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Panel on Development

Meeting on 28 September 2021

**Background brief on
the District Study for Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok
conducted by the Urban Renewal Authority**

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the District Study for Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok ("YMDS") conducted by the Urban Renewal Authority ("URA") and summarizes the views and concerns expressed by Members on the subject at relevant panels and subcommittees of the Legislative Council ("LegCo").

Background

2. The Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok districts are densely populated with over half of the buildings aged 50 years or above, many of which have exceeded the development intensity permitted under the existing planning and legislation limits, thereby creating immense challenges to urban renewal. In May 2017, URA embarked on YMDS to carry out in-depth analysis and assessment on the critical issues in urban renewal, explore how best to enhance existing land use and redevelopment potential, and to recommend practical and feasible modus operandi in urban renewal which may be adopted in other districts. YMDS will also examine the effectiveness of various measures under the Urban Renewal Strategy promulgated in 2011. The study area of YMDS is in **Appendix I**.

3. YMDS is divided into three parts: (i) a baseline review and data analysis; (ii) strategic studies on specific topics including the relevant policy framework, implementation mechanisms and development measures; and (iii) formulation of the Master Urban Renewal Concept Plan ("MRCP") which

contains various options. URA has completed the first and second parts of YMDS in November 2019.

Baseline review and findings

4. The baseline review of YMDS indicates that of the 3 000 or so existing buildings within the study area, over 90% are aged over 30 years. Of these, more than 40% are dilapidated or "Three-Nil Buildings"¹ and the median building age is more than 50 years. Having taken into account the pace of redevelopment of existing old buildings in the study area, it is projected that the production of new residential units lags far behind the mass ageing of existing building blocks.

5. The current residual floor area of the districts within the study area under the permissible planning parameter limit of the Outline Zoning Plan ("OZP") is only about 10% (about 800 000 square metre ("sq m") of Gross Floor Area ("GFA")) which scatters among numerous small sites of existing old residential buildings (more than half are less than 200 sq m in site area). Since the increase in floor area would be very limited upon redevelopment of these sites, it would be difficult to rely on the current mechanisms to carry out site assembly and undertake district renewal effectively. The piecemeal and scattered residual plot ratio ("PR") in Yau Mong District is shown in the distribution map in **Appendix II**.

6. YMDS further suggests improving the problems arising from high population and living density in Yau Mong Districts through measures such as site amalgamation, utilization of underground spaces for sizable car parks and improvement of walkability, as well as providing more public open space.

7. YMDS team has also conducted a baseline review on the policy and legal framework and implementation mechanisms, which encompassed the existing planning, building and land aspects (including the maximum limits allowed for PR and GFA etc.), as well as requirements and relevant procedures for land resumption and roadworks gazettal, etc.

Formulation of the Master Urban Renewal Concept Plan

8. Based on the findings of the baseline review, and taking into account the condition of existing buildings, pace of urban decay in Yau Mong Districts, development density and transport and infrastructure capacities, URA will develop three development density options of positive ("+"), negative ("-")

¹ "Three-Nil Buildings" refer to buildings which do not have owners' corporations or any form of residents organizations, or do not engage property management companies in managing their buildings.

and zero ("0")² which will form the basis to formulate three MRCPs based on different maximum permitted GFA.

9. The "+" option adopts the current population of 213 000 of Yau Mong Districts as the basis for planning to maximize the development potential of the district within the limits of infrastructure and environmental capacity, with provision of more community space. The "-" option is to maintain the existing total GFA in the districts whilst reducing the population by about 30% with provision of more open space. The "0" option is to adopt the total GFA as permitted under the current OZP for restructuring, with the population reduced by about 15%. According to the Administration, URA, in light of the different characteristics of the three options, would propose corresponding policy frameworks, implementation mechanisms and the necessary financial arrangement. Possible implementation measures under consideration include the offer of planning incentives such as the Transfer of Development Rights and amalgamation of sites.

10. URA will identify several potential areas for urban renewal under MRCPs, and look for locations with local and special characteristics to be established as "Development Nodes" for further study in MRCPs. As YMDS progresses, URA will identify projects within the Development Nodes to integrate the "5R renewal strategy" (i.e. Redevelopment, Rehabilitation and Retrofitting, Preservation and Revitalisation) for formulating MRCP options.

Major views and concerns expressed by Members

11. The major views and concerns expressed by Members on YMDS at the relevant meetings of the Panel on Development ("DEV Panel") and the Joint Subcommittee to Follow Up Issues Relating to the Redevelopment, Maintenance and Management of Aged Buildings since the 2017-2018 session are summarized in the ensuing paragraphs.

Public engagement exercises of the District Study for Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok

12. Some Members enquired whether URA had consulted the relevant District Council ("DC") and stakeholders in the process of conducting YMDS, and about the details of the public consultation exercises on the MRCP options.

