

CONCEPT PLAN COMPETITION FOR THE
DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTEGRATED ARTS, CULTURAL
AND ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT AT THE
WEST KOWLOON RECLAMATION, HONG KONG

REPORT OF THE JURY

INTRODUCTION

On 6 April 2001, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSARG) launched an international concept plan competition for the development of an integrated arts, cultural and entertainment district at the West Kowloon Reclamation in Hong Kong. The results of the competition were announced on 28 February 2002. This document is the report of the competition Jury on the selection of the winning entries.

THE COMPETITION SITE

2. The competition site, extending over 40 hectares, is at the southern tip of the West Kowloon Reclamation in Hong Kong, close to the Tsim Sha Tsui tourist and entertainment area and to major new commercial and residential development around Kowloon Station on the airport railway. It also faces the commercial and residential districts of Central, Sheung Wan and the Mid-levels across Victoria Harbour on Hong Kong Island. The prominent waterfront location provides an ideal setting for the development of landmark arts and cultural facilities. The competition was launched with the intention of taking maximum advantage of this unique opportunity to enhance Hong Kong as a city of arts, culture and entertainment and create a new look for Victoria Harbour.

ENTRIES TO THE COMPETITION

3. The Competition Document, containing full details of the site, the general conditions of the competition and the competition brief, was given wide publicity. The competition attracted 161 entries by the closing date of 29 September 2001 with 71 from Hong Kong and 90 from elsewhere. Entries dispatched by air on or before 26 September 2001 were accepted as meeting the closing date if they arrived after 29 September 2001, at the request of overseas entrants relying on delivery services disrupted after the terrorist attacks in the US. Two other entries from overseas with dispatch

dates after 26 September 2001 arrived late and were not considered further. A breakdown of the origin of the 161 entries at Annex 1 to this report.

4. The entries were assigned serial numbers by the competition organizer to maintain anonymity during the adjudication process.

ADJUDICATION CRITERIA

The Jury's broad assessment criteria

5. The Competition Document provides for the submitted conceptual proposals to be adjudicated by a Jury, whose members are named at the end of this report, and for all submissions to be judged in accordance with the broad assessment criteria set out in the Document. The criteria are as follows –

(I) Planning and Design Merits

- (1) Ability to provide a compelling and plausible vision to shape the future use of the Scheme Area as an integrated arts, cultural and entertainment district.
- (2) Ability to translate waterfront and harbour presence into a development of distinguished identity.
- (3) Ability to optimize site potential and development opportunities.
- (4) Ability to adopt innovative and viable ideas and imaginative solutions to planning constraints.
- (5) Ability to achieve integration and connectivity with surroundings.
- (6) Ability to meet changing needs.
- (7) Ability to demonstrate broad feasibility in terms of traffic arrangements.

(II) Overall Benefits to Hong Kong

- (1) Meeting the overall objective of enhancing Hong Kong's position as Asia's premier centre of arts, culture and entertainment.

- (2) Bringing planning and urban design benefits to Hong Kong.
- (3) Meeting public aspirations and generating civic pride.

Technical Panel

6. The Competition Document provides for the Jury to be advised by a Technical Panel on the technical assessment of individual submissions. The composition of the Panel is set out in Annex 2 to this report.

7. The Technical Panel met on 9 October 2001 to decide on a process for advising the Jury as to whether individual entries met the technical requirements set out in the Competition Brief and on 11, 12, 15 and 17 December 2001 to assess the 161 entries in accordance with the agreed process. The Chairman of the Panel attended the Jury meetings to present the Panel's findings, including its recommendations as to which entries should be disqualified for failing to meet the competition requirements in specific non-technical respects, but did not take part in the determination of the winning entries.

Consistency with Government policy objectives

8. The Competition Brief states that the proposals submitted should be in compliance with the policy objectives of the HKSAR Government in terms of promoting the development of the arts and culture and making available to the community a wide choice of arts and cultural facilities. The Home Affairs Bureau of the Government, which is responsible for arts and cultural policy, assessed the individual entries as to their broad consistency with the government's policy objectives in promoting the arts and culture. The Jury was informed of the findings.

