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**Panel on Development**

**Subcommittee on Harbourfront Planning**

**Meeting on 8 January 2009**

**Background brief on planning for harbourfront areas**

**Purpose**

The Subcommittee on Harbourfront Planning will take an overview of the current harbourfront land uses and planned enhancement measures at its meeting on 8 January 2009, and the Administration has provided an information paper in this regard. This paper provides a summary of the views and concerns on harbourfront planning matters expressed by Members at various forums of the Legislative Council in recent years.

**Waterfront connectivity and enhancement along the northern shore of Hong Kong Island**

2. In February 2008, the Administration briefed the Panel on Development (formerly known as "Panel on Planning, Lands and Works") on the latest development of the enhancement measures for the harbourfront areas and the various pedestrian links along the northern shore of Hong Kong Island, and the feasibility of introducing measures to better utilize the space under the Island Eastern Corridor (IEC). According to the Administration, various harbourfront enhancement works, such as the open space at Ex-Gala Point and Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park, would be implemented progressively, and the enhancement works would be able to meet public aspirations. Except for a temporary works site for the MTR Western Island Line and a few private sites in North Point and Quarry Bay, the pedestrian links along the waterfront areas on the northern shore of Hong Kong Island would be basically continuous upon completion of the scheduled enhancement works. The Administration also advised that there were technical difficulties in constructing a boardwalk under IEC near North Point due to clearance limitations and the need to comply with the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance (Cap. 531). Nevertheless, the consultant concerned had been tasked to identify ways to overcome the technical difficulties.

3. During the Panel discussion, individual members expressed the following concerns and views --

- (a) The progress of waterfront enhancement works was too slow.
- (b) The pedestrian links along the northern shore of the Hong Kong Island should be enhanced to link up the waterfront areas.
- (c) In greening waterfront areas, the Administration should avoid excessive planting so as to avoid blocking the sea view. Instead, more meadows might be provided.
- (d) The design of waterfront areas should not be monotonous and it should bring more interests to the life of citizens. The design should also be user-oriented and facilities such as cafes, refreshment kiosks and toilets should be provided.
- (e) As provision of cycle tracks might not be feasible, consideration could be given to providing roller-skater tracks in some waterfront areas where enhancements works would be carried.
- (f) The Administration should consider submerging part of IEC so that the public could better enjoy the waterfront areas.
- (g) There should be continuous waterfront promenades on both sides of the harbour.
- (h) The quality of the waterfront enhancement works should be ensured especially if some of them were to be carried out by the private sector.

#### New Central harbourfront

4. In briefing the Panel on the design proposals in the Urban Design Study for the New Central Harbourfront for the Stage 2 Public Engagement on 22 April 2008, the Administration advised that to strike a balance between strong public aspirations for lower development intensity and different land use needs on the new Central harbourfront, the Administration proposed reducing a total of 86 325 m<sup>2</sup> gross floor area (GFA), or by 25% of the maximum GFA permissible under the relevant Outline Zoning Plans (OZPs), for five sites of the Central harbourfront<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The details of the proposed design concepts and development intensities of the eight sites along the new Central harbourfront are set out in the Administration's paper on [Urban Design Study for the New Central Harbourfront Stage 2 Public Engagement](#) (LC Paper No. CB(1)1273/07-08(05)).

5. The Administration also confirmed that there would be a 2-kilometre continuous waterfront promenade and there would also be vantage points at different locations of the harbourfront for visitors to enjoy the harbour view. A multi-modal transport system and a multi-level (underground, at-grade and elevated) pedestrian network would be available to enhance public access to the new harbourfront.

6. While some members considered that the proposals in the Study had heeded some major public demands, some other members expressed concern that the scale of certain planned developments at the harbourfront was still too large to be acceptable and that there would not be enough space for free public enjoyment of the harbourfront. On the other hand, there was a view that the Administration's decision to reduce development intensities was contrary to the strong market demand for Grade A offices and would lead to a substantial loss in public revenue.