² MRCP comprises three different development density options, namely a "positive" option with increased development density but the same population, "negative" with reduced density, and "neutral" in which the development density under existing planning frameworks will be retained.

13. The Administration advised that URA updated Yau Tsim Mong DC at its meeting on 24 January 2019 on the findings of the baseline review on the physical attributes of the study area. URA had also reported the progress of YMDS at three meetings of its Yau Tsim Mong District Advisory Committee, which comprised DC members, academia and leaders of local community organizations. URA would continue to report such progress to the relevant DC, stakeholders and government departments in a timely manner. Upon finalization of the three MRCP options in early 2020, URA would liaise with the Government on the mode and timing of public engagement. URA would also explore the implementation of early projects under YMDS.

Rehousing arrangements for urban renewal projects

14. Noting that there would be a number of large-scale urban renewal projects in Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok districts and some other old districts, Members expressed concern as to whether there would be sufficient rehousing units provided for the affected tenants. They suggested that URA should collaborate with the Hong Kong Housing Society ("HKHS") in implementing redevelopment projects to provide rehousing units to resettle the affected tenants in the current locality. The Administration advised that the role of various urban renewal agents, the compensation, decanting and rehousing policies/arrangements would be examined under YMDS. In addition, URA and HKHS had entered into a long-term strategic partnership in the rehousing arrangements for urban renewal projects.

15. Given that URA would formulate MRCP on the basis of the "+", "-", and "0" scenarios, Members expressed concern that in the "0" and "-" density scenarios, some residents might be required to move out of their own districts due to a lack of space for rehousing them in Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok.

16. The Administration advised that after completing YMDS, URA would advise and make recommendations to the Administration about the density scenario(s) to be adopted in launching the urban renewal projects in the two districts. Given the scarcity of land resources, it was very likely for URA to adopt the "+" scenario in the first stage of the urban renewal projects to fully utilize the development potential of the land plots.

Development of underground space

17. Members considered that YMDS should cover the development of underground space for the provision of pedestrian and commercial facilities in Yau Mong Districts, with a view to enhancing land use efficiency of and promoting walkability in the Districts. The use of underground space for

commercial purpose would also help cover the costs of the redevelopment projects under YMDS.

18. URA advised that YMDS would cover the feasibility of developing underground space in Yau Mong Districts. In the light of the high development density of the study area, it had adopted a holistic planning approach from multi-level perspectives in planning urban renewal, with a view to fully utilizing underground and above ground space. However, it would be difficult to develop underground space in old districts due to the high density of underground utilities in these districts. In this connection, URA had adopted a district-based approach in urban renewal in recent years, so that it could carry out large-scale urban restructuring projects and reorganize underground utilities to facilitate underground space development.

19. In response to Members' further enquiries on whether URA would consider developing underground space at a level beneath underground utilities, URA advised that underground space could only be developed at a level beneath the underground MTR network in Yau Mong Districts. Consideration should also be given to fire safety and pedestrian access to underground space in determining the depth of underground space development.

Increasing the maximum plot ratio of the redevelopment sites under the District Study for Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok

20. Some Members enquired whether the maximum PR of the redevelopment sites under YMDS would be increased. URA advised that the maximum PR was determined by law. It would consider possible measures, such as PR transfer, site amalgamation and restructuring, so as to fully utilize the allowed development potential of the district. Consideration should also be given to the adequacy of infrastructure capacity to cope with the development of Yau Mong Districts when contemplating possible increase in the maximum PR. In this connection, URA would work in the direction of promoting park-and-walk and the use of public transport in Yau Mong Districts.

Council question

21. A question on the progress of YMDS was raised at the Council meeting of 29 May 2019. The hyperlink to the question and the Administration's reply are provided in **Appendix III**.

Latest developments

22. At the DEV Panel meeting on 22 June 2021 at which the work of URA was discussed, members noted that URA had completed all the working papers of YMDS, including the three MRCs of different density scenarios. The report of YMDS with key findings and recommendations, in particular the proposed planning tools, was being finalized having regard to comments from government bureaux and departments. URA would then kick-start the public engagement, including consultation with professional institutes and district organizations. URA had also commenced more studies on the implementation details of the early projects and pilot testing of the proposed planning tools.

