

For discussion on  
8 April 2021

## **Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs**

### **Renovation and Improvement Project for the Sai Wan Ho Civic Centre**

#### **Purpose**

This paper seeks Members' comments on the proposed renovation and improvement project for the Sai Wan Ho Civic Centre (SWHCC).

#### **Background**

2. SWHCC, opened in 1990, is a major performance venue of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) in the Eastern District of the Hong Kong Island. It is provided with a 480-seat Theatre (Theatre), a 110-seat multi-purpose Cultural Activities Hall (CA Hall), two Art Studios and two Music Practice Rooms. Despite regular maintenance and repairs, no major renovation or improvement works have been carried out since its opening.

#### **Objectives**

3. Upon extensive consultation with the stakeholders, LCSD proposed the following objectives for the project:

- (a) to upgrade the existing facilities of the venue and put in place advanced professional stage equipment in order to meet the prevailing standard for performance facilities and the needs of arts groups; and
- (b) to upgrade and update public facilities of the venue in compliance with the current statutory requirements to ensure public safety and enhance accessibility of various facilities for visitors and audience.

#### **Project Site**

4. The project site is the existing site of SWHCC situated above Sai Wan Ho Mass Transit Railway Station at 111 Shau Kei Wan Road, Hong Kong Island with a total construction floor area of about 4 840 square metres.

## **Project Scope**

5. The proposed project scope includes:

### Major facilities

- (a) refurbishment of the Theatre, including (i) replacement of stage equipment and backstage facilities, and lighting and sound systems; and (ii) provision of an audio description room and a quiet room<sup>1</sup>;
- (b) refurbishment of the CA Hall;

### Ancillary facilities

- (c) refurbishment of one of the Art Studios and the two Music Practice Rooms, and conversion of the other Art Studio into a rehearsal room;
- (d) face-lifting of the foyer and improvement of public facilities, including provision of a babycare room and toilet facilities;
- (e) improvement and upgrading of the existing barrier-free access facilities;

### Building services

- (f) replacement of building services installations, including air-conditioning and mechanical ventilation, fire service, electrical, lighting, plumbing and drainage installations; and
- (g) replacement of the three existing passenger lifts, conversion of the existing cargo lift into two smaller passenger-goods lifts, and provision of two lifting platforms.

6. A site and location plan is at **Enclosure 1** while an artist's impression of the project is at **Enclosure 2**.

## **Justifications**

7. LCSD manages 16 performance venues<sup>2</sup>. These venues have served the performing arts community for over two to nearly six decades, and some of them now face issues arising from aging structures and installations. In terms of architectural design and stage facilities, the performance venues compare unfavourably with our counterparts in the neighboring cities such as the National

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<sup>1</sup> A quiet room in the Theatre is a soundproofed room for watching performance. It is specially designed for audience, who are overwhelmed during performance, to settle down without affecting the others in the auditorium.

<sup>2</sup> LCSD manages a total of 16 performance venues, including 14 performing arts venues (Hong Kong City Hall, Sheung Wan Civic Centre, Sai Wan Ho Civic Centre, Hong Kong Cultural Centre, Yau Ma Tei Theatre, Ko Shan Theatre, Ngau Chi Wan Civic Centre, Sha Tin Town Hall, North District Town Hall, Tsuen Wan Town Hall, Tuen Mun Town Hall, Tai Po Civic Centre, Kwai Tsing Theatre and Yuen Long Theatre) and two indoor stadia (Hong Kong Coliseum and Queen Elizabeth Stadium).

Theatre for the Performing Arts in Beijing, the Guangzhou Opera House and The Venetian Theatre in Macao. The Government announced in the 2018 Policy Address its policy objective to support the development of culture and the arts, and set aside \$20 billion in the 2018-19 Budget for the improvement and development of cultural facilities<sup>3</sup> in the coming ten years to align with the long-term development need of culture and the arts in Hong Kong. At present, six performance venue-related projects<sup>4</sup> are under active planning by LCSD, and one of which is the renovation and improvement project for SWHCC set out in this paper.

