

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)612/08-09(02)

Ref : CB2/PS/2/08

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

**Summary of views and suggestions made in the
Phase III Study Report of the Subcommittee on
West Kowloon Cultural District Development
for future monitoring of the project**

(1) Town planning and integration with neighbouring districts

Development parameters and development mix

- (a) Core Art and Cultural Facilities (CACF) should be built as iconic institutions to serve as the symbolic and anchor buildings in the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) and should integrate with the Residential, Dining and Entertainment (RDE) facilities in the WKCD project to create synergy and attract people flow.
- (b) The Town Planning Board (TPB) should give careful consideration to and properly address objections raised by a few parties on the imposition of the building height restrictions which may have an adverse impact on creative building designs and hinder the formulation of an optimal Development Plan at the subsequent stage of planning.
- (c) Areas at the immediate harbourfront should be designated for public enjoyment with lots of amenities and greening, and areas of public open space should not be too dispersed and should be conveniently accessible to the public including the wheelchair-bound.
- (d) Areas reserved for the development of Phase II arts and cultural facilities should be used as public open space in the interim and their design should be conducive to attracting people flow to the CACF and RDE facilities.

Public engagement in masterplanning

The West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCDA) should engage the public extensively in the drawing-up of the Development Plan for WKCD in a structured and systematic manner. Special attention should be given to the use of effective presentation methods to enable the public to visualize the spatial relationships of various land uses and facilities in relation to different development parameters and development mixes.

Professional support for WKCDA in masterplanning

The Planning Department (PD) should continue to play a role in assisting WKCDA in formulating the Development Plan and act as a link between WKCDA and the Administration in laying down suitable conditions for land sale and leases for the residential, office and hotel sites in WKCD.

Connectivity and revitalization of old districts

The planning of WKCD should aim at achieving integration with the neighbouring areas in the social, cultural and economic dimensions. Adequate facilities should be provided to ensure good physical connectivity. WKCDA should garner views from the public in drawing up the Development Plan and provide substantive recommendations to the Administration on the revitalization of the old districts in West Kowloon in light of the development of WKCD.

(2) Core arts and cultural facilities

Performance venues

- (a) More detailed studies should be conducted on the seating capacity and locations of the proposed performance venues and on whether special features or designs should be provided for the facilities to cater for special groups of audiences, e.g. children or the elderly.
- (b) International design competitions should be launched to obtain the best designs for the iconic facilities. Construction for these facilities should be pursued under separate design and construction contracts.
- (c) The timing for implementing the theatres in Phase II Development should be triggered by the proven demand for those in Phase I.
- (d) The convertibility of the mega performance venue into a smaller venue should be carefully considered, in particular if it would result in revenue reduction and under-utilization of seating space.
- (e) There should be optimum use of space earmarked for facilities in Phase II Development so as to build up the pedestrian flow for the entire WKCD area.
- (f) There should be a hiring policy for the use of the Piazza Areas so that public enjoyment of open space/green space would not be compromised.

Planning and development of M+

- (a) Bearing in mind that M+ would amount to a substantial increase by 52% of the total space provision of all the existing public museums in Hong Kong, its total capital costs will amount to \$4.749 billion, and 78% of the operating deficit of WKCD will come from M+, consideration should be given to whether the implementation of M+ could be deferred until sufficient experience has been built up or be further phased to allow for a more progressive implementation timeframe.
- (b) The Administration should explain to the general public in an easily comprehensible manner what M+ is meant to be, before starting to design and build the M+ infrastructure.
- (c) The Administration should make the optimum use of the interim M+ in North Point, not just as a training ground for future staff of M+ but as a temporary exhibition centre for public viewing and for testing out the M+ concept in a smaller scale.
- (d) The Administration should ensure full co-operation between M+ and the existing museums under the management of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) by promoting staff integration, such as staff attachment programmes, and putting in place contractual arrangements over the borrowing of collections from existing museums.
- (e) The Administration should encourage current local curatorial staff to take on the new challenges in M+, instead of relying entirely on curators from overseas as they may not understand the "Hong Kong perspective" as much as local curators.
- (f) WKCD should conduct more extensive consultation with the museum community before proceeding to establish the management board of M+ and recruiting the M+ staff.
- (g) WKCD should not adopt Design-and-Build mode of development for constructing M+ and should conduct a design competition if the iconic effect of M+ is crucial to the attraction of quality collections in future.
- (h) To enhance M+'s position as the major museum icon in Asia, M+ should also work closely with museums in the Mainland as well as those in the Asian region to facilitate exhibition of important collections from these places.

