For discussion on 1 March 2021

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

# Improvement of Connectivity of West Kowloon Cultural District with its neighbouring district and Implementation of the Infrastructure Works for the West Kowloon Cultural District, Phase 1 Fourth Construction Package

## PURPOSE

This paper updates Members on the implementation progress of projects that would improve connectivity of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD or the District) with its neighbouring districts, and seeks Members' support for the funding proposal to deliver the Public Infrastructure Works (PIW), Phase 1 Fourth Construction Package for the WKCD, details of which are at **Annex A**.

# BACKGROUND

2. Integration and connectivity are the two key planning design principles that guided the formulation of the Development Plan for WKCD. Pursuant to the Foster + Partners design concept, traffic and related servicing facilities within WKCD are located below ground in the Integrated Basement (IB), thus allowing the District above ground to be developed in an organic and flexible way. At present, the public can visit WKCD via a series of footbridge and subway systems from the eastern and western sides of the District as well as Museum Drive. In the not-too-distant future, when further pedestrian and road linkages to WKCD are opened, WKCD can be accessed via multiple ways, covering road, rail and water transport conveniently and without hassle. The guiding principle is that WKCD should be connected to the lives of people beyond the District, complement the neighbouring old and cultural areas, and

become part of a larger network of green spaces connecting the southern tip of the Kowloon Peninsula, with the potential for the waterfront promenade to be extended to Yau Ma Tei in the north and Tsim Sha Tsui in the south. Since July 2013, the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCDA) has briefed and updated Members of the Legislative Council (LegCo) Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the WKCD Project (Joint Subcommittee) on issues relating to the integration and connectivity of WKCD with its neighbouring districts at various meetings and this paper provides an update on the progress made since the last update in April 2020.

## CONNECTIVITY WITH WKCD AT THE EARLY STAGE

3. Understandably, WKCD has faced challenges in the early years of development in terms of connectivity and accessibility. While traffic condition in the Jordan and Tsim Shai Tsui is generally busy, mega projects in the vicinity of WKCD under development will inevitably bring about extra traffic load to the area.

4. With the opening of Freespace and the Art Park and the associated food and beverage facilities in 2019, WKCD is gaining popularity with high visitations during weekends and festive seasons. Looking ahead, the opening of M+ and the Hong Kong Palace Museum (HKPM) by the end of 2021 and mid-2022 respectively will further increase visitations to the District. WKCDA is striving to enhance the awareness and experience of visitors by providing customer-friendly information about WKCD and its individual facilities through multiple channels. For example, we are working on a holistic wayfinding and placemaking strategy which is crucial to enhancing the connectivity and accessibility of WKCD.

5. At present, the eastern and western portions of the District, which together take up about one-third of the 40-hectare site of WKCD, has been open and in use; while the central part of WKCD, i.e. the whole of Zone 2 and Zone 3B, is still under construction. Following the opening of the Art Park in 2019 which offers 11-hectare of open space and features a rich variety of trees and green planting with spacious open lawns (the Great Lawn and the Harbourside Lawn), coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic that restricts travelling abroad and encourages people to pursue outdoor activities, WKCD has become a highly popular destination for

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leisure and relaxation, especially during weekends and public holidays. According to WKCDA's visitor count surveys at selected weekends (including public holidays) in end 2020, the peak daily visitation could be up to 10 000.

# EXISTING TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS

6. Both the Government and WKCDA endeavour to improve the connectivity of WKCD through the provision of new transport infrastructure by phases and continuous enhancement of public transport services serving the District. The existing transport service provision for WKCD are set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

# a) Public Transport

7. The Austin Station of MTR West Rail Line and the Kowloon Station of MTR Tung Chung Line are located within a 10minute walking distance from the Xiqu Centre and the Art Park respectively via the existing pedestrian subway and at-grade footways. To encourage the use of railway as the primary transport mode to access WKCD, new directional signs have been installed at Jordan Road and Canton Road, as well as inside MTR Austin Station and Kowloon Station to direct people to WKCD. The new pedestrian linkage system across Austin Road West, to be opened in March 2021, will link up the MTR Austin Station (Exit F) and the basement of the Xiqu Centre. This new subway together with the beautification works in the area will greatly enhance the connectivity and vibrancy of the Xiqu Centre.

8. Franchised bus is another popular means of transport for visitors coming from Hong Kong Island, Kowloon West and the New Territories, with over 20 day-time regular bus routes stopping at the Western Harbour Crossing (WHC) Toll Plaza to serve the western part of WKCD. At the eastern end of WKCD where the Xiqu Centre is located, visitors are conveniently served by the existing 13 bus routes passing through Canton Road near Austin Road West.