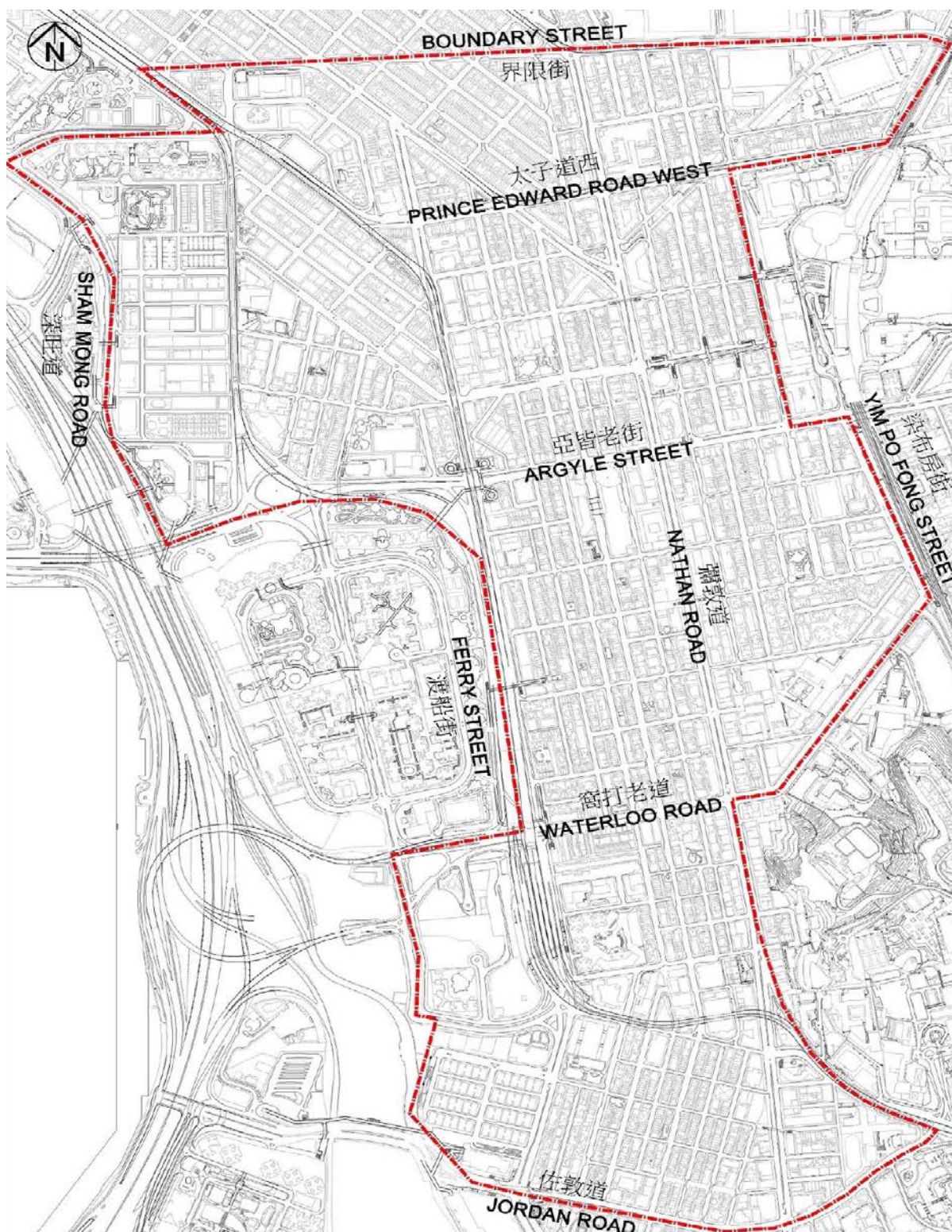
23. At the meeting of DEV Panel to be held on 28 September 2021, the Administration will brief members on the findings and recommendations of YMDS.