Synchronising of project works

- (a) Given the Administration's plan to implement, in terms of capital costs, some 92% of the core facilities within a six to seven year period, extra care should be exercised in programming, in particular, the Phase I

Development. Where appropriate, it should consider further phasing of the facilities to be built in Phase I.

- (b) WKCDA should be certain of what needs to be put in WKCD and how the individual components are configured in relation to one another. WKCDA should have access to enough experienced professionals for management of consultancy and works contracts, and the Administration should be forthcoming in rendering assistance in this regard.

(3) Financial arrangements

Financial assessment and management

- (a) The Subcommittee is concerned about WKCDA's capability in managing the upfront endowment of \$21.6 billion and the extent of control which can be exercised by LegCo and the Administration over WKCDA in this regard.
- (b) The Subcommittee is concerned about the Administration's assumptions on the low inflation rate (i.e. 2%, as compared with the year-on-year underlying inflation rate in Hong Kong of 5.1% in early 2008) in making its financial assessment.
- (c) The Administration should consider revising its financial proposal based on the "worst case" scenario.

WKCDA staffing levels

- (a) WKCDA should ensure clear delineation of responsibilities in the future organizational structure and full justifications for the staffing requirement of WKCDA, and the transparency and public accountability on the remuneration package to enable LegCo and the public to monitor the deployment of resources.
- (b) WKCDA should provide LegCo with regular reports including detailed information on the staff establishment, and the estimated and actual expenditure on outsourcing activities.

Major renovation and reconstruction of aged buildings after 50 years

WKCDA should give consideration to setting aside funding for its long-term repair and maintenance programme so that public funding would not be required for major renovations or re-construction after 50 years.

(4) WKCDA

Mission and objective

WKCDA should not be merely a body corporate for developing, managing and operating the hardware cultural venues, the RDE facilities and other communal facilities in WKCD. It should capitalize the opportunities offered by the WKCD project to catalyse the realization of a long-term arts and cultural vision for Hong Kong.

Public accountability and operational transparency

- (a) There should be accountability, transparency and good governance in WKCDA's operation. These cardinal principles must be built into the mode of operation of the statutory body.
- (b) WKCDA should be held accountable to LegCo and the public for its decisions and disposal of public resources. WKCDA should provide periodic reports to LegCo on the programme and estimates for the construction of CACF facilities, its business plans for CACF and RDE facilities, audited statements of accounts, and an account of the delivery of or delays in implementation of individual facilities.

Appointment mechanism

The mechanism for constituting WKCDA should be transparent, fair and objective. There should be a balanced composition of the Authority.

Public access to WKCDA meetings and papers

The Authority's proceedings should be highly transparent to enable the public to know and understand its decision-making process. There should be adequate public access to the information on the Authority's plans and activities.

Establishment of statutory consultation panels

The Subcommittee strongly believes that the establishment of statutory consultation panels would enable the Authority to garner views from stakeholders and the general public in a structured manner and on an on-going basis.

Delineation of funding responsibilities between WKCDA and existing government and statutory bodies

The Administration should take a critical look into funding system for the local arts and cultural community and devise measures to ensure effective use of public resources.

(5) Public engagement

- (a) WKCDA should allow the public to participate right at the beginning, even when the concept or proposal concerned is still at its embryonic stage, and adopt a non-prescriptive, empowering and participatory approach, whereby innovative ideas and alternative views are allowed to be dialectically debated.
- (b) An institutionalized mechanism should be established to allow stakeholders and the general public to put forward their views in a structured and systematic manner.

(6) Cultural policy and software development

- (a) Cultural software development in Hong Kong should measure up to and complement the hardware development in WKCD to achieve the objective of WKCD.
- (b) The Administration should review the usage and management of existing performing venues and other cultural facilities under the management of LCSD, taking into account the WKCD project.

(7) The Administration's role

While WKCDA should be autonomous and independent from the Administration, the Administration should provide policy steer in respect of the territory's cultural development which may include the enactment of legislation to regulate public museum services, coordinate the government infrastructure works in WKCD with those of WKCDA, plan and build facilities to achieve connectivity between WKCD and its neighbouring areas, undertake the necessary groundwork to prepare for the establishment of WKCDA and lastly, ensure that WKCDA will have adequate access to professional support to discharge its functions.

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12 January 2009