

For discussion on
9 December 2019

Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs

**Pre-construction Activities
for Expansion of Hong Kong Science Museum and
Hong Kong Museum of History**

PURPOSE

This paper seeks Members' support for the pre-construction activities for the proposed expansion of Hong Kong Science Museum (HKScM) and Hong Kong Museum of History (HKMH).

BACKGROUND

2. To support the development of museums, expand the audience base and further promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education, history, arts and culture, the Government announced in the 2018 Policy Address the plan to expand

HKScM and HKMH. The project seeks to improve the museum complex facilities to align with the latest international standards for museum design and facilities for enhanced promotion of science and history to the public; to enlarge the area for display of the latest discoveries in science, frontier innovations and cutting-edge technologies in HKScM and presentation of blockbuster exhibitions and related educational programmes in HKMH; to improve accessibility of HKScM and HKMH in the heart of Hong Kong; and to enhance cultural vibrancy of the Tsim Sha Tsui East area by providing a wide variety of exhibitions, educational programmes, events and leisure spaces.

PROJECT SITE

3. The site, in Tsim Sha Tsui East, accommodating HKScM and HKMH has been developed in planned phases for the construction of a museum complex. The development was proposed to be implemented in three phases.¹ - HKScM, and then HKMH and the expansion of HKScM. HKScM and HKMH were completed and opened in 1991 and 1998 respectively. It is now proposed that a reserved site of around 1 900 square metres (m²) (Site 1) at the backyard of the two museums and

¹ The existing land in Tsim Sha Tsui where HKScM and HKMH are located was demarcated for construction of a museum complex under Government Land Allocation K265. The Town Planning Board (TPB) Application No. A/K1/49 was approved on 14 August 1987 for the development of a museum complex in three phases - Phase I, the construction of the Museum of Science and Technology (former name of HKScM); Phase II, the expansion of the Museum of Science and Technology; and then the construction of HKMH in Phase III. In 1991, HKScM was constructed. According to the TPB Application A/K1/78 dated 19 May 1995, HKMH would be constructed before the possible expansion of HKScM. HKMH was constructed in 1998. Following the same TPB Application, possible expansion of HKScM would be proceeded, with the expansion of HKMH, which is under consideration of this paper.

an open space of around 7 600 m² (Site 2) should be used for the expansion of HKScM and HKMH. The site and location plan is at **Enclosure.**

PROJECT SCOPE

4. The proposed scope of the pre-construction activities includes –
 - (i) design work for the expansion of HKScM and HKMH with facilities as set out in paragraph 5 below;
 - (ii) site investigation works and minor studies² to facilitate the design work mentioned in paragraph 4(i) above; and
 - (iii) preparation of tender documents (including tender drawings) and assessment of tenders for construction works of the expansion of HKScM and HKMH.

5. The project scope of the proposed expansion of HKScM and HKMH comprises the construction of annex buildings with new facilities for both museums and re-provisioning of the affected or out-of-date facilities, which include –
 - (i) galleries and exhibition space for HKScM, including thematic exhibition galleries, innovative experiential centres, permanent exhibition galleries, a special exhibition gallery and outdoor interactive exhibition areas;

² Site investigation works and minor studies include updated topographical and tree surveys, ground investigation, geotechnical assessment, utility mapping, air ventilation assessment and condition survey, etc.

- (ii) education facilities for HKScM, including multi-purpose hall, makerspace, science laboratories, workshops and classrooms;
- (iii) exhibition space and education facilities for HKMH, including special exhibition gallery, learning centre and activity rooms;
- (iv) re-provisioning of the affected facilities and improvements of interfacing between the existing and new facilities/exterior of HKScM and HKMH;
- (v) improvements of HKMH's accessibility, internal circulation for people and goods, as well as venue operation, such as the addition of new escalators, provision of access points for wheelchair users, replacement of existing freight lift for transportation of artefacts, etc.;
- (vi) enhancement of the piazzas and their adjoining public spaces;
- (vii) cafe/restaurant and shop;
- (viii) office facilities for future museum staff;
- (ix) exhibits workshops and storage;
- (x) beautification of public pavement, landscaped areas and surrounding outdoor space;
- (xi) realignment of pedestrian and vehicle circulation including re-provisioning of the existing ramp connecting footbridge across Granville Road, provision of ancillary parking spaces to meet the operational needs of the museums, and provision of loading/unloading facilities and lay-by spaces; and
- (xii) other ancillary facilities including toilets, baby care rooms and plant rooms, etc.