Professional Advisor

9. The Professional Advisor to the competition, Mr Bill Lacy, FAIA, advised the organizer, the Technical Panel and the Jury on procedural matters and on compliance with competition rules and submission requirements. He attended the meetings of the Technical Panel in December 2001 and those of the Jury, but did not take part in the determination of the winning entries.

JURY PROCEEDINGS

Advance consideration of submissions

10. The 161 concept plan proposals, together with the advice of the Technical Panel, were dispatched to members of the Jury towards the end of January 2002 for their perusal in advance of the Jury meeting. Copies of the proposals were also available to the Jury throughout the adjudication sessions.

11. Participants were also required to submit a set of five boards, showing their urban design concept plan, their master layout plan, selected cross-sections, elevations and perspectives and a colour print of a model of their proposal, for presentation and display purposes: these were displayed for members of the Jury to study individually and in detail on 24 February 2002, before the adjudication sessions, and throughout those sessions.

Jury meetings

12. The Jury met from 25 to 28 February 2002 at the City Hall in Hong Kong.

13. On 25 February, in response to enquiries from the local media about the Jury and its work, members attended a photo opportunity for the media and the Chairman answered reporters' questions. Members then began their deliberations in closed session, discussing, among other things, the advice tendered by the Technical Panel and the adjudication process. Members also viewed the West Kowloon Reclamation from vantage points in Sheung Wan and Kowloon commanding a full view of the competition site and the adjacent areas.

14. The Jury spent 26 and 27 February on the adjudication of entries and the morning of 28 February finalising its decisions and compiling its commentary on the entries that it had selected as the five winners.

ADJUDICATION OF ENTRIES

15. The Jury noted that it was tasked to award five prizes – the winner, the runner-up and three honourable mentions. Members agreed upon an elimination process for selecting the winning entries.

Selection of first prize winner

16. The first prize winner was selected in the following manner –

- (a) Each member of the Jury was invited to vote for five entries meriting further consideration as the winning entry, on a non-binding basis and without ranking them. Some 20 entries

were selected in this way. After reviewing the votes cast, the Jury decided that the nine entries with the most votes should be discussed further.

- (b) The nine entries concerned were each brought in front of the Jury in serial number order. Individual Jury members discussed specific aspects which they felt merited the Jury's consideration.
- (c) Members then each cast one vote on a non-binding basis to select a winner from the nine entries discussed. After reviewing the votes cast, the Jury decided to discuss further the three entries receiving the most votes.
- (d) After thorough discussion of all the three entries concerned, each Jury member cast a binding vote to select the winner of the first prize.

Selection of second prize winner

17. The second prize winner was selected in the following manner –

- (a) The eight entries remaining from the original group of nine considered for selection as the first prize winner were again displayed in turn. After discussion, five entries were nominated for further consideration.
- (b) Members then each cast a non-binding vote for one entry from the five selected entries. After reviewing the votes cast, the Jury decided to discuss the three entries receiving the most votes.
- (c) Each of these three entries was placed before the Jury in turn for further detailed discussion, after which each member cast a binding vote to select the winner of the second prize.

Selection of honourable mentions

18. The three entries awarded Honourable Mentions (of equal standing) were selected in the following manner –

- (a) The Jury decided to award honourable mention prizes to entries presenting interesting alternative ways of tackling the competition site.

- (b) The seven entries remaining from the group of eight considered for selection as the second prize winner were again displayed in turn. Members were invited to nominate any entry from among these seven, or any other entry, that they felt merited further consideration. After discussion, six entries were nominated.
- (c) Members discussed all of the entries nominated and cast binding votes for the three entries to be awarded honourable mentions.

Disqualifications

19. During its consideration of the 161 submissions, the Jury, taking into account the recommendations of the Technical Panel and the Professional Advisor, as appropriate, disqualified a total of 13 entries for failing to meet the competition requirements in specific non-technical respects.

Anonymity of participants

20. The participants were anonymous to the Jury throughout the adjudication process. The Jury was informed of the identity of the winning entrants at noon on 28 February, after it had chosen the five prize winning entries and only three hours before the results of the competition were announced.

COMMENTARY BY THE JURY ON THE WINNING ENTRIES

21. The Chairman of the Jury announced the prize winners at a press conference attended by Jury members and the Professional Advisor, among many others, and broadcast live on the internet. He also summarised the Jury's commentary on the winning entries, which is reproduced in full below.

