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18 April 2013

Ms Sharon Chung,
Chief Council Secretary(1)6,
Legislative Council Complex,
1 Legislative Council Road,
Central, Hong Kong.

Dear Ms Chung

Central Military Dock

Thank you for your email of 8 April 2013 enclosing the letter of Dr Hon Kenneth Chan, Member of the Development Panel (“the Panel”), to the Panel Chairman dated 5 April 2013, and requesting written response to the matters set out in his letter. The matters are related to the amendments to the Central District (Extension) Outline Zoning Plan (“OZP”) under the Town Planning Ordinance (Cap. 131). We set out below the background of and our response to the relevant matters.

Background of the Central Military Dock

Providing the Central Military Dock at the Central harbourfront is in accordance with the 1994 Exchange of Notes between the Government of the People’s Republic of China and the Government of the United Kingdom on the Defence Land Agreement (“DLA”). The DLA provides

that 150 metres of the eventual permanent waterfront in the plans for the Central and Wan Chai Reclamation at a place close to the Central Barracks would be left free for the construction of a military dock after 1997. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government (“HKSARG”) is responsible for taking forward the construction of the military dock in accordance with the DLA.

The Government has stated in public (including to the Legislative Council (“LegCo”)) on a number of occasions in the past that the military dock is part of the works of the Central Reclamation Phase III and the related matters; and that the military dock would be open to the public as part of the waterfront promenade when it is not in military use. They include -

- (a) when the Government submitted funding application to LegCo for implementing the works of Central Reclamation Phase III in June 2002, the scope of works stated that it included the construction of a berth of 150 m and associated facilities for use by the Chinese People’s Liberation Army Forces Hong Kong in accordance with the DLA. The funding application was approved by LegCo (PWSC(2002-03)41, Extract at Appendix 1);
- (b) the then Secretary for Planning and Lands, in response to oral question no. 6 raised by Hon Lee Wing-tat on 6 June 2007, explained that the military dock would be open to the public as part of the waterfront promenade when it is not in military use (Extract at Appendix 2);
- (c) under the public engagement exercise of the Urban Design Study of the New Central Harbourfront (“UDS”) in 2008, the Government had made known to the public the location and conceptual design of the military dock and its integration with the New Central Harbourfront (Information digest for Stage II of the public engagement exercise, and the final report of the UDS (only English version is available) are extracted at Appendix 3);
- (d) the Government briefed the Central and Western District Council in May 2010 on the works of the advance promenade of the New Central Harbourfront, including the architectural design of the military dock (Extract at Appendix 4); and

- (e) the Government briefed the Hong Kong Task Force of the Harbourfront Commission in October 2010 on the works of the advance promenade of the New Central Harbourfront, including the architectural design of the military dock (Extract at Appendix 5).

Amendments to the Central District (Extension) Outline Zoning Plan

The Central District (Extension) Outline Zoning Plan (“OZP”), which clearly indicated the location of the military dock, was first approved in 2000 after extensive consultation. As the form that the dock would take and the area that it would occupy were not finalized in detail at the time, it was therefore represented by a straight line annotated ‘150m Military Berth (subject to detailed design)’ on the OZP. In the public engagement exercise of UDS in 2008, the Government explained and consulted the public on the conceptual design and the broad location and area of the military dock and related facilities. The Government also consulted the Central and Western District Council and the Harbourfront Commission on the works of the advance promenade of the New Central Harbourfront, including the architectural design of the military dock and related facilities.

The detailed design of the military dock is confirmed now and the construction works are reaching their final stages. Taking into account the design and the implementation of works, the Government delineated the actual operation boundaries of the military dock. Hence it is opportune to make technical amendments to amend the land use zoning where the Central Military Dock is located to “Other Specified Uses” annotated “Military Use (1)” to accurately reflect the final delineation and the land use of the military dock in the OZP.

The Notes of the OZP clearly indicated the planning intention of the site is for military dock use. The building height restriction (“BHR”) is 10mPD and the ground level of the military dock is 4.2mPD. The existing buildings of the dock are single-storey and about 4 metres high, which are in compliance with the BHR. The BHR and relevant restrictions are the same as those proposed to be applicable at Site 7 (i.e. the waterfront promenade) under the UDS. Generally speaking, as the OZP aims to set out the broad land use zoning of a district, there is no need to provide for the detailed design and operational details in the OZP.