JUSTIFICATIONS

The Hong Kong Science Museum

6. Since its opening in 1991, HKScM has been featuring about 600 exhibits in 17 permanent exhibition galleries with a total exhibition space of 6 500 m². The museum aims at promoting science popularisation in Hong Kong and arousing public's interest in the learning of science through hands-on experience. HKScM has been getting more popular and attracted more than a million visitors per year in the past five years. In view of the popularity of the museum and the high usage rate of various facilities, the existing space and facilities are insufficient. A feasibility study³ conducted earlier on has benchmarked HKScM against a number of international science museums and revealed that with a floor area of 13 500 m², HKScM was significantly smaller than its overseas counterparts. To maintain HKScM's competitiveness in the 21st century with fast-paced advances in science and technology, upgrading HKScM in both its capacity and facilities is of paramount importance.

7. More than 75% of HKScM's permanent galleries focus on natural sciences such as physics, biology, mathematics and earth sciences, while the rest cover topics on transportation, home technology and

³ Aecom conducted a feasibility study in 2015 and compared HKScM with 11 world-class science museums including California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, California; Exploratorium, San Francisco, California; The Tech Museum of Innovation, San Jose, California; Ontario Science Centre Toronto, Canada; Science Museum, London, United Kingdom; Shanghai Science & Technology Museum, Shanghai; Shanghai Natural History Museum, Shanghai; China Science and Technology Museum, Beijing; Guangdong Science Center, Guangzhou; National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation, Tokyo, Japan; and Science Centre Singapore.

telecommunications. In the past few decades, rapid advances in science and technology have been playing crucial roles in stimulating economic growth of societies worldwide. There is a strong demand from the public for HKScM to keep pace with the technological developments and showcase the latest discoveries, research findings and cutting-edge technological innovations in the exhibition galleries. With the significantly increased floor area after the expansion, new exhibition space will be available for showcasing local achievements in scientific research and innovation. In addition, the new special exhibition hall could also facilitate the organisation of large-scale special exhibitions with renowned museums and institutions in the world.

8. Provision of informal education programmes is another core function of HKScM. At present, with the very limited venue space and supporting facilities, which include one classroom, one laboratory and one computer classroom installed with very basic and simple equipment, it is very difficult for the museum to organise diversified science communication activities and joint-school exhibitions, or to support the increasing demand for local STEM-related education programmes. Therefore, there is an urgent need to increase its size and add new facilities, particularly the provision of the multi-purpose hall, workshops and laboratories with advanced tools and equipment, discussion spaces and experiment rooms which are found in science museums around the world.

The Hong Kong Museum of History

9. Established in 1975, HKMH⁴ is dedicated to promoting local history of Hong Kong to the public, as well as fostering public awareness and understanding of the history and culture of China and overseas countries. There is a total exhibition space of 8 000 m² with one permanent and one special exhibition galleries in the current museum premises. *The Hong Kong Story* permanent exhibition, occupying an area of 7 000 m², vividly outlines the natural environment, folk culture and historical development of Hong Kong. The exhibition attracted an attendance of over one million per year during the period of 2014 to 2018 and is undergoing a full-scale renovation to sustain its appeal to the public, cultivate a wider audience base, as well as to enrich visitors' experience and attract visitation. However, the one-way visitor circulation design and accessibility provisions installed two decades ago are far from meeting the contemporary international museum standards. Improvement in this regard is therefore required before we could enhance visitors' experience and align the museum with the latest international museum standards.