8. The Chief Executive advocated in the 2019 Policy Address the incorporation of advanced innovative technology into the East Kowloon Cultural Centre under construction, and mentioned in the 2020 Policy Address that the integration of arts and innovative technologies has become a new trend in arts development. To align with the objectives mentioned above, LCSD will introduce appropriate innovative technologies when planning for facility upgrading of its performance venues to meet the requirement of the performing arts sector and their aspirations for professional performance venues. Examples of the innovative technologies include immersive projection and sound systems, projection mapping system, tracking enabled audio-visual-light system, and 4K live streaming system.

9. At present, stage equipment of the Theatre, such as the counterweight flying system, fails to meet the requirements of professional performance on operation and stage effects. The CA Hall also fails to optimise its flexibility in changing stage configurations typical of a multi-purpose hall as only the very basic technical equipment is provided. Aging problem of the building services installations (including passenger lifts) in SWHCC continues to worsen as a result of prolonged use, and causes breakdowns from time to time. Improvement to the building services installations is therefore required. The cargo lift is essential for the transportation of scenery, props and equipment. As the supply of some spare parts of the existing cargo lift has already discontinued, replacement by a new lift is required to ensure smooth operation of the venue. While the absence of rehearsal facilities and a baby care room needs to be addressed, improvement is also required for the barrier-free access facilities that connect the foyer on the ground floor with the Theatre's main entrances and the auditorium with the stage.

10. Upon completion of the project, the performance facilities of SWHCC will be provided with professional stage equipment supporting innovative technologies to cater for the needs of performances in different art forms. The user-friendly public facilities and pleasant environment thus provided will attract visitors and audience alike.

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<sup>3</sup> Paragraph 156 of the 2018-19 Budget Speech reads, "In order to continuously upgrade our cultural hardware, I will set aside \$20 billion for the improvement and development of cultural facilities. Projects to be rolled out in the coming ten years include the construction of the New Territories East Cultural Centre and the Heritage Conservation and Resource Centre; the expansion of the Hong Kong Science Museum, Hong Kong Museum of History and Hong Kong City Hall; and the renovation of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre."

<sup>4</sup> The five remaining performance venue-related projects are the expansion and renovation of the Hong Kong City Hall, renovation of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre, Phase II development of the Yau Ma Tei Theatre, facility upgrading of the Tai Po Civic Centre and construction of the New Territories East Cultural Centre.

## **Proposed Improvements of Facilities**

### Theatre

11. Comprehensive upgrading of stage equipment and refurbishment of backstage facilities will be carried out for the Theatre, the major performance facility of SWHCC, to meet the present operational needs of performance venues and the rising aspirations of arts groups and audience for sophisticated stage effects. Works include upgrading of the counterweight flying system to a computerised flying system, upgrading of stage lighting to light-emitting diode (LED) lights and computerised moving lights, provision of a large LED wall, and refurbishment of dressing rooms at backstage. To further enhance the service quality, an audio description room, a quiet room and additional wheelchair seats will be provided in the Theatre. Lifting platforms will also be added to facilitate direct access to the stage by wheelchair users.

### CA Hall

12. Technical equipment of the CA Hall will be upgraded, including replacement of the pipe grids for additional rigging points, and the sound and lighting systems, in a bid to improve the flexibility for professional performances.

### Art Studios and Music Practice Rooms

13. No rehearsal facilities are currently available in SWHCC for hire. The project will convert one of the two Art Studios into a rehearsal room, providing more diversified ancillary facilities for performing arts groups in preparation for performance. The other Art Studio and the two Music Practice Rooms will also be refurbished for use by art groups and the community at large.

### Public and accessible facilities

14. To improve the accessibility of the Theatre, especially for the mobility impaired and wheelchair users, the foyer and public space of SWHCC will be re-designed, and the existing barrier-free access facilities will be upgraded. Works include improvement of the ramp at the main entrance and provision of a new lifting platform at the foyer to connect with the lifts at the mezzanine floor. As no toilet facility is currently provided on the ground floor, a universal toilet and a baby care room will be added in the project. Overall, the number of toilet cubicles for toilet facilities on the first and second floors will also be increased.