Opening arrangement of the Central Military Dock

On the request of the HKSARG, the Garrison has confirmed in 2000 that it would open the area of the military dock site to the public as part of the waterfront promenade for enjoyment when it is not in military use, having regard to its operation and need for protecting the military dock.

When the military dock is closed for military use, the public can still use the pedestrian walkway in the southern periphery of the dock site for a continuous east-west connection along the waterfront. Site 7 of the New Central Harbourfront (i.e. the waterfront promenade) is about 9.8 hectares in size. Except for the military dock, which is about 0.3 hectare in size, other areas including the south-north pedestrian walkway from the waterfront promenade to Lung Wo Road are zoned as “Open Space” which will be open for public use.

Should the Garrison require any temporary special arrangement for access to the military dock for defense purpose, HKSARG will take into account actual situation, say, making temporary traffic arrangement to ensure the safety of pedestrians and road users and minimize the disturbance to the public enjoyment of the harbourfront.

Yours sincerely,

(signed)

(Frederick Yu)
for Secretary of Development

PROJECT SCOPE AND NATURE

3. The scope of **343CL** comprises –
- (a) reclamation of about 18 ha of seabed from the “Star” Ferry Piers at Central to Lung King Street including construction of about 1.2 kilometres (km) of seawalls;
 - (b) construction of primary distributor Roads P1 and P2 of about 1.1 km in total length, including a 200-metre (m) depressed road/underpass, and other district distributor roads D5, D6, D7, D8, D9 and D11 of about 1.4 km in total length;
 - (c) construction of a network of emergency vehicular access (EVA) cum promenade of about 1.3 km in total length;
 - (d) construction of three at-grade public transport interchanges and drop-off facility;
 - (e) construction of a footbridge of about 300 m and an at-grade covered walkway of about 120 m;
 - (f) construction of associated footpaths and roadside amenities;
 - (g) construction of associated stormwater drainage and sewerage works;
 - (h) construction of stormwater box culverts of about 925 m in total length and hinterland drainage improvement works to cope with the proposed reclamation;
 - (i) construction of a berth of about 150 m and associated facilities for use by the Chinese People’s Liberation Army Forces Hong Kong;
 - (j) refurbishment of the existing Ferry Pier No. 7 and construction of a new Ferry Pier No. 8 and associated structures for reprovisioning of the “Star” Ferry Piers to be affected by the proposed reclamation;

/(k)

12. The 1994 Sino-British Defence Land Agreement⁴ provides, inter alia, that “the Hong Kong Government will leave free 150 m of the eventual permanent waterfront in the plans for the Central and Wan Chai Reclamation at a place close to the Prince of Wales Barracks⁵ for the construction of a military dock after 1997.” We intend to construct the committed berthing facilities for Chinese People’s Liberation Army Forces Hong Kong under this project. It is also our planning intention to make the military dock open for public access and as part of the future waterfront promenade when it is not in military use. The Hong Kong Garrison has already agreed in principle to this planning intention.

13. The reclamation works under CRIII will affect a range of existing waterfront facilities, including the “Star” Ferry Piers, the Queen’s Pier, a number of public landing steps, several groups of cooling water pumping stations serving different government and private buildings in the vicinity, and a government helipad. We have to re-provision these facilities, either within the CRIII area or off site, in order to maintain their respective operations. During the construction period, all these facilities will be maintained prior to completion of the re-provisioned facilities. We will also construct new waterfront pumping station structures for the future cooling water pumping systems of the planned developments.

14. The Queen’s Pier and several public landing steps will be re-provisioned at the proposed Piers 9 and 10 to be constructed under this project. We believe that Pier 9 has considerable development potential, and indeed we have already received a firm expression of interest from a commercial venture. In order to keep open various development options, we propose to construct the pier with extra provision to its pile foundation to permit subsequent double-decking. If further development of Pier 9 materialises in future, we will award the development rights after an open and competitive exercise.

/15.

⁴ The Finance Committee (FC) approved on 8 July 1994 a funding application for re-provisioning of certain defence facilities before 30 June 1997. A copy of the 1994 Sino-British Defence Agreement was attached to FC Paper FCR(94-95)51 and the then Secretary for Security had briefed Members on the Agreement.

⁵ Now renamed Central Barracks.

