

By Post and Fax

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17 August 2007

The Honourable Lau Wong-fat, GBM
Chairman
Subcommittee to Review the Planning for the
Central Waterfront (including the Tamar Site)
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Mr Lau,

Planning for the New Central Harbourfront

Thank you for your letter of 12 July 2007 to the Chief Executive, who has asked me to reply on his behalf.

I would like to thank the Subcommittee to Review the Planning for the Central Waterfront (including the Tamar Site) (the Subcommittee) for providing a platform for the Legislative Council, the Administration, concern groups and members of the public to exchange views on the planning and design of the new Central harbourfront. As pointed out in your letter, the public generally wish to develop a world-class new harbourfront at Central. This is in line with our planning vision for the area.

The statutory Outline Zoning Plans (OZPs) covering the new Central harbourfront were approved by the Chief Executive-in-Council. The OZPs were prepared on the basis of comprehensive planning and urban design studies and approved after a due process of public consultation as required by the Town Planning Ordinance. The OZPs provide a land use framework to ensure a balanced development to meet the needs of various sectors of the community, including an extensive waterfront promenade, government and community

facilities, leisure and commercial facilities along the waterfront, and a small amount of commercial land for the Central Business District to sustain our competitiveness as an international financial centre. The OZPs also provide a basis for planning of major infrastructure facilities in the area, some of which have already been completed or are due to commence development.

Having regard to the instruction of the Town Planning Board, the Planning Department is undertaking the Urban Design Study for the New Central Harbourfront. This study aims to refine the existing urban design for the new Central harbourfront and to formulate a master layout plan setting out the master design, a refined urban design framework, and planning/design briefs for individual key sites to guide future developments in the new Central harbourfront. There will be extensive public engagement to solicit public views on the design considerations for the various development sites. Concerns raised by the deputations to the Subcommittee will be carefully addressed in the study. We will further gauge public views when more design options are drawn up. We believe that the existing planning framework allows flexibility in the design of built forms, layout of future buildings and development of public spaces.

International competition is one of the ways to produce a quality design for the harbourfront. We envisage that through an open, transparent planning process with extensive public engagement, we can produce a refined urban design framework for the new Central harbourfront integrating public aspirations and innovative ideas. That said, we will not preclude any possibility of adopting innovative mechanisms (e.g. through competition) to implement some of the planning proposals.

We welcome further suggestions and comments from the Subcommittee in enhancing the urban design of our new Central harbourfront.

Yours sincerely,

(Kenneth Mak)
Private Secretary to Chief Executive