7. Concerning the re-assembly of the Queen's Pier, one concept proposed under the Study was to re-assemble Queen's Pier by the harbour, between Central Piers No. 9 and 10, to meet public aspirations for revival of the pier function of the Queen's Pier. Another concept proposed was to re-assemble Queen's Pier at its original location. Some members expressed the view that the Queen's Pier should be reassembled at the waterfront to resume its pier function. On the other hand, some other members were of the view that the Queen's Pier should be re-assembled in-situ and adequate consultation should be made with professional bodies on the design proposals.

8. Members also expressed concern about the scale of Road P2 and the possible environmental impacts of Road P2 on the waterfront promenade, such as noise and air pollution. The Administration affirmed that the current road layout of Road P2 was appropriate for its intended functions, but would be adjusted as appropriate if the current authorized scheme was affected by the final location for the reassembly of the Queen's Pier.

#### *Recent developments*

9. The Administration plans to brief the Subcommittee on Harbourfront Planning on the outcome of the Stage 2 Public Engagement of the Urban Design Study for the New Central Harbourfront and study recommendations in the first quarter of 2009.

#### Wan Chai Development Phase II

10. Land formed consequential to the construction of the proposed road scheme of the Central-Wan Chai Bypass and Island Eastern Corridor Link (together known as "the Trunk Road") would provide opportunities for providing waterfront open space in Wan Chai, Causeway Bay and North Point. Based on the Tunnel Option adopted for the construction of the Trunk Road, the

consultants engaged by the Administration for the Wan Chai Development Phase II (WDII) project prepared a Concept Plan in October 2006 setting out the overall planning and design concept for land uses in the waterfront areas in Wan Chai, Causeway Bay and North Point. Under the Concept Plan, five character precincts namely, "Arts and Culture Precinct", "Water Park Precinct", "Water Recreation Precinct", "Heritage Precinct", and "Leisure and Recreation Precinct", were proposed to enhance the waterfront areas. Following a series of public engagement activities, the Administration prepared a Recommended Outline Development Plan for WDII and proposed amendments to the relevant OZPs, i.e. the Draft Wan Chai North OZP and the Draft North Point OZP. The Administration briefed the Panel on the details of these plans on 29 May 2007.

11. Members in general supported the proposal of creating a vibrant and attractive waterfront that was continuous and easily accessible for all, and called for early implementation of the enhancement measures. Members also provided specific views on certain design aspects, such as placing emphasis on the provision of a natural and open environment at the waterfront and the need to ensure that the greening and supporting facilities provided at the waterfront would not block the sea view. There was a suggestion that a design competition should be held to produce a good design for the waterfront. Members also urged the Administration to address the odour problem at the Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter.

#### *Recent developments*

12. The Trunk Road scheme was gazetted on 27 July 2007. The proposed amendments to the two relevant OZPs and the proposed reclamation in WDII were gazetted on the same day. The Court of First Instance (CFI) ruled in a judicial review relating to the Trunk Road project on 20 March 2008 that the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance (PHO) (Cap. 531) applies to the proposed temporary reclamation works for construction of the Trunk Road Tunnel. In the light of the CFI's judgment on the application of the PHO to the temporary reclamation, the Administration has engaged consultants to examine the overriding public need of the temporary reclamation works and their compliance with the PHO. On 25 November 2008, the Administration briefed the Panel on the consultants' findings.

13. The Administration has indicated its plan to brief members on the financial proposal for carrying out engineering works to provide land for constructing the Trunk Road, enhancing the harbourfront of the areas concerned, and other related works in the second quarter of 2009.