Press Releases

LCQ6: Military Dock

Following is a question by the Hon Lee Wing-tat and a reply by the Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands, Mr Michael Suen, in the Legislative Council today (June 6):

Question:

It has been learnt that the overall planning concept of the Central Reclamation Phase III project is to provide leisure facilities for the public along the waterfront promenade in Central, and to enable the public to enjoy the view of the Victoria Harbour. Some 150 metres of the waterfront have been reserved in the area of the project for the construction of a military dock for naval vessels of the Hong Kong Garrison of the People's Liberation Army ("PLA"). In this connection, will the Government inform this Council whether:

(a) it has studied the compatibility of such a military facility with the overall planning concept of the above project; if it has, of the results of the study;

(b) the use of the facilities along the above waterfront promenade by the public in the future have to give way to the operation of the military dock, and whether the view of the Harbour will be blocked by structures of the military dock; if the view will be blocked, of the building height restriction for the site; whether the periphery of the military dock will be designated as a closed area; if so, whether the closed area will impede the use of facilities along the waterfront promenade by the public; and

(c) it will consider discussing with the PLA afresh the future location of the dock?

Reply:

Madam President,

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government has to leave free 150m of the eventual permanent waterfront in the plans for the Central and Wan Chai Reclamation at a place close to the Central Barracks for the construction of a military dock in compliance with the Defence Land Agreement signed between the governments of the People's Republic of China and the United Kingdom in 1994. In July 1994, the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council was briefed on the Agreement by the then Hong Kong Government.

My reply to the three-part question is as follows:

(a) The military dock, which falls within the scope of the Central Reclamation Phase III (CRIII) project, is part and parcel of the Sino-British Defence Land Agreement. According to our planning intention, the section of 150m waterfront will be open for public use as part of the Central waterfront promenade when it is not required for military use. The Planning Department is conducting the Urban Design Study for the New Central Harbourfront, which covers, inter alia, how to suitably integrate

this planning intention.

(b) The military dock will be put into operation only when it is in military use. It will be open for public use at other times as part of the waterfront promenade. It is planned that a small number of low-rise basic facilities will be provided within the military dock. The view of the Victoria Harbour will not be blocked.

(c) As mentioned above, the military dock will be constructed in accordance with the 1994 Sino-British Defence Land Agreement.

The location of the military dock is clearly shown on the Central District (Extension) Outline Zoning Plan. The question of discussing with the People's Liberation Army Hong Kong Garrison afresh does not arise.

Ends/Wednesday, June 6, 2007

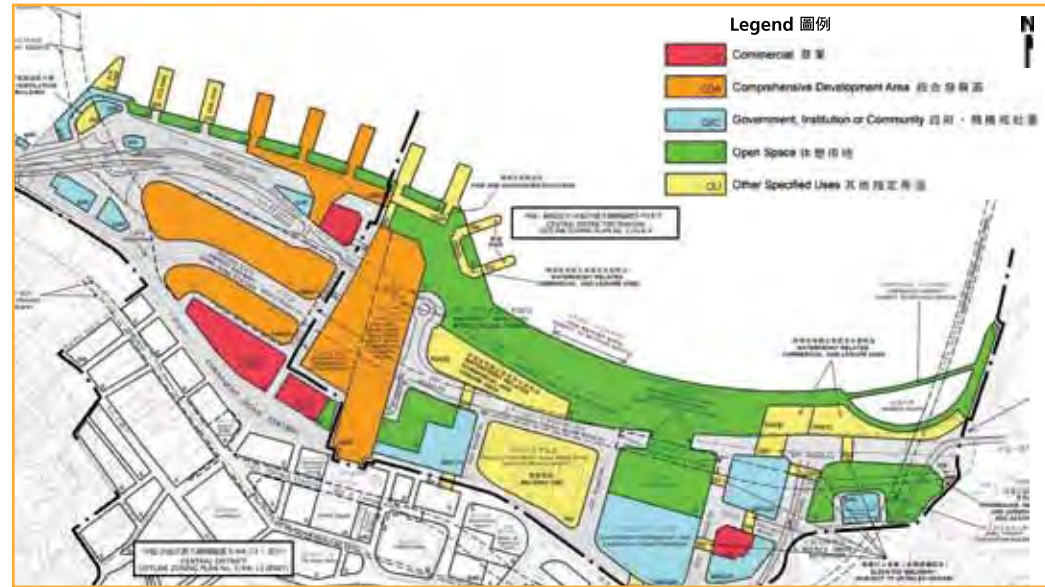
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III. The Refined Urban Design Framework

A. Responding to Public Aspirations

Based on the public aspirations and views, the TPB's Vision Statement for Victoria Harbour, HEC's Harbour Planning Principles and Guidelines, the Urban Design Guidelines in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines and findings of other relevant studies, we have refined the existing urban design framework in the two approved Outline Zoning Plans (OZPs) covering the Central harbourfront and developed alternative design concepts for the key sites. Due regard has also been given to the design constraints, in particular the existing and committed developments and infrastructure facilities in the study area.



