



香港城市設計學會  
Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design

4 April 2019

By email: [panel\\_dev@legco.gov.hk](mailto:panel_dev@legco.gov.hk)  
The LegCo Panel on Development  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Sir,

Re: LegCo Panel on Development: "Studies related to artificial islands in the central waters"

On behalf of the Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design, we would like to provide comments on "Studies related to artificial islands in the central waters".

Should there be any queries, please kindly contact me or Ms. Cherry Lau, our Administrative Officer at 2235 9057.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Y. TAM', written over a horizontal line.

( P. Y. TAM )

Chairman, Public Affairs Committee, HKIUD

Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design Limited



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**LegCo Panel on Development**  
**“Studies related to artificial islands in the central waters”**  
**Special meeting on 13 April 2019**

**A submission by the Public Affairs Committee of the Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design**

**Visions and positioning**

1. Putting the subject in context, the ELM idea has been raised in the HK2030+ vision and is a long-term development strategy. The subject area was a recommended long-term housing land supply option by the Task Force on Land Supply. Whilst the proposed artificial islands would unlikely be able to overcome the imminent housing land shortage problem, the other side of the coin is we could take the necessary time to carry out thorough studies to make sure that the vision would be implemented properly in due course. It is therefore considered opportune to commence a study today rather than procrastinating further arguments aimlessly.
2. We concur that the location is conducive to it becoming a “double-gateway” connecting with the existing urban area as well as the Greater Bay Area. Vis-à-vis the cities in the GBA, the ELM must have a scale that can compete with or be complementary to its counterparts. Whilst the site could also contribute to relieving the pressure and upgrading of Hong Kong’s existing, older urban areas by taking up some of their functions, the area must be provided timely with connections by efficient and affordable transport facilities. This brings up questions as to the roles of the transport links now shown diagrammatically, how much they are to serve as intra-city or inter-city links, and consequently whether they need to be supported by certain densification of adjoining catchment areas. For example, Tuen Mun East and So Kwu Wat, etc. could be relevant subjects also to be included in the scope of the proposed Study.
3. The development must not only emphasise on building of the hardwares. There is considerable concern about possible mis-match in the provision of jobs, noting the rapidly ageing population and substantial proportion of public housing development compared to the proposed CBD functions.
4. No matter how the land-use mixes would be recommended in the outcome of the Study, the community justifiably aspires to a quality environment in the new development area. As a vision, we should have forward thinking instead of duplicating the concepts and design methods of the last century.

**Public engagement**

5. As the vision is such a long term one and the investment involved is enormous, it is essential to gain the community’s strong and steady support from the beginning and throughout the course of implementation. It is therefore vital to engage the public

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extensively, including the younger generation – for they would likely constitute most of the users in future when the development is ripe.

6. As professionals, we would also like to continue to monitor the process at various stages as there may be changes at a future date.
7. The CBD-3 concept transpires that the area would be like Central District, with which it is going to compete or complement. The scale as given to understand by Government, of some 1,000 hectares and 400,000 housing units would be much larger than just a business centre. Like the general public, we wish to know how this area would be developed into a balanced community with provision for people of different income groups at different ages and for the small and medium enterprises and not just the large corporations.

#### **Queries and risks**

8. There appears to be a risk of mis-understanding during public consultation if the terms carry different meanings to different parties. e.g. “public housing” is meant to include “subsidized home ownership” and not just public rental housing. Government should make necessary clarifications whenever there are such ambiguities for making public engagement effective.
9. Some basic assumptions and sources of information are also considered outdated, e.g. the CTS-3 was done before 1997, and there have been a lot of changes in the modes and patterns of transportation since then. RDS-2014 was also somewhat outdated and its coverage restrictive. RDS-2014 only reviewed the remaining unbuilt lines left from the previous RDS-2000. RDS-2014 made reference to the “HK2030 planning vision and strategy” done in 2007, and the latter is now in fact already superseded by “HK2030+”. Forecast into the future for such a large scale of development should be based on more up to date information.

#### **Better living environment is the goal**

10. The vision and goals should be set out more clearly with priority on the pursuit for a living environment of better quality than the congested urban areas of today, although there is, up to a point, merit for the city matrix to be compact. The HK2030+ vision recommended increasing the per-person provision of GIC land and open spaces in future. Whilst it is only a spatial standard, other policy and administrative measures, resources, manpower and training have also to be enhanced to accord, e.g. the current arrangement of management of open spaces by LCSD may have to be reviewed. It may also necessitate updating of relevant parts of the HKPSG. It may be worthwhile to explore alternative mechanisms of management involving the private sector.
11. In view of the islands character and high landscape value as identified in Planning Department’s Landscape Value Mapping, a **balance needs to be struck between**

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**conservation of the coastal features and ecology with the future development.** A thorough ecological survey of the flora and fauna is essential, since the impacts of development may be irreversible

12. Alternative land formation methods other than reclamation should be explored, with a view to possible shortening of the period of impacts to the existing sea bed and marine life.
13. Waterfronts should be made easily accessible, and connected to a people-oriented and walkable outdoor space network. Priority should be given to pedestrians over vehicles in the new development area.

#### **Urban design framework** –

14. The public realm must not be dominated by massive infrastructures and engineering structures. The present development control mechanism under the Town Planning Ordinance gives way to projects approved under the ordinances for roads and rails. This is highly undesirable. The Town Planning Ordinance may need to be reviewed. In the meanwhile, as we are starting the planning and design afresh, the planning of roads, rails and bridges should be limited and clearly defined in an overall Urban Design framework.
15. In pursuit for a quality living environment, the new development areas should be **sustainable, green and resilient, well connected, walkable, inclusive** for population of different ages, and planned with 3-dimensional considerations. There should be a strong urban design theme which can bring out the special character of the locality and its context. Qianhai in Shenzhen has conducted design competitions which successfully produced the urban matrix integrated with its water courses. Hong Kong should be able to do better since the Study area is larger and has much more potentials of land and marine features.
16. An **urban design framework** could also help the **formulation of site-specific development control guidelines** upon implementation of individual sites. The team of consultancies for the Study **should include experienced urban designers**, among other professionals in a multi-disciplinary team. Urban design essentially is a multi-disciplinary profession and is best positioned to advise on all urban design matters.

#### **Technology and innovation** –

17. There appears to be ample opportunities for the application of smart city and other new technologies, such as: carbon neutral designs, autonomous vehicles, artificial intelligence, car sharing, eco-shorelines, etc.
18. Whilst there is a need to tackle the impacts of climate change, it may be worthwhile to capitalise on these forces, e.g. the use of solar, wind and wave energies.

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### **Overall**

19. Last but not least, we would reiterate our concern about how the consultancy is to be procured or engaged. In view of urban design's significant roles throughout the Study process – from the creative thinking and setting of an urban design framework in the envisioning stage all the way to guiding the detailed design of individual projects in the implementation stage, it is imperative that there is a due proportion of urban design expertise in the Study team if we are to give our full support to the proposed Study. In this light we are confident and hopeful that the Lantau Tomorrow vision would be successfully accomplished.

Ends

**THE HONG KONG INSTITUTE OF URBAN DESIGN**

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