10. Furthermore, special exhibitions on various themes of local or world history are featured regularly at the special exhibition gallery, but the existing gallery, 980 m² in size with 3.3 m headroom, does not cater for the presentation of large-scale exhibition with sizable exhibits, and

⁴ In 1975, HKMH was first established at Star House in Tsim Sha Tsui. It was subsequently moved to the temporary accommodation in Kowloon Park in 1983 and its present premises on Chatham Road South, Tsim Sha Tsui East in 1998.

restricts the museum from staging world-class exhibitions in collaboration with internationally acclaimed museums. Apart from the need of better exhibition space, HKMH also requires new facilities to deliver educational programmes for various target groups, such as physical interactions with historical objects to enhance visitors' skills and knowledge in experiencing and understanding history, so as to strengthen the support to school curriculum. With the new exhibition and education facilities, HKMH would be able to present more world-class exhibitions and organise more innovative and diversified audience building and educational programmes with a view to stimulating the interest of students and youngsters, as well as engaging the community with new and fresh learning experience.

The Disconnected Neighbourhood

11. At present, the public entrances of the two museums all lie on the southern side of the site and connect only to a fraction of the public circulation system around the area, rendering the accessibility of the museums unsatisfactory. In line with the prevalent design decades ago, HKScM and HKMH are walled up with an uninviting vibe. The museums are cut off from the surrounding streetscape and stand in striking contrast with the hustle and bustle in the vicinity. The current piazzas, especially the upper one, are very much under-utilised and have little connections with the two museums. The old framework of the museum buildings lacking leisure space and supporting facilities is not enticing to the community. In order to invigorate the area, it is essential

for the museums to enhance their accessibility, exposure and connectivity with the neighbourhood, and to provide more leisure and activity spaces for the public.

The Refreshed Museum Complex and the Invigorated Neighbourhood

12. Against this background, the expansion of HKScM and HKMH, forming a refreshed museum complex amid the invigorated neighbourhood, is envisaged to achieve the following objectives through expansion in both the scale and breath of activities:

- (i) To expand the scope of HKScM by showcasing more cutting-edge technologies and innovations using the additional space in the new annex buildings;
- (ii) To complement the existing HKScM as a full-fledged world-class museum with state-of-the-art facilities, exhibits and programmes that can provide a pleasant learning experience to visitors, and strengthen its role as a leading science and technology education hub interconnecting the Greater Bay Area, promoting appreciation of the scientific and technological developments of China as well as the rest of the world;
- (iii) To inspire and groom more talented students in support of the economic development of local scientific and technology research industries, through connecting science and the community, complementing school education by the provision of extra-curricular STEM extended-learning activities, and showcasing scientific and technological developments and achievements;

- (iv) To reinforce HKMH's leading role in promoting Chinese, local and world history to the public, and to cultivate a wider audience base, by constantly striving to present high quality blockbuster exhibitions at the enhanced exhibition galleries to members of the public and visitors;
- (v) To equip HKMH with enhanced education facilities, improve accessibility and visitor circulation design, and implement series of innovative and diversified audience building and educational programmes, in support of school education and catering for the learning needs of people with disabilities as well as other underprivileged groups, so as to enhance the learning experience of visitors, school groups, families and persons with special needs; and
- (vi) To invigorate the museum complex and the neighbourhood with improved visual and spatial connectivity, contemporary design and enhanced accessibility, as well as to establish a district icon to boost district character and identity.

PROJECT ESTIMATE AND TIME SCHEDULE

13. The estimated cost of pre-construction activities of the proposed expansion is \$72.8 million in money-of-the-day prices. The proposed pre-construction activities will not give rise to any recurrent expenditure. Subject to the funding approval of the Finance Committee (FC), we plan to engage consultants to commence the design and site investigations in the second quarter of 2020 for completion in the fourth quarter of 2022.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

14. We consulted Yau Tsim Mong District Council on the project scope of the proposed expansion at its meeting on 28 March 2019. Members supported the project unanimously and urged for its early implementation. The Tsim Sha Tsui East Property Developers Association⁵ was consulted on 19 February 2019. They fully supported the expansion and agreed that the project could effectively enhance the vitality of the area. We also consulted the Museum Advisory Committee⁶ on 21 April 2017, Museum Expert Advisers⁷ of the two museums on 27 November and 13 December 2018, and HKScM's partners on 12 July 2019 and they strongly supported the expansion to enhance museum services.