Approved Central District (Extension) OZP and Central District OZP

Town Planning Board's Vision Statement for Victoria Harbour

To make Victoria Harbour attractive, vibrant, accessible and symbolic of Hong Kong – a harbour for the people and a harbour of life.

website: <http://www.info.gov.hk/tpb>

Harbour-front Enhancement Committee's

Harbour Planning Principles

- Preserving Victoria Harbour
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Sustainable Development
- Integrated Planning
- Proactive Harbour Enhancement
- Vibrant Harbour
- Accessible Harbour
- Public Enjoyment

Harbour Planning Guidelines

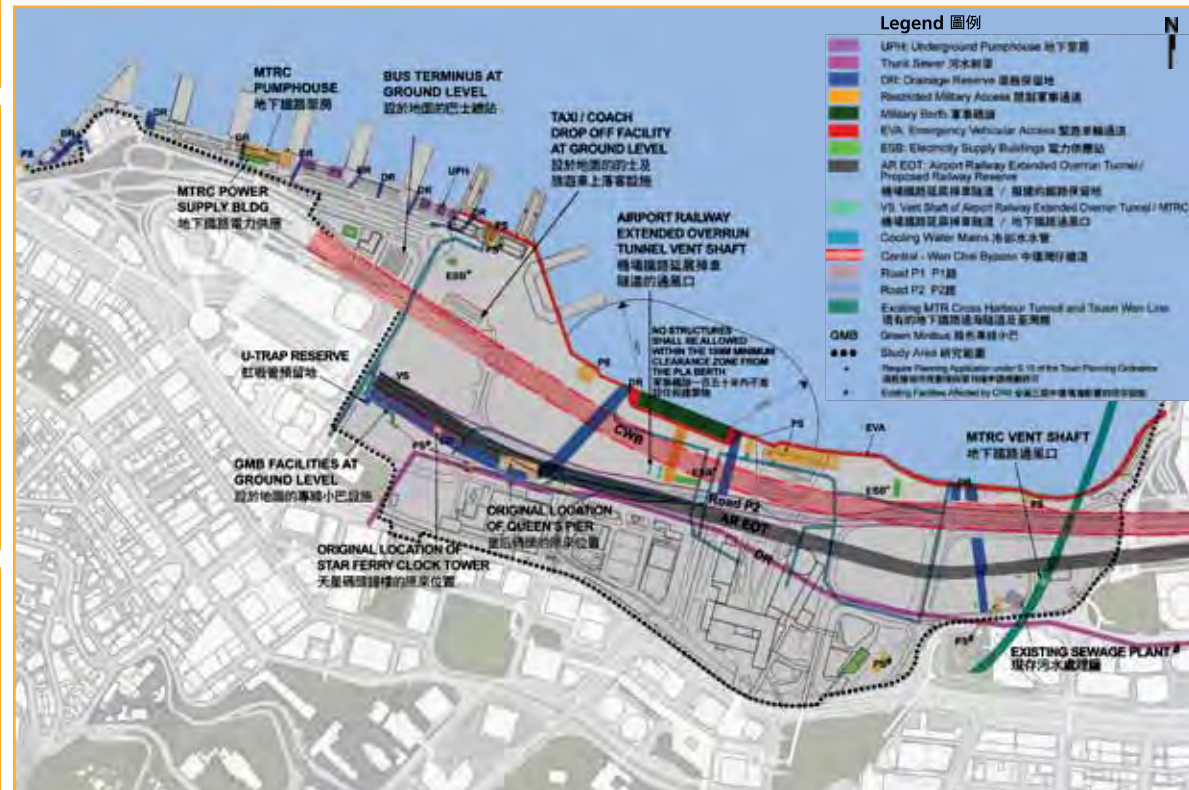
- Public Engagement
- Land Use Planning
- Urban Design
- Landscaping
- Physical Linkage
- Land Formation
- Harbour-front Enhancement
- Sustainable Development
- Temporary Land Uses

website: <http://www.harbourfront.org.hk>

The Urban Design Guidelines in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines

