

CB(1)2101/06-07(01)

By hand and by fax

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12 July 2007

The Honourable Donald Tsang, GBM
The Chief Executive
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
People's Republic of China

Dear Sir,

Planning for the New Central Harbourfront

I am writing on behalf of the Subcommittee to Review the Planning for the Central Waterfront (including the Tamar Site), which is a subcommittee of the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works tasked to review the planning for the Central waterfront.

The Subcommittee has been receiving views from the public and interested parties on the Urban Design Study for the New Central Harbourfront (the Study) commissioned by the Planning Department in March 2007. The Subcommittee notes an overwhelming support from amongst the deputations for the development of a world-class Central harbourfront with due attention given to preservation of heritage buildings/structures in the area. The deputations have given substantive views on a wide spectrum of relevant issues including land use zoning and development parameters, the built form and layout of future buildings and the mode and design of transport infrastructure in the area etc. While we are delighted with the enthusiastic public participation in giving views on the future development of the harbourfront area, we are disappointed to note that the scope of the Study is confined to refining the existing urban design framework and the preparation of planning/design briefs for specific sites. We have also been advised by the Administration that unless there are very strong reasons, the Study should not result in any major change to the maximum gross floor areas and building heights specified in the relevant Outline Zoning Plans.

The Central harbourfront is a very important part of the city. We consider that the vision of creating a world-class waterfront which is vibrant, attractive, accessible and symbolic of Hong Kong cannot be realized under the current planning approach and procedures given their inherent constraints. In order that the outturn new Central harbourfront would be one that Hong Kong people can take pride in, we consider it necessary to revamp the planning approach for the new Central harbourfront. Instead of focusing on refining the current planning and making piece-meal design briefs, the Government should go for a master design for the entire Central harbourfront area. To attain a master design of prime quality, the Subcommittee urges the Government to launch an international competition to invite design proposals and thereafter to draw up a detailed masterplan for the harbourfront area on the basis of the winning proposals.

The Subcommittee echoes your principle of adopting public engagement in the planning of major infrastructure projects and development of public policies. We believe that you are equally concerned about the future development of the Central harbourfront and we look forward to hearing very soon from you on the above suggestion.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,

(Signed on the Chinese version)

(LAU Wong-fat)

Chairman

Subcommittee to Review the Planning for the
Central Waterfront (including the Tamar Site)

c.c. Secretary for Development