and compensation. CA expressed the following views:

- If there was no change to the current planned alignments of P2 road, the drainage outfall and the airport railway overrun, CA appreciated the engineering difficulties of keeping the Queen's Pier at the current location during the construction works;
- CA was not convinced that re-gazetting would cause un-surmountable problem;
- In case the Administration insisted to move the Queen's Pier to make way for the construction work, CA requested the Administration (a) to preserve the structure of the Queen's Pier as much as possible; (b) to appoint a Government architect who has proven experience in building preservation to take the lead in preserving the Queen's Pier; a preservation plan should be produced; (c) the pier should be temporarily placed at a location as close to the current location as possible and the strengthening work of the pier should be easily seen by the public; (d) to produce perspective drawings and models to consult the public the future look of the pier with the new reclamation setting; (e) to delete the planned roads D6 that cut across the Edinburgh Place so that the entire square linking Edinburgh Place, City Hall Upper Block and Lower Block can be enjoyed by the people.

CA's proposal: technically feasible

- 7. It is clear that CA's proposal of in-situ reinstatement of QP is technically feasible. It involves temporarily rolling away QP; re-gazetting of P2 and reinstatement of the pier; and a maximum cost of HK\$30M and one and a half year to handle re-gazetting and reclamation programme.**
8. In responding to CA's proposal, CEDD emphasizes that the current QP structure is vulnerable and easily damaged but admitted that there are successful cases elsewhere to move existing building structure. CEDD also argues that there is a lack of space in the vicinity for storage of the QP structure. As such, the proposal will have great cost (HK\$30M) and programme implications (one and a half year). CA reckons that the amount of time and cost is well justified.
9. Another argument CEDD relies on is the conflict of CA's proposal with the Extended Overrun Tunnel (EOT). If CA's proposal were to pursue, it will require advance construction of the section of EOT underneath QP; thus,

further delay of two years will be incurred for the EOT advance works which will involve another HK\$100M. CA reckons that if the advance works of EOT were not carried out now, it will cost more in the future as it will involve open cut a big trench of over 30 m along the EOT route when all developments are completed including the ground scrapper and the P2 road. There will a big chaos. It is expected that the works will generate huge number of public complaint. Therefore, CA's proposal actually helps CEDD to plan the works better.

10.If CEDD insists not to undertake these advance works for EOT (this is irresponsible!), the alignment of the EOT can actually be shifted away from the QP. The future works of EOT will not affect the QP at its current location. The working group has obtained information from the MTRC, through CEDD, that a shift of about 10m is possible with a limiting turning radius of 300m, instead of the current 500m. CA believed that a further few meter shift can be achieved at the detailed design stage.

Conclusion

11.CA's proposal of temporarily rolling off QP and reinstate it back to its current location is technically feasible and improve the planned works on EOT. The cost of HK\$30M and one and a half year is well justified. CA urged the Legislative Council to support CA's proposal.