The Urban Design Guidelines cover the major general urban design and air ventilation issues to shape a better physical environment.

website: http://www.pland.gov.hk/tech_doc/hkpsg/english/ch11/ch11_text.htm



Design Constraints

C. The Refined Urban Design Framework

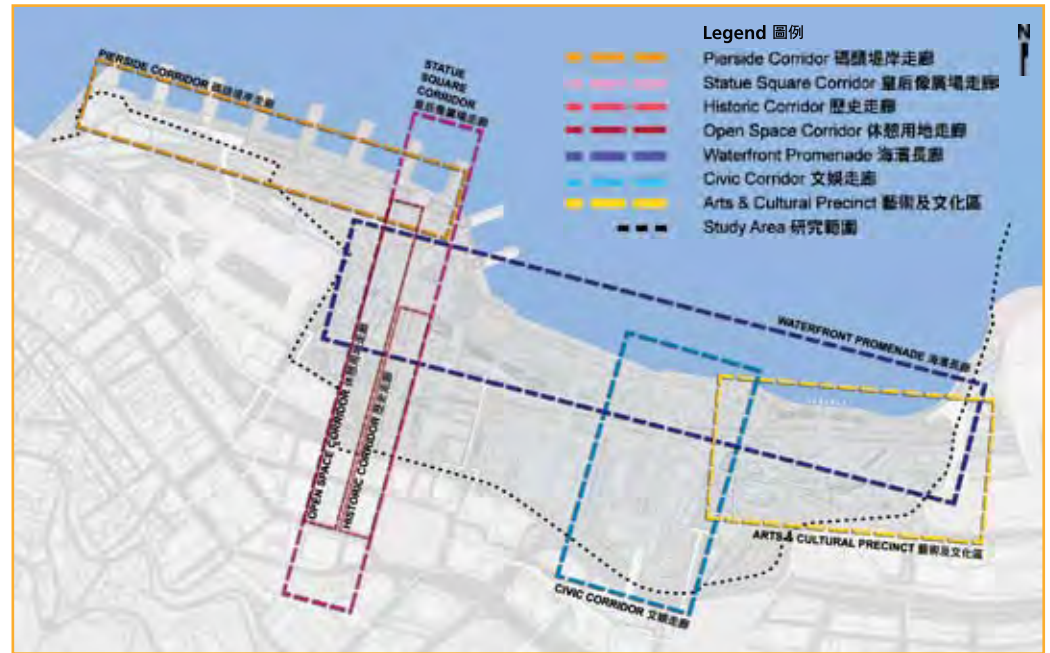
The refined urban design framework provides a coherent and legible structure of uses, building forms, open space and connectivity. It is built upon the waterfront promenade and four principal design corridors to create a sense of place.



Physical Model of Illustrative Master Layout Plan A



Physical Model of Illustrative Master Layout Plan B



Design Corridors and Character Precinct

Waterfront Promenade

The 2 km long waterfront promenade with about 11 ha of harbourside public open space will form a green unifying edge to the harbour. It will be the major east-west pedestrian link along the northern shore of Hong Kong Island. A diversity of uses and activity space ranging from alfresco dining, leisure and entertainment to leisure strolling and harbour appreciation will provide different harbourfront experiences. The waterfront promenade will be extensively landscaped and integrated with various marine facilities including ferry piers, public landing steps and a military berth.



Waterfront Promenade

E. The Waterfront Promenade (Site 7)

Meeting Public Aspirations:

- To provide a diversity of attractions to create an all-time and all-season waterfront
- To provide extensive greenery
- To integrate the PLA berth with the waterfront promenade and allow for public access
- To provide a continuous waterfront promenade
- To provide for environmentally friendly transport



Location Plan



Promenade Concept Plan

Key Design Features:

- 3 walking zones with different characters:
 - Pier Walk: a leisure walking and circulation zone around the Central Piers
 - Harbour Walk: a vibrant place for the public to enjoy and gather for festive events
 - Bayside Walk: a bayside walking zone with dining and leisure facilities in support of adjacent arts and cultural uses
- A reserve for an environmentally friendly transport system with stops at nodal attractions along the waterfront promenade
- The PLA berth be part of the waterfront promenade and open for public access when it is not in military use
- Extensive harbourside public open space in a luxuriant landscape setting with two alternative concepts:

Concept A: Urban Park

- A park setting with a greater variety of nodal attractions including ferry plaza, featured piazza, waterfront event plaza, viewing platform, etc., in addition to flat and undulating lawns and other landscape features
- More activity spaces

Concept B: Urban Green

- A more natural form of landscaping to provide a peaceful green area for appreciation of the harbour and a city oasis as an icon of the harbourfront (as put forward in the design competition for the new Central harbourfront organized by one organization and other public suggestions)
- More greenery and more passive recreation use

Which design do you prefer, Urban Park or Urban Green?
Or other suggestions?