ADVICE SOUGHT

15. Members are invited to note the contents of this paper and support the submission of the funding application in respect of the pre-construction activities for the proposed expansion of HKScM and

⁵ The Tsim Sha Tsui East Property Developers Association was founded in 1982 and committed to the development of the district into a popular commercial and shopping attraction for locals and overseas tourists.

⁶ The Museum Advisory Committee is an advisory body that advises the Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (DLCS) on a wide range of subject matters such as strategies for development, promotion and management of the public museums and related offices under the purview of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD).

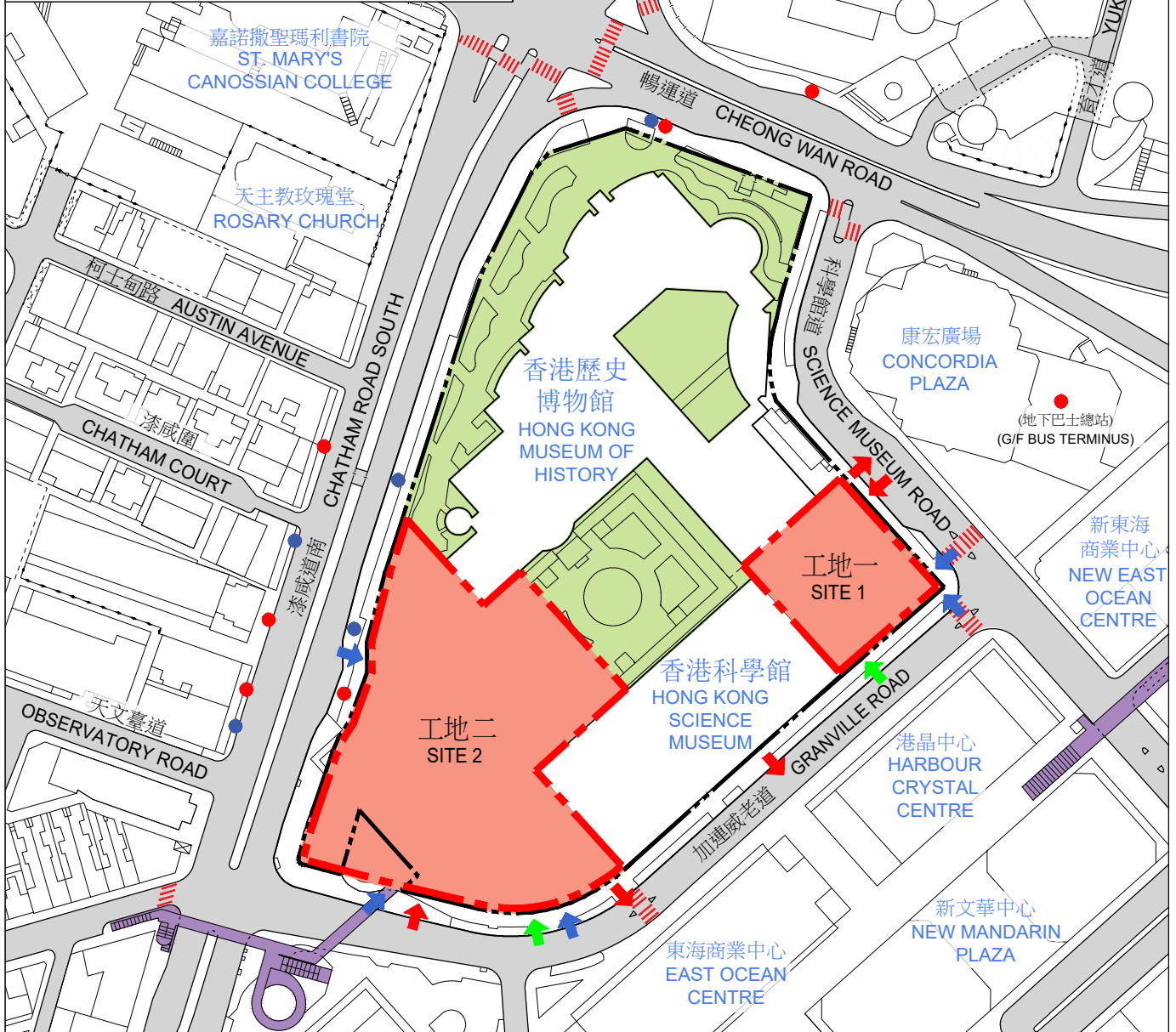
