

For discussion on  
20 December 2017

**Legislative Council**  
**Panel on Development and Panel on Home Affairs**  
**Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the**  
**West Kowloon Cultural District Project**

**Update on the Development of the Art Park and Freespace**

**PURPOSE**

This paper provides an update on the development of the Art Park and Freespace in the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD).

**BACKGROUND**

2. The Art Park will be the green heart of WKCD and feature a rich variety of trees and green planting as well as open lawn spaces for leisure and relaxation. The Park will feature a waterfront promenade which wraps the entire headland area, offering spectacular views over the Victoria Harbour. It will provide a vibrant venue for open-air performances of music, dance and theatre as well as art exhibitions and other events, as well as space for showcasing large-scale outdoor sculptures and art installations curated by M+. A digital rendering of the aerial view of the Art Park is at **Annex 1**.

3. As an integral part of the 23-hectare public open space within WKCD, the Art Park will be completed in three phases. The first phase of the Park includes the south of the Nursery Park and part of the Promenade as well as the Lawn, which is a flexible space in the western area of the Park, capable of accommodating over 10 000 standing visitors for outdoor festivals, classical or pop concerts, and other performances. Phase 2 covers the surrounding of M+ Pavilion, the Small Lawn, the Event Lawn, part of the

Promenade, the Double Edged Design where all the retail and dining facilities are located, as well as the management office and storage block of the Park. Phase 3 covers Freespace and Outdoor Stage which will be completed at the same time as the Sloping Lawn above the interfacing car park next to M+ in Phase 3. A phasing plan of the construction of the Art Park is at **Annex 2**.

## **LANDSCAPING AND FACILITIES OF THE ART PARK**

4. The Art Park will have a green coverage of 60%, which meets the requirement as stipulated in the approved Development Plan. Structural and ornamental plantings emphasizing seasonal beauty, stimulation of the senses, microclimate enhancement and, most of all, leisure enjoyment are planned in the Park design. The thoughtfully landscaped grounds will contain a rich variety of trees and plants – including native woodland species, some of which will display attractive colours in different seasons; waterfront species which are salt tolerant and can be commonly found in the waterfront or areas close to the water; urban forest species that are sun tolerant and can be planted to provide shade while allowing sufficient space for pedestrian circulation and other activities, as well as a number of lawns.

5. With reference to different vegetation of hills surrounding Hong Kong, the overall planting design showcases the concept of ‘Urban Forest’ with a mix of over 50% of native species, other as naturalized and exotic species in Hong Kong. The concept shows some densely planted zones and forest like groups of trees along the main paths to create intimacy and contrast with the larger open spaces that will function as venues for events. In addition to the woodland planting of ficus species, the planting design is further categorised into different zones: the Cultural Boulevard serves as an urban boulevard with a diversity of flowering trees, solitary shade trees and exotic exceptions; the Event Lawn will be surrounded by palm trees along the Waterfront Promenade to facilitate different event setups against the backdrop of the Victoria Harbour; Cypress Forest creates a strong contrast in plant texture and an amazing autumn colour emphasising the seasonality. The overall planting design concept envisions the richness of textures and diversity of

planting within Art Park.

6. Alongside the green open space for public enjoyment, the Art Park integrates a wide range of facilities, including the M+ Pavilion and Freespace. A plan showing the location of the Art Park, M+ Pavilion and Freespace is at **Annex 3**. The venues in the Park will be linked by a cultural boulevard, an extension from the Avenue that runs through the heart of WKCD. Opportunities to cycle within and beyond the Park will also be provided to enrich the variety of leisure experience. The retail and dining facilities at the Double Edged Design in the southern edge of the Park allow visitors to enjoy the grandeur of harbourview at different levels. The interfacing car park will be provided next to M+ underneath the eastern part of the Park, providing 209 parking spaces.

7. Located within the Art Park amid public space, the M+ Pavilion, opened in late July 2016, is the first permanent facility completed in WKCD. It offers a respite from hectic city life with a smart simplistic approach that allows it to blend into its environment. Mirrored external walls reflect the surrounding expanses of greenery and immerse the building in the Art Park setting. To further this experience, the Pavilion's main exhibition space is elevated, allowing it to float above the foliage, creating the opportunity for artwork to be appreciated against a backdrop of the unparalleled Hong Kong Island skyline with spectacular views of Victoria Harbour. The M+ Pavilion currently serves as the home base for M+ in the run-up to the completion of the M+ building in 2019; by then, it will be a space for Hong Kong's creative communities to stage small-scale exhibitions and events and be renamed the Arts Pavilion.