V. Illustrative Master Layout Plans

Two illustrative Master Layout Plans (MLPs) are shown for presentation purpose to reflect how various design concepts for the key sites can possibly be put together. The combinations are not exhaustive.



Illustrative Master Layout Plan A



Featured Piazza



Water Fountain



Waterfront Event Plaza



Undulating Lawn



At Grade Landscaped Open Space



Boardwalk



Water Feature



Urban Mount



Outdoor Theatre



Waterfront Related Commercial & Leisure Use

- (a) The Waterfront Promenade provides a continuous harbourfront public open space forming a green unifying edge to the harbour. It will be a major east-west pedestrian link along the northern shore of Hong Kong Island. A diversity of uses and activity spaces within the Waterfront Promenade will provide different experiences for the users at the harbourfront.
- (b) The key design corridors of the NCH all terminate at the Waterfront Promenade. The public open space planned along the Waterfront Promenade will be extensively landscaped and well integrated with various anchoring spaces strategically placed along the new harbourfront to accent individual characters and a sense of place. Together with adjacent “Harbourfront Festive Deck” at Sites 1 and 2 along the Pier Walk, “Harbour Place” at Site 4 along the Harbour Walk and “Marine Place” at Site 6 along the Bayside Walk, it should add vibrancy and attraction of the NCH as a world-class destination for Hong Kong.
- (c) Within the Waterfront Promenade, there should be the following anchoring nodes :
 - (i) Ferry Plaza – which is the terminating point of the Pierside Corridor and Statue Square Corridor, serving as the public gathering space and entrance plaza prior to boarding for leisure boat trips;
 - (ii) Waterfront Event Plaza – which anchors the Civic Corridor and the “Green Carpet” at Tamar to facilitate a wide range of civic and public events;
 - (iii) Marine Place Boardwalk – which complements the Arts and Cultural Precinct to enhance the ‘marine’ character of the harbourfront setting.

The Waterfront Promenade also includes Festival Lawn, Themed Garden, Viewing Platforms, etc. to add vibrancy and diversity at the edge of the waterfront. According to the LSP, the Waterfront Promenade is sub-divided into several landscape strategy zones, namely Seaside Verdure, Exotic Floral Park and Bauhinia Walk, each with its own landscape character and landscape strategy.

- (d) Visual connectivity to the Waterfront Promenade should be provided with due regard to the view corridors from the Statue Square Corridor, from the City Hall, from the Tamar site and the Civic Corridor, and from the Art Event Plaza of the Arts and Cultural Precinct. The east-west visual connectivity between Central and Wan Chai should be maintained.
- (e) The proposed People’s Liberation Army (PLA) berth and its ancillary facilities should be integrated with the Waterfront Promenade and the part used for open space should be opened to the public when it is not in military use. Folding gates will be installed around the berth but can be hidden in the ancillary building structures.
- (f) Taking advantage of its waterfront location, the Site should create a strong land-water connectivity in the design. Visitor access to the Waterfront Promenade by road, MTR and sea transport and entrances to the Waterfront Promenade from appropriate location should be provided for.
- (g) To enhance the east-west connectivity within the promenade, a cycle track should be provided along the Waterfront Promenade for recreational and leisure purposes with possibility for inter-district connection to Wan Chai and Sheung Wan Districts, which will be subject to more detailed feasibility study. Meanwhile, other environmentally friendly transport modes within the Waterfront Promenade should also be considered, subject to detailed assessment and design.