### Building services

15. In order to create a pleasant environment for enjoyment by venue users, the audience and the public, the aging building services installations of SWHCC, including air-conditioning and mechanical ventilation, fire service, electrical, lighting, plumbing and drainage installations, as well as other ancillary equipment, will be replaced and upgraded. In addition, the three existing passenger lifts will be replaced. After taking into account the provision of lifts in other performing arts venues of comparable scale and the actual operational needs, the existing cargo lift will be converted into two smaller passenger-goods lifts to allow concurrent use for move-in and move-out by hirers of the Theatre and the CA Hall to enhance the operational efficiency.

### **Project Estimate and Timetable**

16. The estimated project cost is about \$280.6 million in money-of-the-day prices. Subject to funding approval by the Finance Committee (FC) within the 2020-21 legislative session, the construction works will take about two years to complete.

### **Arrangement during Closure of SWHCC**

17. Because of safety and noise issues, all facilities in SWHCC will be temporarily closed during the renovation and improvement works. Meanwhile, LCSD will cease accepting booking applications for SWHCC until its re-opening. During the closure of SWHCC, potential hirers will be referred to the Youth Square, community halls in the Eastern District, Sheung Wan Civic Centre and Ngau Chi Wan Civic Centre which are comparable in scale with SWHCC, as well as other LCSD performance venues.

18. Moreover, LCSD will organise more community cultural events and district entertainment programmes at suitable venues in the Eastern District to alleviate the impact caused by the decreased number of entertainment programmes during the closure period.

### **Public Consultation**

19. LCSD consulted the District Facilities Management Committee and the Facilities Management, Culture and Leisure Committee of the Eastern District Council in September 2009 and June 2020 respectively. Both committees greatly supported the project and urged for its early implementation. From May to November 2020, LCSD also gauged the views of various stakeholders, including its Committee on Venue Partnership, venue partners of SWHCC, district arts groups and organisations for people with disabilities. The stakeholders unanimously supported the project.

