

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL ON HOME AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HERITAGE CONSERVATION**

**Preservation of the Open-Air Bazaar
at Tai Yuen Street and Cross Street**

PURPOSE

This paper updates Members on the proposed plan to preserve the entire open-air bazaar at Tai Yuen Street and Cross Street in Wan Chai and related issues.

BACKGROUND

2. There are about 150 licensed fixed hawker pitches located along Tai Yuen Street and Cross Street. To meet the needs of the rising population and pedestrian traffic generated by new residential and commercial development in the area, it was originally proposed that the 79 licensed fixed hawker pitches at Tai Yuen Street (South) and Cross Street (East) be relocated into a newly built market in the vicinity.

3. Due to the presence of the fixed pitch hawkers, Tai Yuen Street (South) is currently a cul-de-sac for two-way traffic during most of the day. Vehicular traffic entering Tai Yuen Street (South) from Queen's Road East will need to do a U-turn to re-access Queen Road's East. The proposed relocation of the licensed fixed hawker pitches at Tai Yuen Street (South) and Cross Street (East) will allow the opening up of Tai Yuen Street (South) and Cross Street (East) for one way traffic so that vehicles entering Tai Yuen Street (South) can re-access Queen's Road East by way of Cross Street (East) and Wan Chai Road.

4. This Subcommittee discussed the issues relating to the open-air bazaar at Tai Yuen Street and Cross Street at its meetings on 11 and 26 July 2007, including meeting the deputations. The Subcommittee has passed two motions, urging the Government to treasure the "bazaar" culture and retain the open-air bazaar at Tai Yuen Street and Cross Street so as to preserve local characteristics and protect local community economy. Individual hawkers, relevant concerns groups and conservation groups also strongly requested that the hawkers concerned

should not be relocated on account that the open-air bazaar was a unique city icon and tourist attraction with rich flavour of local culture. Besides, it was considered that the relocation of these hawkers would jeopardise the vibrancy and continued survival of the open-air bazaar as a whole. While individual District Council members who attended the above-mentioned Subcommittee meeting on 26 July 2007 also spoke in favour of retention, the relocation plan was in fact endorsed by the Wan Chai District Council.

PRESERVATION PLAN FOR TAI YUEN STREET AND CROSS STREET OPEN-AIR BAZAAR

5. Despite the advanced stage in taking forward the partial relocation of the hawker pitches in the Tai Yuen Street and Cross Street open-air bazaar, the Administration believed the strong aspirations expressed by the community and Subcommittee members call for a re-consideration of the matter. With the Development Bureau (DEVB) taking the lead, the relevant Government departments and the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) have carefully considered various factors, including the importance of retaining the district character of this part of Wan Chai, the implications on traffic and transport requirements in the area, and the impact on the public and the nearby residents. Having carefully balanced these factors, we have devised a plan for preserving the entire bazaar while addressing the traffic concerns. The special efforts and support rendered by the relevant departments and URA in making the proposal possible should be recognised. In his 2007-08 Policy Address delivered on 10 October 2007, the Chief Executive made reference to our plan for preserving the Tai Yuen Street and Cross Street open-air bazaar. Once endorsed by the Wan Chai District Council, we would further beautify the bazaar with local characteristics. This would form part of the efforts of the DEVB and URA in adopting a district-based approach to revitalise old Wan Chai.

6. Under the proposed plan, all licensed fixed hawker pitches at Tai Yuen Street and Cross Street can continue to stay. To address the traffic concern caused by U-turn traffic at Tai Yuen Street (South), the loading and unloading area on the ground floor of the new market within URA's redevelopment project at Tai Yuen Street (South) will be used for vehicle U-turn activities by the public. The U-turn area is owned by the Government and the URA has agreed, in principle, to manage it on the Government's behalf. The site plan is at the **Annex**.

7. Under the proposal, all future vehicular access to and from the URA development at Tai Yuen Street, including the new market, will be via Tai Yuen Street (South) into Queen's Road East direct, in the same way as the current traffic arrangements applicable to the existing commercial carpark at Tai Yuen Street adjacent to the URA development.