Figure 12 : Master Layout Plan

New Central Harbourfront for the meeting of 13 May 2010

Appendix 4

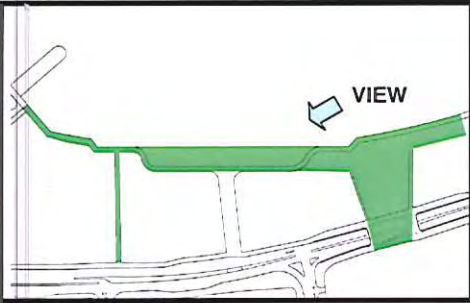


Figure 5 – Perspective View of the Landscape Area (2)

圖5 – 園景透視圖(二)

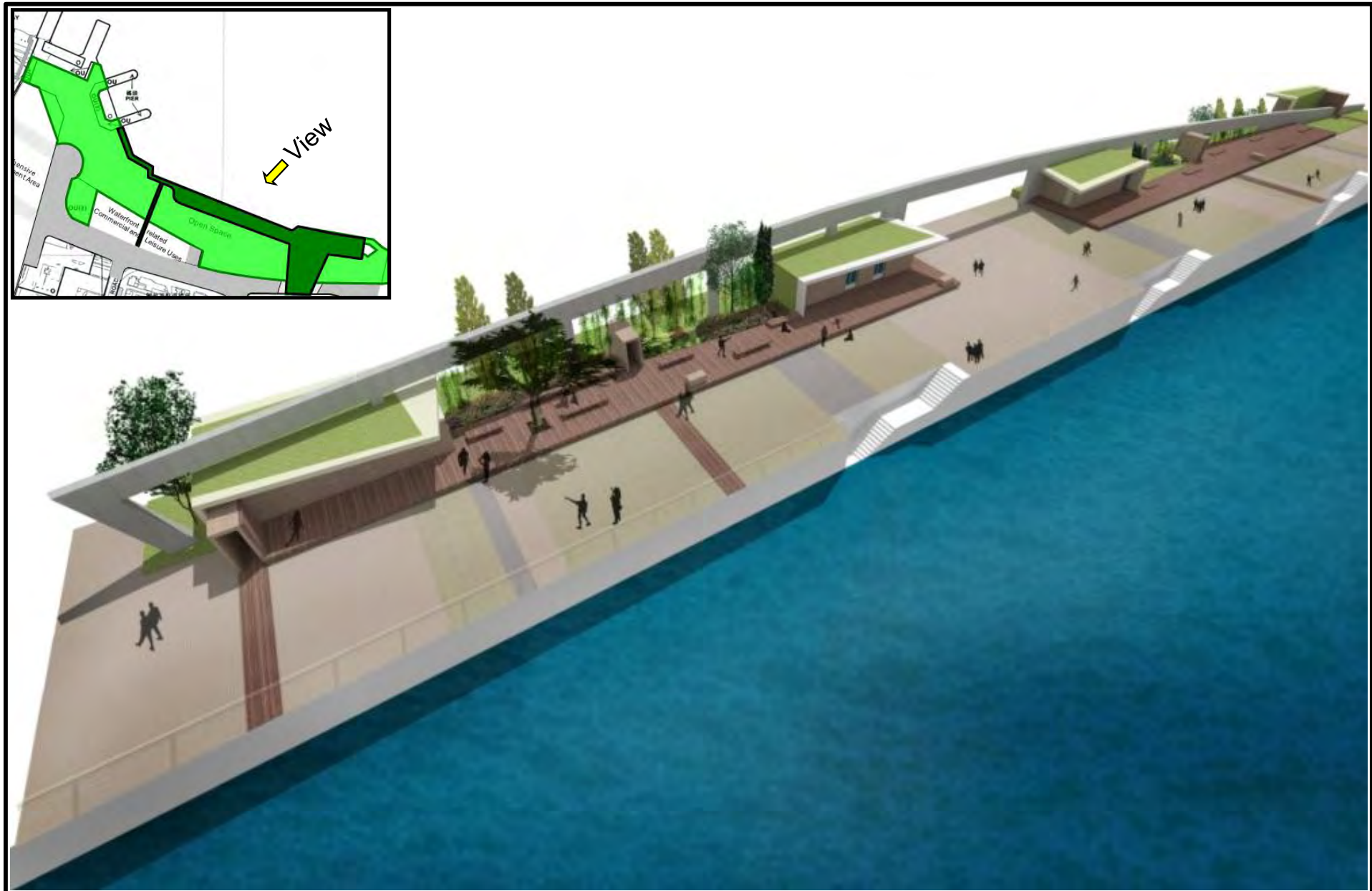


Figure 7 – Perspective View (7) of Advance Promenade

圖7 – 海濱長廊前期工程透視圖(7)