### **Advice Sought**

20. We plan to seek funding approval from FC after consulting the Public Works Subcommittee.



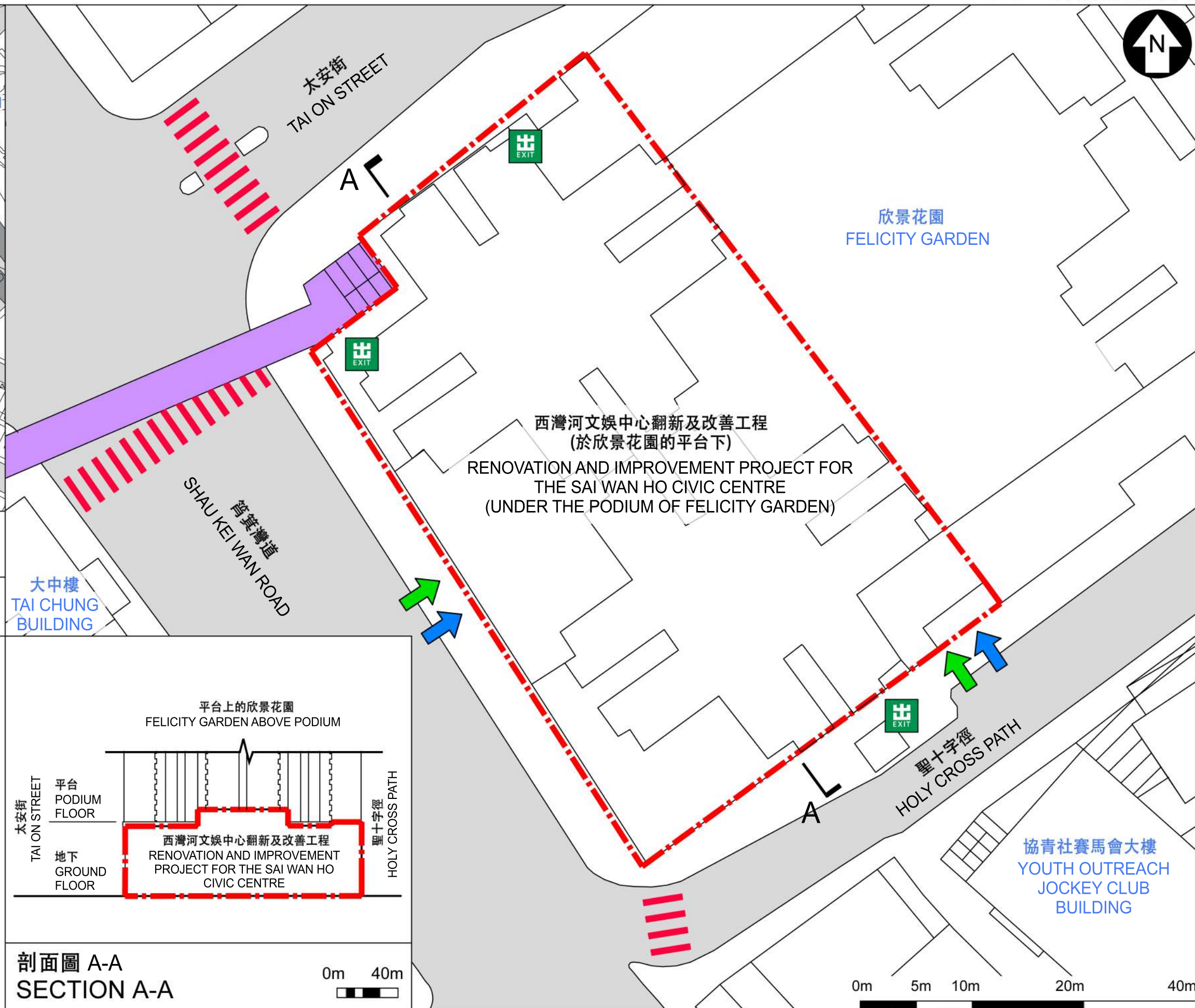
位置圖  
LOCATION PLAN



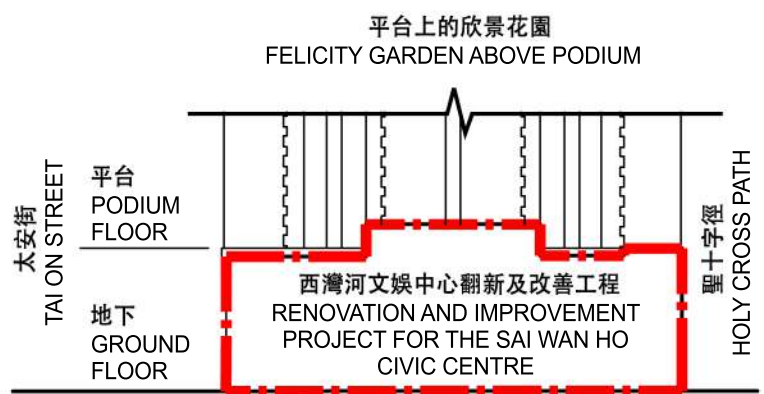
圖例 LEGEND

- 工地界線  
SITE BOUNDARY
- 現有行人天橋  
EXISTING PEDESTRIAN FOOTBRIDGE
- 港鐵站出入口  
MTR STATION ENTRANCE / EXIT
- 現有行人過路處  
EXISTING AT-GRADE PEDESTRIAN CROSSING
- 無障礙出入口  
BARRIER-FREE ENTRANCE / EXIT
- 行人出入口  
PEDESTRIAN ENTRANCE / EXIT

工地平面圖  
SITE PLAN



西灣河文娛中心翻新及改善工程  
(於欣景花園的平台下)  
RENOVATION AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT FOR THE SAI WAN HO CIVIC CENTRE  
(UNDER THE PODIUM OF FELICITY GARDEN)



剖面圖 A-A  
SECTION A-A



61RE  
西灣河文娛中心翻新及改善工程  
RENOVATION AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT FOR THE SAI WAN HO CIVIC CENTRE





西灣河文娛中心大堂的構思透視圖  
PERSPECTIVE VIEW FROM FOYER (ARTIST'S IMPRESSION)