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

**Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat
for the meeting on 23 July 2014**

Park development in the West Kowloon Cultural District

Purpose

This paper provides updated information on the Park development in the West Kowloon Cultural District ("WKCD") and summarizes the major views and concerns expressed by members of the Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the West Kowloon Cultural District Project on the subject.

Background

2. The Development Plan ("DP") for WKCD, which was approved by the Chief Executive in Council in January 2013, was prepared by the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority ("WKCDA") based on the "City Park" conceptual plan designed by Foster + Partners ("F+P"). According to the approved DP, the Park is an integral part of the 23-hectare public open space to be provided in WKCD. The Park, located at the western end of WKCD, is among the first batch of the WKCD facilities to be delivered and is targeted to open by phases starting from around 2015. It will house a series of arts and cultural venues, including the Arts Pavilion and Freespace. Other planned provisions of the Park include retail, dining and entertainment facilities; cycling tracks and bicycle rental points; waterfront promenade and walks; marine landing facilities (subject to compliance with Protection of the Harbour Ordinance (Cap. 531) and agreement of the relevant government departments); and other recreational and leisure facilities.

3. The Joint Subcommittee was briefed on the progress of the Park development at its meeting on 23 April 2013. Members noted that six design teams shortlisted by WKCD A had submitted fee and technical proposals for the Park development and WKCD A's target was to appoint the selected design team in the second quarter of 2013. Members were also advised that WKCD A would prepare bylaws in accordance with the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority Ordinance (Cap. 601) for the management of the Park and the facilities to be provided therein.

4. The Joint Subcommittee was subsequently advised at its meeting on 3 July 2013 that in view of the challenge presented by project cost escalation, WKCD A would adopt a pragmatic approach to develop the Park as a quality open space with a simple design, with a view to facilitating early delivery of the Park and related facilities in a cost-effective manner. The Joint Subcommittee was further advised at its meeting on 29 November 2013 that with the revised approach for the Park development, a revised scope for the Park design consultancy emphasizing on early delivery, quality open space and cost containment while retaining the original design intention of the "City Park" concept under the WKCD DP was issued to the original six shortlisted design teams for re-tendering. According to WKCD A, assessment of the tender proposals would be completed by end 2013 and works for the Park was scheduled to commence in 2014 for target completion by end 2015.

Members' views and concerns

5. The major views and concerns raised by members of the Joint Subcommittee on the Park development at the meetings on 23 April, 3 July and 29 November 2013 are set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

Alternative development approach

6. Concern had been raised about WKCD A's plan to turn the fully landscaped Park as envisaged in F+P's "City Park" conceptual plan into quality open space with a simple design. WKCD A was urged to provide more details on the proposed alternative approach to develop the Park to facilitate members' discussion. Members also called on WKCD A to provide information on the estimated construction cost of the Park as soon as practicable.

7. The Administration and WKCD A explained that under the proposed alternative development approach, the facilities to be accommodated in the Park would remain largely the same as those proposed in the original scope of the Park development on the basis of F+P's conceptual plan, except that simpler designs for the Park and the facilities therein would be adopted.

WKCDA would expedite the development of the Park under the revised approach based on a reduced budget of \$1.0 billion (money-of-the-day ("MOD") prices)^{Note 1} including fees, etc. Public views on how the Park should be developed as a quality open space would be sought through the Consultation Panel ("CP") of WKCDA. WKCDA would revert to the Joint Subcommittee on its detailed plan for the Park development when ready.

Management of the Park

8. The management of the Park was another major concern of the Joint Subcommittee. Members noted that the former Subcommittee on the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Public Pleasure Grounds) (Amendment of Fourth Schedule) (No.2) Order 2012 ("the Subcommittee") formed under the House Committee in October 2012 had expressed grave concern over the arrangement whereby the waterfront promenade within the Park, which had been under the management of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD") and subject to statutory regulation before the gazettal of the Amendment Order, was handed over to WKCDA for use and management under a set of temporary and administrative house rules with no legal basis. Members also noted that in response to the Subcommittee's concerns, the Administration had advised that WKCDA would prepare bylaws for the management of the Park before its opening and would consult the Panel on Home Affairs or relevant subcommittee before the legislative process of the bylaws was initiated.

9. Given that the Park was targeted to open by phases starting from 2015, members generally urged WKCDA to expeditiously draw up the bylaws to facilitate proper management of the Park. Some members expressed the view that while WKCDA had the responsibility to ensure the safety of the public using the Park, it should adopt a more relaxed and flexible management approach and the bylaws to be drawn up should not prohibit the staging of street performances in WKCD or inhibit the public from enjoying the Park freely. They considered it more desirable for the bylaws to be enforced by the staff of or agents engaged by WKCDA, as they should be more familiar with WKCDA's organizational culture and approach in managing the Park.