First Prize

22. The first prize winning entry is from a team led by Foster and Partners of the United Kingdom.

23. The Jury felt that this submission, more than any other, fulfilled the purpose of the competition to define a conceptual architectural plan to establish Hong Kong as a city of world-class arts and cultural activities. The signature feature of the design, a great canopy, "flows over the various spaces contained within the development" to create a unique landmark. The sinuously flowing form of the site contours and the canopy produce a memorable effect.

24. The master layout plan, even at this conceptual level, organizes the site to take full advantage of its prime waterfront location and its proximity to Kowloon Park and the Canton Road retail district. The primary components of the design include a cultural hub of auditoria, museums, galleries and performance venues along with a dense collection of shops, bars and retail spaces. The combination of uses proposed lends a great vitality to the scheme, and a continuous promenade along the smooth curvature of the waterfront further enhances the development for cultural and commercial purposes.

25. In particular, the winning scheme has eight distinguishing aspects -

- (a) the singularity of image, offering coherent visual authority and something that will become immediately recognizable with Hong Kong and an icon around the world. The image is also progressive, well suited for Hong Kong in the 21st Century;
- (b) the horizontality of the scheme across the site that does not attempt to compete with but rather counterpoints the tall buildings behind;
- (c) the presence of a multiplicity of public-space opportunities at various scales;
- (d) the introduction of substantial green space into the heart of Hong Kong, both symbolically and as a real amenity for citizens;
- (e) the logical and imaginative deployment of programmatic elements and the inherent idea of drawing people through the commercial and entertainment portion of the complex to the arts and cultural centre beyond. The scheme also allows for a good balance between public and private interests and, in particular, the mix of arts facilities offered. One aspect of the project which gave rise to concern was the lagoon which struck the Jury as perhaps impractical. However, this concern would not negate the construction of a similar public space, including a water body disconnected from the harbour;
- (f) the skilful way in which integration can be achieved with surrounding neighbourhoods and complexes. The links to Kowloon Station and to Kowloon Park, in the east, are particularly good examples, as is the people mover supporting this linkage;

- (g) the viability of the scheme, which is technically straightforward, consisting of a large mall, two taller structures at either end of the site - one associated with the arts and cultural complex - and a large roof that is well within the ambit of known technology and experience; and
- (h) the well-argued case in support of the scheme.

26. In conclusion, the Jury felt that this bold scheme is a clear and deserving winner of the competition. The great canopy would create an unmistakable landmark for Hong Kong. It would be a major tourist attraction. It would symbolize the community's vision of their city as a future centre of arts and culture, and realise that vision with great style.

Second Prize

27. The second prize winning entry is from a team led by Mr Philip Y K Liao of Hong Kong.

28. The Jury felt that this submission had immense energy and dynamism in its bold horizontal architectural forms and was well suited to the vibrant nature of Hong Kong. It has many interesting ideas. Imaginative contouring of the site produces a waterfront park and green oases within the landscape. The extensive use of water-pools, waterfalls and mists - as a landscape element - is prevalent throughout the master plan and culminates in a spinal waterway running the length of the scheme area, effectively bringing a part of Victoria Harbour onto the site.

29. In several aspects, the second prize-winning scheme has similar features to the winning submission, including a general feeling of horizontality, a multiplicity of environments and a coherent programmatic response. Although the expressive architectural language is different, the second place scheme does also offer a distinctive image with a progressive spirit. The well-articulated arts and cultural complex is notable, although, on balance, the scheme lacks the expressive authority of the winner and is less straightforward in accommodating some programmatic components.

Honourable Mentions

30. The entries selected for honourable mention (of equal standing) are as follows.

31. The first honourable mention is the "Jewel Scheme", from a team led by Professor Minoru Takeyama of Japan.

32. The Jury awarded an honorable mention to this entry for its elegant and well-balanced simplicity and the appropriate distinctions it draws between cultural and commercial uses.

33. The second honourable mention is the "West End Scheme", from a joint team led by Mr Alan Macdonald, Urbis-LPT (Architects) Association, of Hong Kong.