8. Situated in the centre of the Art Park and next to the Lawn, Freespace invites visitors to freely explore, encounter and be inspired by new artistic experiences through innovative programming across all genres. This black box theatre will provide a flexible performance space with an audience capacity of 450 if seated or 900 standing. There is also a foyer where live music will be presented in a bar/ café environment with an audience capacity of 100 if seated or 150 standing and a multi-purpose function hall

with 100 seats. Digital rendering of the Art Park and Freespace is at **Annex 4**; and a close-up rendering of Freespace is at **Annex 5**.

9. To complement the future provision of cycling track in WKCD, WKCD launched Hong Kong's first bike sharing programme, the SmartBike, in April 2014 to encourage visitors to use bicycles as a sustainable means of getting around the future Art Park. Currently, there are two bike rental points, one next to the WKCD entrance and the other near the Big Circle in the Nursery Park. There will be three self-service points in the Art Park. Upon the software upgrade completed in mid-2018, bike reservation could be made via mobile application. In addition, bike locking/unlocking will only be allowed at designated locations to avoid illegal parking.

## **CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS**

10. At the last meeting of the Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the WKCD Project (Joint Subcommittee) on 21 November 2017, Members were informed that the construction of the Art Park was on track and Phase 1 is expected to be completed by end of this year. The aim is to open Phase 1 to visitors gradually by the second quarter of 2018. Phase 2 is expected to be completed by the third quarter of 2018 while the final phase with Freespace by end of 2018. The waterfront promenade in front of the Art Park and M+ will be open in phases starting from 2018.

11. Freespace was officially topped out in July 2017, while architectural builders work and finishing and building services installations associated with Freespace are underway. Wall plastering and painting at the G/F and 1/F, in spaces such as the green room, technical office, toilets and other back-of-house areas are also well underway. Work on the superstructures for the management office and storage block of the Art Park is also moving ahead well. Site formation is on-going to the north (rear) of the RDE Blocks where an earth berm will integrate the RDE into the landscape and topographical designs and provide access to the rooftop walkway, which will allow the public to have excellent views across the waterfront and Victoria Harbour.

12. As reported in the Joint Subcommittee meeting on 21 November 2017, 512 out of 937 trees in the Nursery Park were selected for the permanent Art Park. These trees are being transferred to the Art Park and planting of trees and shrubs are ongoing for Phases 1 and 2 and another around 1 000 trees are being selected from tree nurseries in the Mainland for planting for Phases 1 and 2.

13. A mock-up for the dry river is being tested. The dry river is a landscaping feature mimicking the shape of a winding stream. The river bed will be lined with natural rocks and stones, rainwater will be channelled into the dry river to assist drainage from the surrounding area during the rainy season. This water will be recycled as irrigation for plants when available.

### **FREESPACE OPENING PLAN**

14. The opening schedule of Freespace will include an opening festival followed by a full year of programming, comprising invited local and international performances, WKCD self-produced performances, external hirers, and more. Genres include dance, theatre, music, and multi-media art forms.

15. A Spring/Summer season will present performances, workshops and talks, primarily in-doors, utilizing the Freespace's various performance and event spaces. An Autumn/Winter season will extend programming into the Art Park, especially the Lawn adjacent to Freespace. Outdoor events will focus on concerts, multi-art forms, WKCD commissioned music productions, local co-productions and international music and multi-art groups, as well as learning and participation activities for the community.

### **STREET PERFORMANCE SCHEME**

16. Street performances are an important part of a city's cultural life. WKCD has established a Street Performance Scheme (Scheme) to encourage street entertainment that adds to the colour and life of WKCD. The Scheme allows the general public to enjoy a

wide variety of performances in suitable public space initially within the Nursery Park but in due course within the Art Park and eventually throughout the District.

17. The Scheme was established on 1 August 2015 with a set of guidelines highlighting the importance of cooperation and mutual respect in the sharing of public space by street performers, the public and other users. According to the guidelines, all street performers in WKCD are required to hold a valid permit and comply with the regulations on volume, performance hours, performance duration and location. In drawing up the guidelines, reference has been made to similar city-wide policies in other countries/economies such as Australia, Canada, France, Singapore, Taiwan, UK and USA as well as specific locations such as Covent Garden (London), Fisherman's Wharf and Santa Monica (California), and *Music under New York* (New York). As at December 2017, 398 Street Performance Permits have been issued by WKCDA since the establishment of the Scheme.