#### Kai Tak Development

14. In October 2006, after going through three stages of public participation, the Administration briefed the Panel on the revised Preliminary Outline Development Plan (PODP) for Kai Tak on the basis of the "no reclamation"

scenario. Under the PODP, a number of open spaces were proposed including the Metro Park, the Runway Park and waterfront promenade for the waterfront of the former Kai Tak area. The Metro Park would form a regional open space for the East Kowloon Area and would be integrated with the proposed Multi-purpose Stadium Complex to form a comprehensive green hub to achieve the "Stadium in the Park" concept. The Runway Park at the end of the Kai Tak runway would provide an area to accommodate facilities of the aviation-related theme. The waterfront promenade would be 20 to 30 metres in width. There would be a comprehensive pedestrian connection system to facilitate pedestrian connections with the adjoining districts. The Panel met with deputations on 14 November 2006 to receive their views on the revised PODP. At the meetings, individual members expressed the following concerns and views in relation to the proposed harbourfront facilities --

- (a) The PODP failed to meet public aspirations as the best locations were designated for the Cruise Terminal, Heliport and hotels, rather than for facilities to be used by the general public.
- (b) The Stadium Complex might affect the integrity of the Metro Park and there might be difficulties in attaining a good design for the portion of the Metro Park located at the 600-metre deck above the opening of the former runway.
- (c) It was a planning blunder to provide a mega sports stadium in Kai Tak and the appropriateness of locating the Metro Park next to the To Kwa Wan Typhoon Shelter was in question.
- (d) Failing to solve the odour problem at the Kai Tak Approach Channel (KTAC) would affect the image of Kai Tak, especially in relation to developing the Cruise Terminal and Tourism Node in Kai Tak.
- (e) If the environmental problems at KTAC could be solved, KTAC could be developed into a good and easily accessible in-town water activities centre.
- (f) The possibility that cruise ships berthing at the third berth of the Cruise Terminal, which might be constructed in future, would obstruct the view of the hotel developments on the former runway should be taken into account in the future planning.
- (g) The provision of the Heliport in Kai Tak was not the best option and many Kwun Tong residents still had reservation on the proposal.
- (h) It was questionable that the Heliport should occupy the best location in Kai Tak. Residential and hotel developments on the

former runway were not absolutely necessary. There were no public leisure facilities such as water activities centres near the tip of the former runway, which was the best location in the area.

- (i) The proposed integrated tourism-related development of about 200mPD high housing an observation gallery might be massive and too high. If a landmark was indeed required, it should be a thin observation tower, not a high-rise and massive hotel with an observation gallery.
- (j) There was no need to construct an observation gallery in Kai Tak, be it a thin or massive one.

### *Recent developments*

15. The Kai Tak Outline Zoning Plan (No. S/K22/2) was approved by the Chief Executive in Council on 6 November 2007. An item on "The implementation of Kai Tak Development" is scheduled for discussion by the Panel on Development on 20 January 2009.

### West Kowloon Cultural District

16. According to the Administration, the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) is intended to be developed to integrate arts, cultural, entertainment, commercial and other uses with public open space of not less than 23 hectares, which will include piazzas and a waterfront promenade not less than 20 metres in width. Pedestrian linkages within WKCD and the surrounding areas will be provided for easy access to the public open space. Pending the commencement work for WKCD, a waterfront promenade has been open for public enjoyment since September 2005, and its extension since early February 2007.

17. The Subcommittee on West Kowloon Cultural District Development, which was formed by the House Committee in January 2005 and completed its work in June 2008, had studied the town planning aspects of WKCD. According to the Phase III Study Report of the Subcommittee published in June 2008, the Subcommittee considered that WKCD should strive to be, among others, an impetus to improve quality of life through the provision of an accessible, open, spacious and vibrant harbourfront for public enjoyment. To attain this objective, the Subcommittee considered it important to designate the areas at the immediate harbourfront for public enjoyment with lots of amenities and greening. Areas of public open space should not be too dispersed and should be conveniently accessible to the public including the wheelchair-bound. In view of the strong public demand for open space in WKCD, the Subcommittee suggested that those areas reserved for the development of Phase II arts and cultural facilities should also be used as public open space in the interim.

