

**LegCo Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the
West Kowloon Cultural District Project**

Follow up to meeting on 29 March 2011

Response from the Home Affairs Bureau

Stage 3 Public Engagement exercise

The Stage 3 Public Engagement exercise (PE3) is scheduled for late summer 2011. The West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCDA) is now working with its consultants to formulate the development plan (DP) based on the preferred Conceptual Plan Option (CPO). The DP will indicate, amongst other aspects, the areas and nature of the proposed land uses, specifications of arts and cultural facilities, distribution of open space, landscape and urban design proposals as well as pedestrian and transport facilities.

2. WKCDA is currently working with its consultants to finalize the content of PE3. It will consult its Consultation Panel on the detailed arrangements for PE3 in due course.

Organic growth approach

3. The results of the previous two stages of public engagement (PE) exercise indicated that the public and stakeholders support an organic growth approach for the WKCD development. WKCDA and its consultants are refining the phasing arrangement for the core arts and cultural facilities (CACF) taking into account public and stakeholders' views collected. WKCDA will closely monitor the project cost and formulate financial strategy to make the best use of the available resources, taking into account relevant factors like the pace of development of CACF, fluctuation in construction prices, inflation, investment returns, etc.

Selection of the preferred CPO

The Selection Panel

4. A Selection Panel (SP) was set up by the Board of WKCDA (the Board) to recommend on the preferred CPO. The SP, comprising Board and Committee members with arts, cultural and professional background and with connections to the local community, has gone through a vigorous and stringent assessment process to arrive at the recommendation. The SP Chairman has reported progress to the Board throughout the assessment process. As the minutes of SP meetings and related documents are internal records containing commercially sensitive information, in line with established practice they are not considered suitable for release to the public.

Selection criteria

5. The SP has examined voluminous analysis and studies to assess the three CPOs based on the following selection criteria as endorsed by the Board:

- (i) meeting planning design principles set by the Board;
- (ii) meeting community and stakeholders aspirations;
- (iii) design and phasing flexibility;
- (iv) technical strengths and weaknesses;
- (v) financial implications; and
- (vi) fulfilling the key planning and development requirements of the Government.

6. Creativity, accessibility, connectivity, integration, vibrancy, uniqueness and sustainability are the seven planning design principles for WKCD development referred to under criterion (i) stated above. Criterion (ii) covers the main concerns raised by the public during the Stage 1 PE exercise, including exhibiting a green setting, environmental friendliness, experiencing a relaxing atmosphere, showcasing Hong

Kong's unique local and traditional characteristics, connectivity with the neighborhood districts, and catering the needs of different users.

7. The SP and the Board have taken into due consideration the need to integrate hardware with software development in recommending and endorsing the preferred CPO. The views of the arts and cultural stakeholders, the WKCDA's Performing Arts Committee and Museum Committee as well as the LegCo Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the WKCD project were conveyed to the SP during the selection process. The preferred CPO supports arts education and cultural software development which will facilitate WKCDA's work in nurturing arts talents and building audiences. Its high degree of flexibility allows swapping of sites to facilitate earlier development of core arts and cultural facilities and allows public enjoyment of arts and cultural facilities amidst ongoing construction programmes. It also allows room to accommodate arts and cultural activities before commissioning of permanent facilities.

8. The three Conceptual Plan Consultants have been provided with a full set of information on the six selection criteria and their weightings which are the same as those released to the public. All of them have been involved in the WKCD project since the Stage 1 PE exercise and were fully aware of public expectation and aspirations on the project.

Way forward

9. WKCDA and its Project Consultant are currently collaborating with Foster + Partners in identifying desirable features from the other two CPOs for incorporation in the draft DP, with due regard to the design integrity of the preferred CPO, the views collected from the Stage 2 PE exercise, implications on phasing arrangement, as well as the outcome of detailed assessments on technical feasibility and financial viability. All three CPOs contain environmental friendly features which require further

detailed studies on feasibility and compatibility with the preferred CPO before incorporation in the DP. The draft DP will be unveiled during PE3.

10. WKCDA is well aware that hardware design as well as software development are equally important and must go hand-in-hand for the long-term success of the WKCD. WKCDA is working on a series of programmes, in cooperation with education and arts and culture institutes, to link WKCD with the community and to groom talents for WKCD and the local arts sector. WKCDA will adopt a strategic approach to software development over the next few years, leading to the opening of the arts and cultural venues in WKCD.

Home Affairs Bureau
May 2011