### **ADVICE SOUGHT**

18. Members are invited to note the latest development of the Art Park and Freespace in WKCD.

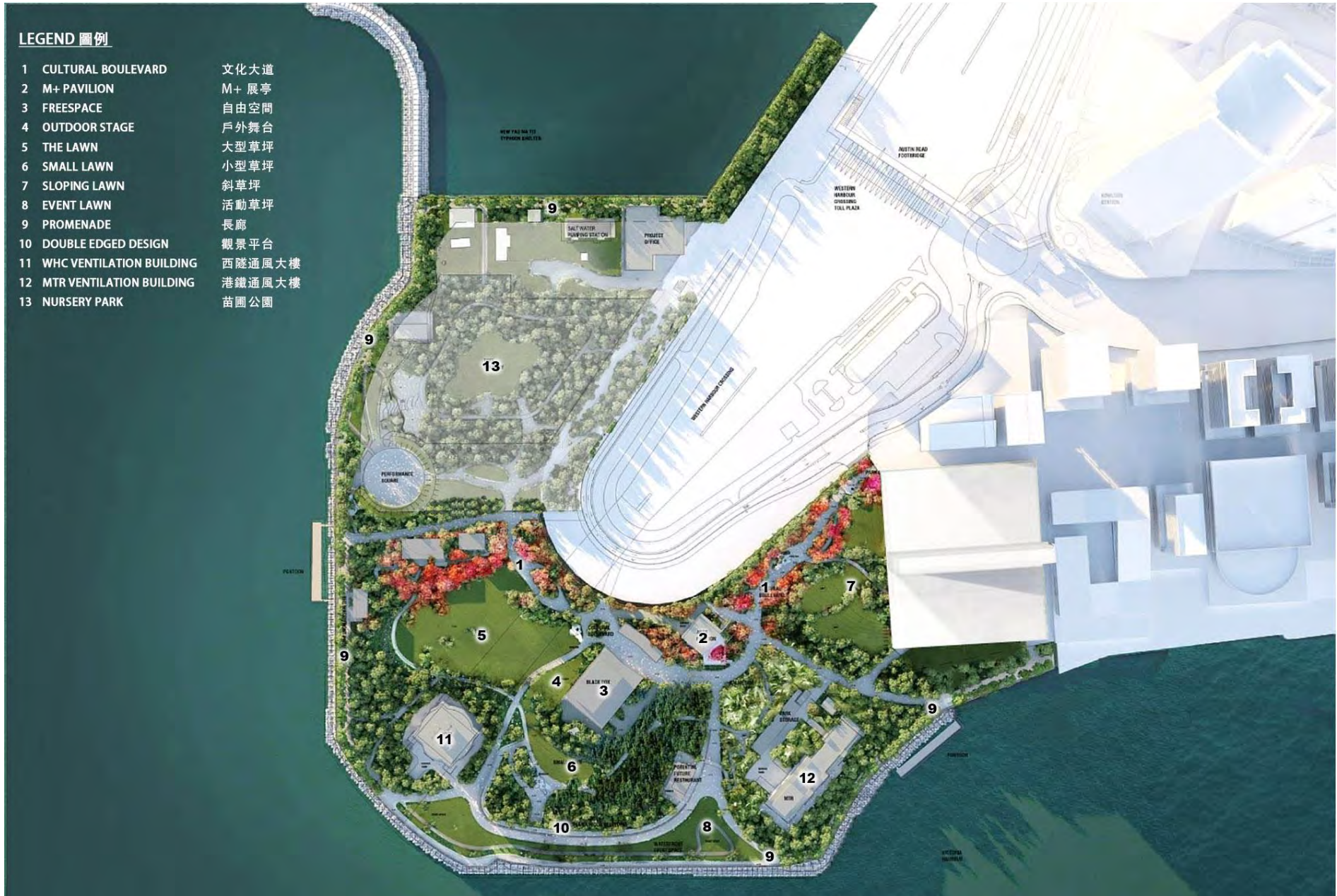
**West Kowloon Cultural District Authority**  
**December 2017**