9. Green minibus (GMB) also connects the MTR Kowloon Station, Jordan and Yau Mei Tei commercial districts with WKCD. Since end 2019, two GMB routes have been en-routed to serve WKCD with stops at the Art Park. It is currently the most convenient and direct means of transport to the western part of WKCD.

# b) Transport Infrastructures

To cater for the traffic generated by the developments in 10. the West Kowloon area, road improvement schemes including the at-grade junctions widening along Canton Road, and the link road (approximately 6-metre (m) wide, 220m in length) between West Kowloon Highway southbound and Nga Cheung Road have been completed in 2018 and 2020 respectively. These works have eased the traffic congestions at busy junctions in the vicinity and improve connectivity of WKCD. Furthermore, a link road (approximately 6m in length) to bring traffic directly from the 200m wide. elevated Nga Cheung Road to the Hong Kong bound of the WHC toll plaza (Scheme I) has just been completed and opened in January 2021. It provides a quick and convenient route for traffic to gain access to WHC without detour via the busy junction of Lin Cheung Road and Jordan Road. All the above improvement works were carried out by the Highways Department under PWP Item no. 6855TH. Plan showing the improvement works is at **Annex B**.

11. Within WKCD, Museum Drive, a U-shaped at-grade dual-2 lane carriageway located around the portal of WHC, had been substantially completed and opened since 2018. The Drive connects the Art Park, M+, HKPM and the future Art, Commerce and Exhibition (ACE) development (under review) with proper accesses for pick-up/drop-off activities. The second public road in WKCD is the approximately 1.5-kilometer long Underground Road located in the IB which is being constructed by phases. The first section (about 100m long) was completed and open to public on 30 December 2020 together with the car park underneath M+. This first section of the Underground Road only serves M+ for the time being.

12. The IB has a site area equivalent to about 17 times the size of the turfed area of Hong Kong Stadium and mainly comprises of two floors. Inside the IB are the supporting facilities of topside development, accommodating a huge car park with around 1 500 spaces, more than 150 loading and unloading spaces and the Underground Road at B1 level. Visitors could access the Avenue (ground) level via communal lobbies and lifts. The Underground

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Road is planned to have three access points, viz. junction with Museum Drive, Lin Cheung Road Underpass, and Canton Road, connecting WKCD to the major road network in the area. The connection to Canton Road will be reviewed when there is a programme for the relocation of the existing Tsim Sha Tsui Fire Station located at the south east corner of WKCD.

# c) Car parking provision

13. To meet the current car parking demand, 50 temporary parking spaces adjacent to the Xiqu Centre, 210 parking spaces below the Art Park adjoining M+ (Zone E Car Park) and 150 parking spaces underneath M+ (Zone F Car Park) are currently open to the public. In addition, we have opened the car park of the Project Site Office of WKCD to the public during weekends and public holidays, offering an additional 70 parking spaces. Collectively, there are a maximum of 480 spaces in WKCD to meet the spike demand on weekends and public holidays. To encourage utilisation of the car parks at non-peak hours, WKCDA is reviewing the fee charging mechanism and may attract over-night parking at discounted rates.

# d) Mode of Transport within WKCD

14. WKCDA is committed to using green transport within the district. It started trials of an Electric Autonomous Vehicle (EAV) at the Nursery Park in 2017 with a movement permit granted by the Transport Department (TD). As of the end of 2020, about 16 000 participants have taken part in the trials. The routing of the EAV has been adjusted to enable a shorter but more frequent service within the Art Park, calling at the waterfront promenade and viewing terrace, Arts Pavilion and Freespace. The trial will continue till completion of the promenade and formulation of its operation strategy will then follow.

15. Apart from encouraging walking and cycling within the District, we will further assess the feasibility of introducing electric buses and other low or zero carbon emission vehicles to serve WKCD. The feasibility of deploying electric bus services in WKCD depends very much on the maturity of electric bus technology development, their prices and suitability for use in the District.

16. SmartBike is running as a bike sharing programme designed to complement the future provision of cycle paths in

WKCD, and to encourage visitors to use bicycles as a sustainable means of getting around the District. The SmartBike service is operated by Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (TWGHs) BiciLine Cycling Eco-Tourism Social Enterprise and fully covers the Art Park. About 50 rental bikes are being provided for children and adults. Visitors may also bring their own bikes to the park.