34. The Jury awarded an honourable mention to this entry for the manner in which it provided a "fieldscape" of a fine grain of individual buildings, landscapes and public spaces. This feature is intended to create a vibrant congenial area of individual galleries and theatres on a par with the lively West End area of London.

35. The third honourable mention is the "New Leaf Scheme", from a team led by Mr Rocco Sen Kee Yim of Hong Kong.

36. The Jury awarded an honourable mention to this entry for its innovative design and the unifying feature of a circulation spine connecting and providing access to all the many activities on the site. This design also takes great advantage of a multi-level urban promenade along the waterfront. It also proposes an upbeat, media-oriented image and takes explicit advantage of the site's location and public outlook back towards central Hong Kong. All in all, it is a very lively and compelling solution.

Prizes

37. The winner of the first prize receives HK\$3 million, the winner of the second prize receives HK\$1.5 million and each of three winners awarded an honourable mention receives a prize of HK\$800,000. The Jury congratulates all of the winners for their outstanding efforts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

38. The members of the Jury would like to express their appreciation to the HKSAR Government – and in particular the Secretary for Planning and Lands, Mr John C Tsang – for giving them this unique and remarkable opportunity to contribute in such a stimulating way to the planning and development of what will become an unmistakable architectural symbol for Hong Kong and an image recognized throughout the world. All members of the Jury look forward to following the project over the coming years and indeed to visiting the new arts and cultural district when today's vision has finally taken shape.

THE JURY

Chairman of the Jury:

The Lord Rothschild, GBE
Jury Member, The Pritzker Architecture Prize; Chairman of the Hermitage Development Trust, the Gilbert Collection Trust and the Heather Foundation for the Arts at Somerset House in London, England

Members of the Jury:

Mr C Nicholas Brooke, BBS, JP
Vice-Chairman,
Metro Planning Committee
Town Planning Board
Hong Kong

The Hon. Leung Chun-ying, GBS, JP
Convenor, Executive Council,
Hong Kong

Professor Chang Hsin-kang, JP
Chairman,
Culture and Heritage Commission,
Hong Kong

Mr Peter W Rogers
Director,
Stanhope plc,
London, England

The Hon. Mrs Selina Chow, JP
Chairman,
Hong Kong Tourism Board,
Hong Kong

Professor Peter G. Rowe,
Dean,
Graduate School of Design,
Harvard University,
Cambridge,
Massachusetts, USA

Professor Peter F V Droege,
Professor of Urban Design,
Faculty of Architecture,
University of Sydney,
Australia

Professor Wu Liangyong,
Professor and Director,
Institute for Architectural and Urban
Studies,
School of Architecture,
Tsinghua University,
Beijing, People's Republic of China

Professor Lau Sau-shing, Patrick,
SBS
Professor of Architecture
The University of Hong Kong,
Hong Kong

Origin of the 161 entries to the competition

Place of origin	Entries received
Australia	5
Austria	3
Bulgaria	1
Canada	1
China (Mainland)	10
Colombia	1
Denmark	1
France	1
Germany	12
Hong Kong	71
India	3
Indonesia	2
Italy	2
Japan	6
Korea	1
Lebanon	1
Luxembourg	1
Macau	1
Malaysia	1
Monaco	1
Netherlands	2
New Zealand	1
Norway	1
Singapore	2
Sweden	2
Switzerland	1
Thailand	3
Turkey	2
UK	3
USA	18
Venezuela	1
Total	161

Composition of the Technical Panel

Chairman : Mr Bosco Fung Chee-keung, JP
Director of Planning, HKSARG

Members : Mr Pau Shiu-hung, JP
Director of Architectural Services, HKSARG

Miss Choi Suk-kuen, JP,
representing the Director of Leisure and Cultural Services,
HKSARG

Mr Leslie H Chen
Member, the Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects

Ir Professor Chow Che-king, OBE
Member, the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers

Professor Lam Kin-che
Member, Advisory Council on the Environment

Mr David C Lee, BBS, JP
Member, the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors

Professor Lui Chun-wan, Alex
Member, the Hong Kong Institute of Architects

Mr Tsao Sing-yuen, Willy, BBS
Member, Hong Kong Arts Development Council

Mr Yip Cho-tat, Stanley
Member, the Hong Kong Institute of Planners