10. WKCDA stressed that it attached great importance to the subject of how the Park should be managed and would strive to put in place appropriate arrangements to ensure the comfort and safety of the park users. The bylaws for the Park would be prepared with reference to the bylaws governing the operation of well-known local and overseas parks and cultural areas. WKCDA would seek to ensure that the proposed bylaws were not excessively restrictive in a way that would inhibit enjoyment of this important public

^{Note 1} According to the Administration and WKCDA, in November 2012, the ballpark project cost for developing the Park (Phase 1) was \$1,865 million (MOD prices) including fees, etc..

facility, and would consult the Joint Subcommittee on the proposed bylaws once ready. In the interim, WKCDA was managing the waterfront promenade within the Park, which was open to the public subject to works or events, with a set of temporary house rules.

Planting strategy

11. Members generally considered that the green coverage in WKCD should be enhanced and extensive tree planting should be provided within the Park and along the waterfront promenade, so as to provide for a pleasant pedestrian environment in WKCD. Some members expressed concern that certain species of trees might not be suitable for planting in the Park on the reclaimed WKCD site, and that the future landscape maintenance costs might be considerably high given the windy and exposed location of the Park. Hon Christopher CHUNG suggested that WKCDA should consider consulting relevant experts and departments such as LCSD before choosing the appropriate species of plants for planting in the Park.

12. WKCDA advised members that the planting strategy for the Park was prepared with the advice of specialist landscape architectural sub-consultants and due regard would be given to the fact that WKCD was a reclaimed site. To prepare for the development of the future Park, an 18 000 square metre temporary tree nursery was set up on the western end of the WKCD site. Apart from tree acclimatization, the tree nursery also served to test the adaptability and suitability of different plant species and to provide tree-related educational opportunities. The tree nursery works were completed in July 2013 and some 988 trees of 96 species had been planted. WKCDA would consider further consulting relevant experts and departments such as LCSD as appropriate when the Park came into detailed design stage.

Naming and facilities of the Park

13. Some members considered that a better name should be given to the Park and enquired whether the public would be consulted on the naming of the Park. Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan suggested that WKCDA might consider naming the Park as "Cultural Park". WKCDA advised that consideration would be given to conducting an open competition to solicit the community's suggestions and views on the name of the Park.

14. In response to members' enquiry about the cycling facilities to be provided in WKCD, WKCDA advised that there would be cycle paths in WKCD and a SmartBike system would be launched to provide an automated bicycle rental service on the waterfront promenade as a pilot scheme. Hon Cyd HO considered that as WKCD would be a popular location for families, WKCDA should make available bicycles for children in addition to

those for adults in launching the automated bicycle rental system in WKCD and appropriate measures should be put in place to prevent the bicycles for renting from being stolen. WKCDA was requested to update the Joint Subcommittee on the operation of the automated bicycle rental system in due course.

Latest development

15. On 28 February 2014, WKCDA announced the appointment of a design team led by Dennis Lau & Ng Chun Man Architects & Engineers (Hong Kong) Ltd. and supported by landscape architects, West 8 (Netherlands) and ACAL (Hong Kong), as the design consultant for the Park. According to WKCDA, the design team will administer the construction project across the whole Park site, design the Freespace (including a Black Box and an Outdoor Stage), work in collaboration with the architects for the Arts Pavilion to decide on the best location for the facility within the overall scheme, and liaise with the M+ design team on the interfacing area of the parkland which connects to the museum.

16. At the meeting of the Joint Subcommittee on 9 June 2014, members were advised that a taskforce was set up by CP of WKCDA in November 2013 to spearhead an engagement exercise to collect public views and ideas on the future use and management of the Park. The engagement exercise, which comprised an online survey and a series of focus group discussions, was launched in early May 2014. According to WKCDA, the results would be used as references to inform and guide the drafting of the bylaws for the Park.

17. The Administration and WKCDA will brief members on the scheme design of the Park as well as the use and management of the Park in preparation of the bylaws at the meeting on 23 July 2014.

Relevant papers

18. A list of the relevant papers on the Legislative Council website is in **Appendix**.

**Relevant papers on
Park Development in the West Kowloon Cultural District**

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Subcommittee on Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Public Pleasure Grounds) (Amendment of Fourth Schedule) (No.2) Order 2012	-	Report of the Subcommittee
Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the West Kowloon Cultural District Project	23 April 2013 (Item III)	Agenda CB(2)1008/12-13(04) Minutes
Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the West Kowloon Cultural District Project	3 July 2013 (Item II)	Agenda CB(2)1492/12-13(02) Minutes
Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the West Kowloon Cultural District Project	29.11.2013 (Item III)	Agenda CB(2)358/13-14(02) Minutes
Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the West Kowloon Cultural District Project	9.6.2014 (Item I)	CB(2)1693/13-14(01)