*Recent developments*

18. On 23 October 2008, the Chief Executive appointed 19 members, including four public officers and 15 non-public officers to the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCDA) Board. According to the Administration, the priority of the WKCDA is to prepare an overall development plan for WKCD for submission to the Town Planning Board for consideration in accordance with the statutory procedures. The WKCDA will start the preparation of the development plan as soon as possible to tie in with the target completion date of the construction projects in phase one (2014-2015).

19. A Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the West Kowloon Cultural District Project has been formed under the Panel on Development and the Panel on Home Affairs. The Joint Subcommittee is tasked to monitor issues relating to the implementation of the WKCD project, including the work of WKCDA, the project's interface with arts and cultural development, and other related matters. The Joint Subcommittee held its first meeting on 19 December 2008.

**Relevant papers**

20. A list of relevant papers is in the **Appendix**.

## Harbourfront Planning

## List of relevant papers

Council/Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Planning, Lands and Works (PLW Panel)	24 Oct 2006 14 Nov 2006	<p>Administration's paper on "Kai Tak Planning Review Revised Preliminary Outline Development Plan" (LC Paper No. CB(1)89/06-07(01))  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/plw/papers/plw1024cb1-89-1-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/plw/papers/plw1024cb1-89-1-e.pdf</a></p> <p>Background brief on "Kai Tak Planning Review" prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (CB(1)89/06-07(04))  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/plw/papers/plw1024cb1-89-4-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/plw/papers/plw1024cb1-89-4-e.pdf</a></p> <p>Minutes of meetings (LC Paper Nos. CB(1)361 and 666/06-07)  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/plw/minutes/pl061024.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/plw/minutes/pl061024.pdf</a>  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/plw/minutes/pl061114.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/plw/minutes/pl061114.pdf</a></p>
PLW Panel	29 May 2007	<p>Administration's paper on "Wan Chai Development Phase II Review" (LC Paper No. CB(1)1723/06-07(01))  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/plw/papers/plw0529cb1-1723-1-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/plw/papers/plw0529cb1-1723-1-e.pdf</a></p> <p>Background brief on "Wan Chai Development Phase II Review" (LC Paper No. CB(1)1723/06-07(02))  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/plw/papers/plw0529cb1-1723-2-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/plw/papers/plw0529cb1-1723-2-e.pdf</a></p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)2149/06-07)  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/plw/minutes/pl070529.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/plw/minutes/pl070529.pdf</a></p>



Council/Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Development	26 February 2008	<p>Administration's paper on Waterfront Connectivity and Pedestrian Access along the Northern Shore of Hong Kong (LC Paper No. CB(1)860/07-08(04))  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/plw/papers/dev0226cb1-860-4-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/plw/papers/dev0226cb1-860-4-e.pdf</a></p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)1276/07-08)  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/plw/minutes/de080226.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/plw/minutes/de080226.pdf</a></p> <p>Administration's paper on waterfront enhancement works in Kowloon (Follow-up paper) (LC Paper No. CB(1)1349/07-08(01))  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/plw/papers/dev0226cb1-1349-1-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/plw/papers/dev0226cb1-1349-1-e.pdf</a></p>
Panel on Development	22 April 2008	<p>Information paper provided by the Administration (LC Paper No. CB(1)1273/07-08(05))  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/plw/papers/dev0422cb1-1273-5-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/plw/papers/dev0422cb1-1273-5-e.pdf</a></p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)1952/07-08)  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/plw/minutes/de080422.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/plw/minutes/de080422.pdf</a></p>
Subcommittee on West Kowloon Cultural District Development	20 June 2008 (Date of submission of report to House Committee)	<p>Phase III Study Report of the Subcommittee  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/hc/sub_com/hs02/reports/hs02-rpt080620-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/hc/sub_com/hs02/reports/hs02-rpt080620-e.pdf</a></p>