# SHORT TO MEDIUM TERM TRANSPORT STRATEGIES

17. In the next 18 months, two world-class visual art venues, viz, M+ and HKPM will be opened. It is anticipated that these new attractions will boost the visitation and attract millions of local and international art lovers to WKCD in coming years. In around 2025/2026, the Artist Square and the topside developments, including the Lyric Theatre Complex (LTC) and office buildings, will also be completed. Together with the Government, WKCDA has formulated short to medium term measures to further enhance the transport infrastructures and services to meet the anticipated surge in the number of visitors.

# a) Public Transport

18. As mentioned in paragraph 9 above, the existing GMB services are well-received by visitors. WKCDA will continue to work with the Government and GMB/franchised bus operators to explore further possible enhancements to the services to meet passenger demand, including introducing more GMBs and buses en-route WKCD.

19. Water transport is one of the most direct and convenient means of transport to cross the harbour, and can be an attractive alternative to passengers who want to avoid road traffic congestion. In 2020, TD tendered the in-harbour water-taxi service to improve the connectivity between the Central harbourfront and other major tourist attractions along the two sides of Victoria Harbour (including WKCD) so as to make good use of the promenades as part of the tourism resources. Preparatory work for launching the service is in progress. An interim stop for WKCD is arranged at the existing landing steps of the New Yau Ma Tei Typhoon shelter. To enhance visitor experience, the Government and WKCDA have made joint effort to beautify the landing areas by widening the footpath, lightening up the area and providing benches.

To better serve the visitors to WKCD, a new marine 20. landing point for public vessels and event-based water transport is being planned at the southern side of the District. Upon completion of this Southern Landing Facility, it will be one of the calling points of water taxi and will enhance the connectivity of WKCD with the Central District. The Southern Landing Facility will be located south of the MTR Ventilation shaft within walking distance to various facilities including the retail, dining and entertainment facilities at the Art Park, Arts Pavilion and Freespace, HKPM in the west, and M+ and the LTC under construction in the east. The proposed Southern Landing Facility is targeted to be completed by around 2023/2024. Subject to support of the Joint Subcommittee, funding approval of the LegCo Finance Committee will be sought for the proposed facility. The scope of works and design of the Southern Landing Facility are detailed in Annex A.

# b) Highway and Pedestrian Infrastructures

21. As reported at the last Joint Subcommittee meeting in January 2021, to further enhance the egress arrangement in the western part of WKCD and to improve the connectivity between the Museum Drive and the external road network to the north of the District alongside the entrance of WHC, a New Exit Road is under design. Besides, upon the completion of IB Zone 3B around 2024, the second section of the Underground Road will open, providing direct access to the car park and loading areas in Zone 3B, together with an additional pick-up/drop-off zone located outside the communal lobby of the LTC. On ground level at the northern peripheral, the western lay-bys will also be completed for use by buses, GMBs and taxis.

22. The Artist Square Bridge (ASB) under construction is targeted for completion around mid-2022. It will provide a direct, round-the-clock, barrier-free connection between the developments above MTR Kowloon Station and the Artist Square of WKCD, M+, the Art Park, the future LTC as well as the promenade. WKCDA is liaising with the contractor to explore ways to bring forward the completion date of the ASB.

23. As for further enhancement of pedestrian linkage to the neighbourhood, WKCDA plans to start the design consultancy for the Kowloon Park Bridge and China Ferry Terminal Bridge in the first quarter of 2021. The consultancy study will review feasible options of providing a footbridge across Canton Road to link WKCD

with Kowloon Park to facilitate pedestrian access to the Tsim Sha Tsui district, including MTR Tsim Sha Tsui Station.

# c) Car and Coach parking

24. In addition to the existing provision of up to 480 car parking spaces during the weekends, HKPM and Zone 3B will provide an additional 50 and 230 car parking spaces by 2022 and 2024 respectively, thereby increasing the total car parking provision to over 700. To address the coach parking demand, WKCD will provide 26 coach parking spaces at B1 level of the IB serving the cultural venues on the eastern portion of WKCD by around 2027, and an additional 17 coach parking spaces at the western end of WKCD to serve the HKPM and other cultural venues. In the interim years, we are looking at temporary car and coach parking arrangements to cater for the opening of M+, HKPM and the LTC. One option is to make use of part of the ACE site to provide additional parking and pick-up/drop-off facilities.