Relevant papers

24. A list of the relevant papers on the LegCo website is in **Appendix III**.

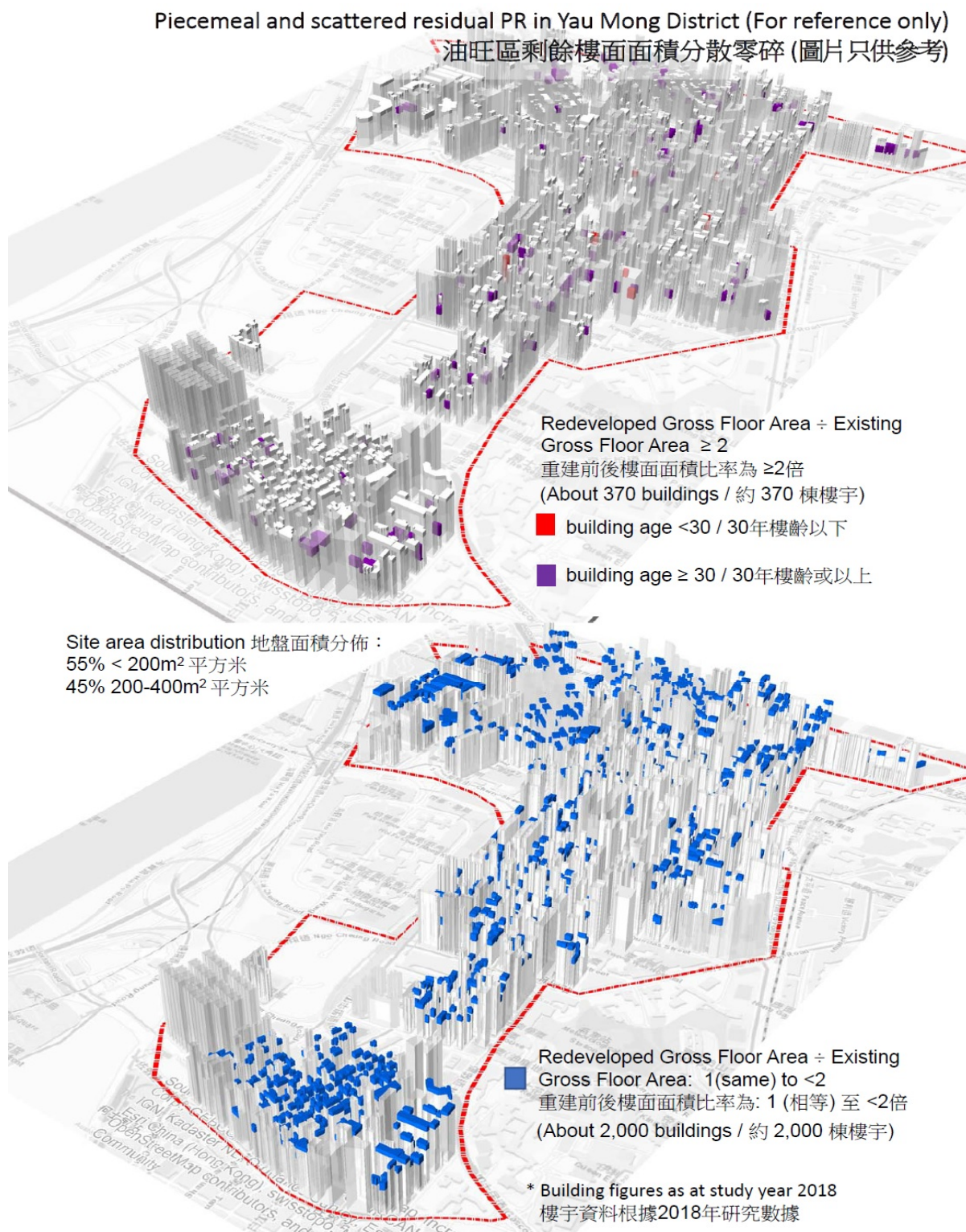
Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
20 September 2021

油麻地及旺角地區研究涵蓋的研究範圍
Study Area of the District Study for Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok



資料來源：立法會 CB(2)267/19-20(01)號文件附件一
Source: Appendix 1 to [LC Paper No. CB\(2\)267/19-20\(01\)](#)

油旺地區零碎及分散的剩餘地積比率 The piecemeal and scattered residual plot ratio ("PR") in Yau Mong District



資料來源：[立法會 CB\(2\)267/19-20\(01\)號文件](#)附件二
Source: [Appendix 2 to LC Paper No. CB\(2\)267/19-20\(01\)](#)

Progress of the District Study for Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok

List of relevant papers

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Development	31 October 2017	Administration's paper on "Work of the Urban Renewal Authority" [LC Paper No. CB(1)117/17-18(02)] Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(1)484/17-18]
Panel on Development	26 June 2018	Administration's paper on "Work of the Urban Renewal Authority" [LC Paper No. CB(1)1133/17-18(03)] Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(1)222/18-19]
Panel on Development	25 June 2019	Administration's paper on "Work of the Urban Renewal Authority" [LC Paper No. CB(1)1181/18-19(03)] Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(1)1356/18-19] Administration's follow-up paper [LC Paper No. CB(1)1317/18-19(01)]
Joint Subcommittee to Follow Up Issues Relating to the Redevelopment, Maintenance and Management of Aged Buildings	26 November 2019	Administration's paper on "The District Study for Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok of the Urban Renewal Authority - Findings of the baseline review" [LC Paper No. CB(2)267/19-20(01)] Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No. CB(2)404/19-20]

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Development	23 June 2020	Administration's paper on "Work of the Urban Renewal Authority" [LC Paper No. CB(1)762/19-20(01)] Minutes of meeting [LC Paper No.CB(1)893/19-20]
Panel on Development	22 June 2021	Administration's paper on "Work of the Urban Renewal Authority" [LC Paper No. CB(1)1006/20-21(03)]

Hyperlink to relevant Council question and the Administration's reply:

Date	Council question
29 May 2019	Question on " Work of Urban Renewal Authority "