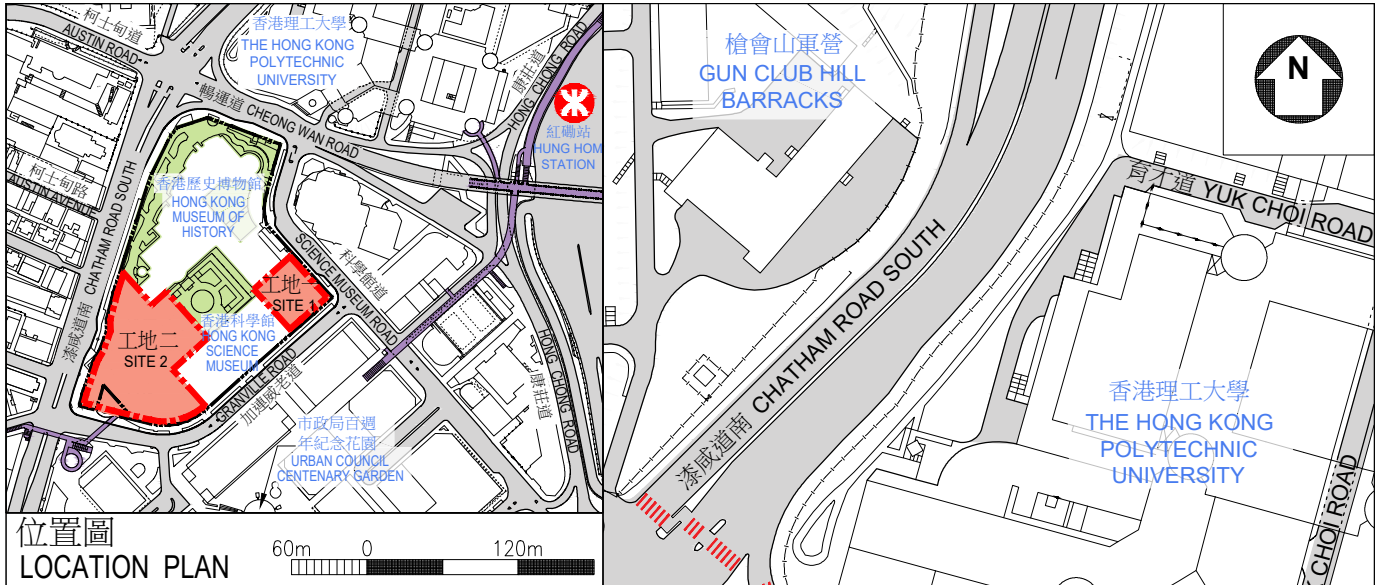
⁷ Museum Expert Advisers are appointed by the DLCS to provide professional advice to the museums of the LCSD on matters pertaining to the promotion of art, history, science and film, in particular the acquisition of collection items.

HKMH to the Public Works Subcommittee and FC for support and approval.

Home Affairs Bureau

Leisure and Cultural Services Department

December 2019



LEGEND 圖例		20m 0 40m	
	工地界線 SITE BOUNDARY		有蓋行人天橋 COVERED FOOTBRIDGE
	香港科學館及香港歷史博物館現有的工地界線 EXISTING SITE BOUNDARY OF HONG KONG SCIENCE MUSEUM AND HONG KONG MUSEUM OF HISTORY		現有行人過路處 EXISTING AT-GRADE PEDESTRIAN CROSSING
	戶外空間改善範圍 IMPROVEMENTS OF OUTDOOR SPACES		巴士站 BUS STOP
			小巴士站 MINI BUS STOP
			無障礙出入口 BARRIER-FREE ENTRANCE/EXIT
			行人出入口 PEDESTRIAN ENTRANCE/EXIT
			車輛出入口 VEHICULAR INGRESS / EGRESS