附件一：藝術公園鳥瞰圖（數碼繪製圖）

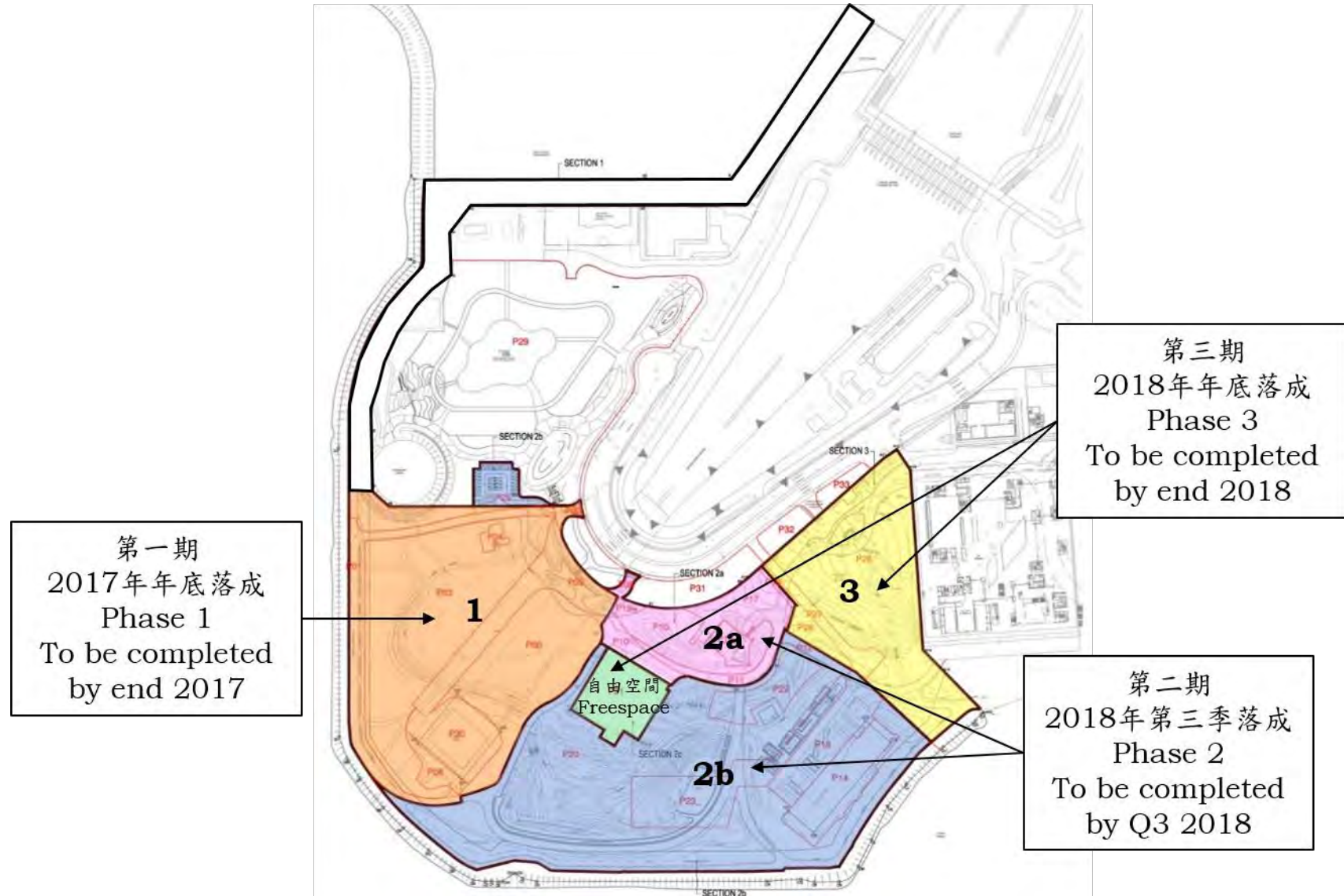
Annex 1: Digital rendering of the aerial view of the Art Park

LEGEND 圖例

- |    |                          |        |
|----|--------------------------|--------|
| 1  | CULTURAL BOULEVARD       | 文化大道   |
| 2  | M+ PAVILION              | M+ 展亭  |
| 3  | FREESPACE                | 自由空間   |
| 4  | OUTDOOR STAGE            | 戶外舞台   |
| 5  | THE LAWN                 | 大型草坪   |
| 6  | SMALL LAWN               | 小型草坪   |
| 7  | SLOPING LAWN             | 斜草坪    |
| 8  | EVENT LAWN               | 活動草坪   |
| 9  | PROMENADE                | 長廊     |
| 10 | DOUBLE EDGED DESIGN      | 觀景平台   |
| 11 | WHC VENTILATION BUILDING | 西隧通風大樓 |
| 12 | MTR VENTILATION BUILDING | 港鐵通風大樓 |
| 13 | NURSERY PARK             | 苗圃公園   |



附件二：藝術公園分階段發展圖  
Annex 2: Phasing Plan of the Art Park





附件三：藝術公園、M+展亭和自由空間的位置圖

Annex 3: Location of the Art Park, M+ Pavilion and Freespace



附件四：藝術公園和自由空間數碼繪製圖  
**Annex 4: Digital rendering of the Art Park and Freespace**



附件五：自由空間數碼繪製圖—大型草坪連同戶外舞台

**Annex 5: Digital rendering of Freespace – The Lawn with space for Outdoor Stage**