8. The Transport Department will implement a series of road safety and traffic management measures at and near Tai Yuen Street (South) to cater for the U-turn arrangement within the new market and to facilitate on-street loading and unloading activities and smooth flow of traffic at Tai Yuen Street (South). These traffic measures include –

Restriction of vehicles using Tai Yuen Street

- (a) prohibiting vehicles from entering Tai Yuen Street (South) except for those gaining access to that area;

Control of long vehicles accessing Tai Yuen Street

- (b) prohibiting vehicles longer than 7 metres from entering Tai Yuen Street (South). For vehicles accessing the new market or in need of loading or unloading, permits can be applied from the Transport Department;

Allowing on-street loading and unloading and maintaining smooth traffic flow

- (c) reducing the width of the eastern footpath of Tai Yuen Street (South) from 2.4 metres to 2 metres to facilitate loading and unloading activities along the western kerbside except during the peak periods from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.;
- (d) imposing 24-hour no-stopping restrictions at Tai Yuen Street (South) other than the above loading and unloading zone along the western kerbside to ensure smooth traffic flow;

Addressing U-turn problem

- (e) erecting an information traffic sign at Tai Yuen Street (South) to advise vehicles to make U-turn inside the new market in order to exit onto Queen's Road East; and

- (f) adding a short section of double white lines together with a “no U-turn” sign at Tai Yuen Street (South) near vehicle entrances to the U-turn area within the new market to prohibit potentially dangerous U-turn activities there.

The salient features of the proposed traffic arrangements are shown on the site plan at the Annex.

9. The proposed plan will allow the continued operation of the licensed fixed pitch hawkers at Tai Yuen Street (South) and Cross Street (East), while catering for road safety and traffic considerations as far as possible.

WAN CHAI MARKET

10. At the Subcommittee meeting on 11 July 2007, Members also passed a motion urging the Administration to conserve the Wan Chai Market which has been accorded a Grade III historical building status, by making every endeavour to renegotiate with the developers in order to achieve the objective of in-situ preservation. The DEVB, the URA and relevant Government departments are exploring various options to preserve the Wan Chai Market. Nevertheless, it is to be noted that legally, the URA is obliged to honour the redevelopment contract which was entered into by the then Land Development Corporation with the developer in 1996. In considering various options, there is a need to thoroughly examine, amongst others, the legal implications and contractual obligations of all parties concerned, the financial implications and the technical and practical feasibility of the conservation proposals.

11. Meanwhile, the FEHD is making the necessary steps to address the views expressed by the tenants in Wan Chai Market regarding the relocation to the new market in the Tai Yuen Street development. The FEHD is prepared to house the affected tenants on the ground floor of the new market, as suggested by the tenants themselves. FEHD will consult the tenant representatives and the Wan Chai District Council on the relevant arrangements.

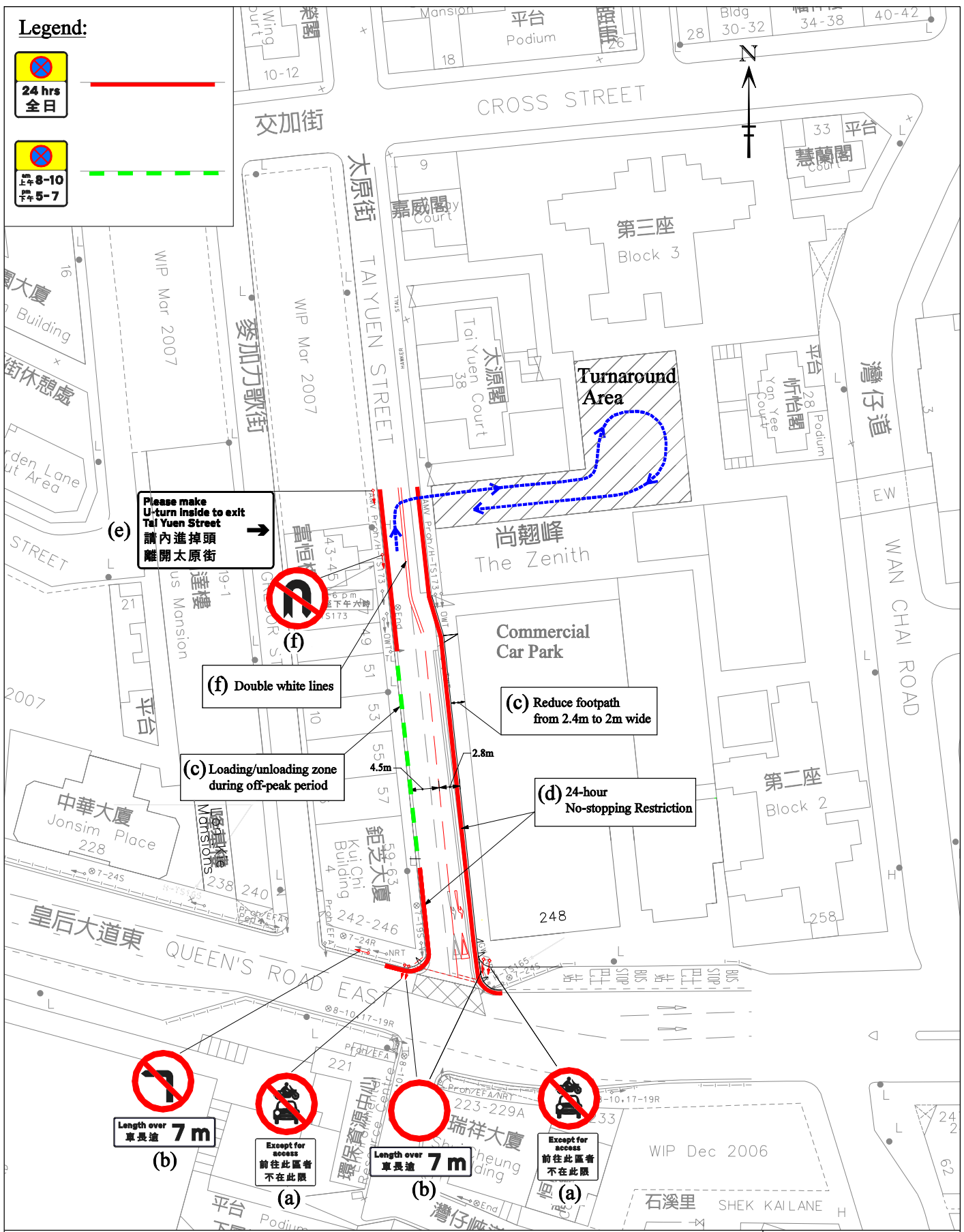
WAY FORWARD

12. We will consult the Wan Chai District Council and other stakeholders on the proposed plan to preserve the Tai Yuen Street and Cross Street open-air bazaar. We recognise that different parties may hold different views on the subject of preservation. Whilst the preservation proposal may be welcomed by some sectors of the community as highly worthwhile, others may feel inconvenienced by the retention of the bazaar. In the consultation process, we hope the Wan Chai District Council would assist to reflect the views of various stakeholders and help to forge a way forward on the subject. Once the proposed plan is endorsed, the relevant Government departments and the URA will work closely with the Wan Chai District Council to consult the hawkers and the community at large on the beautification initiatives for the bazaar to enhance its local characteristics.

Development Bureau

November 2007

Legend:



(e) Please make U-turn inside to exit Tai Yuen Street
請內進掉頭 離開太原街



(f) Double white lines

(c) Loading/unloading zone during off-peak period

(c) Reduce footpath from 2.4m to 2m wide

(d) 24-hour No-stopping Restriction

(b) Length over 7m
車長逾 7m

(a) Except for access
前往此區者
不在此限

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不在此限

Proposed Traffic Measures at Tai Yuen Street (South) for Preservation of the Entire Open-Air Bazaar