# d) Pedestrian Walking Experience and Wayfinding

25. Clear and characterised messages presented on wayfinding signage helps visitors' navigation to and within WKCD. Along major pedestrian corridors to WKCD, WKCDA plans to install characterised signage with images of WKCD's features to assist visitors' navigation and enhance arrival experience. WKCDA is working on a wayfinding improvement exercise to prepare for the opening of M+ and HKPM, and will work with the relevant Government departments with a view to enhancing the existing directional signs in Yau Ma Tei, Jordan and Tsim Sha Tsui districts.

# ADVICE SOUGHT

# 26. Members are invited to:

- (a) note the implementation progress of projects to improve connectivity of WKCD with its neighbouring districts; and
- (b) support the funding application to the Public Works Sub-Committee of LegCo for the PIW, Phase 1 - Fourth Construction Package.

West Kowloon Cultural District Authority February 2021

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

#### <u>Implementation of the Infrastructure Works for</u> <u>West Kowloon Cultural District, Phase 1 – Fourth Construction Package</u>

### PURPOSE

This paper briefs Members on the funding proposal to upgrade part of **754CL** entitled "Infrastructure Works for West Kowloon Cultural District, phase 1 – Fourth Construction Package" to Category A for provision of public infrastructure works (PIW) for the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD).

## PROJECT SCOPE AND NATURE

2. The part of **754CL** which we propose to upgrade to Category A (the proposed works) comprises –

- (a) construction of the Southern Landing Facility for vessels and modification of existing seawall;
- (b) construction of the drainage, sewerage and water supply systems, including a drainage outfall, for Zone 2 of WKCD;
- (c) the associated road works, ancillary works (including utilities and electrical and mechanical works) and landscaping works; and
- (d) necessary environmental mitigation measures, as well as related monitoring and auditing works.

Layout plan of the proposed works is at **Enclosure 1**.

3. We plan to commence the proposed works upon obtaining funding approval from the Finance Committee (FC) for target completion in around seven years, with the phased completion from 2023-2024 onwards, to suit the phased implementation of WKCD.

## JUSTIFICATION

4. In July 2008, FC approved a one-off upfront endowment for the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCDA) to implement the WKCD development covering the arts and cultural facilities, retail/dining/entertainment (RDE) facilities, public open space and certain transport facilities. As stated in the funding application approved by FC (vide PWSC(2008-09)31) in 2008, other communal and government facilities and related engineering works, such as roads, drainage, fire station, public pier and other ancillary facilities to support the whole WKCD (including residential, commercial and hotel developments) would be undertaken by the Government with funding approval for such works to be sought separately.

## Southern Landing Facility

5. The proposed Southern Landing Facility is located at the waterfront of WKCD Art Park and adjacent to the M+ Museum, Lyric Theatre Complex and the Artist Square providing marine access for WKCD visitors to the public open space and the art and cultural facilities and venues, thereby enhancing the overall connectivity of WKCD. The proposed Southern Landing Facility will serve as a marine landing point for public vessels and event-based water transport of WKCD. It is envisaged that upon its operation, the proposed Southern Landing Facility will be one of the calling points of "water taxi". Please refer to **Enclosure 2** for layout plan and photomontage of the proposed landing facility.

#### Drainage, sewerage and water supply systems for Zone 2 of WKCD

6. The proposed drainage, sewerage and water supply systems, including a drainage outfall, are mainly located at the periphery of the integrated basement in Zone 2 to provide the necessary infrastructure works for the area.

## Proposed Entrustment to WKCDA

7. In view of the high degree of integration between WKCDA's facilities and the proposed works, which would be mainly carried out within WKCD area, it would create various interfaces issues, including the overlapping of work sites and programme interface. If the construction of WKCDA's facilities and the proposed works are separately carried out by WKCDA's and the Government's contractors, it would be prone to conflicts and escalate the risks of delay in construction and increase in construction cost, thereby resulting in adverse impacts on the implementation of WKCD development project. We therefore consider it necessary and cost-effective to entrust to WKCDA the implementation of the proposed works. Subject to funding approval of the FC, we plan to entrust to WKCDA the construction of proposed works as set out in paragraph 2 above.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8. We estimate the capital cost of the proposed works to be about \$425.2 million in MOD prices.

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION

9. We consulted the relevant committees<sup>1</sup> under the purview of Marine Department and the Harbourfront Commission's Task Force on Harbourfront Developments in Kowloon, Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing by circulation in December 2020 and January 2021, respectively, on the proposed Southern Landing Facility. Members of the committees had no objection and the Task Force generally welcomed the provision of additional landing facility. We plan to consult the Yau Tsim Mong District Council on the proposed works in March 2021, and then gazette the proposed marine works under the Foreshore and Seabed (Reclamations) Ordinance (Cap. 127).

# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

## Southern Landing Facility

10. The proposed Southern Landing Facility is not a designated project under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO). A Preliminary Environmental Review is being carried out for the proposed works, and it is anticipated that the construction of the landing facility would not generate long term adverse environmental impact. During the construction stage, the contractor will implement appropriate environmental mitigation measures based on the findings from the Preliminary Environmental Review, such as deployment of silt curtains and use of quiet powered mechanical equipment. We, in conjunction with WKCDA, will carry out regular site inspections to ensure effective implementation of the mitigation measures and site management.

## Drainage, sewerage and water supply systems for Zone 2 of WKCD

11. The proposed drainage, sewerage and water supply systems for Zone 2 of WKCD form part of the WKCD development and do not belong to any designated projects under Schedule 2 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO). Nevertheless, the engineering feasibility study of WKCD development belongs to a designated project under Schedule 3 of the EIAO. The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report for WKCD development was

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The relevant committees consulted include Local Vessels Advisory Committee, High Speed Craft Consultative Committee and Port Operation Committee.

approved in November 2013 under the EIAO. The EIA report has concluded that after implementation of the recommended mitigation measures, the environmental impact of the proposed works can be controlled to within the criteria under the EIAO and the Technical Memorandum on EIA Process. We, in conjunction with WKCDA, will implement the mitigation measures as recommended in the approved EIA report. The mitigation measures recommended for the construction phase mainly include adoption of quieter equipment and movable noise barriers or noise insulating fabric to minimize construction noise impact, and regular watering of the site and provision of wheel-washing facilities for dust control, etc.

## TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS

12. We have conducted Marine Traffic Impact Assessment (MTIA) to assess the impact on the existing marine traffic caused by the marine traffic generated from the proposed landing facility. We, in conjunction with WKCDA, have formulated preliminary management measures for the operation stage of the proposed landing facility, such as establishment of communication system with the Berthing Control Office of China Ferry Terminal, prior registration for berthing, limitations on boarding/alighting under adverse weather/environment condition etc. According to the MTIA, the proposed landing facility would not generate unacceptable impact on the existing marine traffic.

13. The proposed works will be mainly carried out within WKCD area, and the works contracts will set out that the contractor must implement proper traffic management measures during construction. No significant impacts on traffic in the vicinity are anticipated arising from the proposed works. As only a few vessels would be deployed for the proposed marine works, no significant impacts on marine traffic in the vicinity are anticipated.

## HERITAGE IMPLICATIONS

14. The proposed works will not affect any heritage sites, i.e. all declared monuments, proposed monuments, graded historic sites and buildings, sites of archaeological interest and government historic sites identified by the Antiquities and Monuments Office.

## LAND ACQUISITION

15. The proposed works do not require any private land acquisition.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

16. The WKCD development is one of the ten major infrastructure projects included in the Chief Executive's 2007-08 Policy Address for promoting the long-term development of arts and culture, and supporting Hong Kong as a creative economy and Asia's World City.

17. In January 2013, FC approved the upgrading of **753CL** "Infrastructure Works for West Kowloon Cultural District, phase 1 - design and site investigation" to Category A at an estimated cost of \$478.0 million in MOD prices.

18. In July 2015, FC approved the upgrading of part of **754CL** "Infrastructure Works for West Kowloon Cultural District, phase 1 – first construction package" to Category A at an estimated cost of \$840.5 million in MOD prices.

19. The first construction package of PIW comprises an at-grade road, two lay-bys, associated drainage, sewerage and water supply systems, as well as ancillary works to support the commissioning of the Art Park, Xiqu Centre, M+ and other facilities in the Artist Square Development Area. The construction works were substantially completed by the end of 2018.

20. In April 2018, FC approved the upgrading of part of **754CL** "Infrastructure Works for West Kowloon Cultural District, phase 1 – second construction package" to Category A at an estimated cost of \$192 million in MOD prices.

21. The second construction package, which comprises the Austin Road Pedestrian Linkage System and the beautification works for existing pedestrian subway across the junction of Austin Road West and Canton Road, was substantially completed in December 2020.

22. In March 2020, FC approved the upgrading of part of **754CL** "Infrastructure Works for West Kowloon Cultural District, phase 1 - third construction package" to Category A at an estimated cost of \$380 million in MOD prices.

23. The third construction package, which comprises the covered footbridge across Austin Road West linking the Artist Square in WKCD, southern footpath of Austin Road West and the existing developments above MTR Kowloon Station, was commenced in May 2020 for substantial completion by 2022.

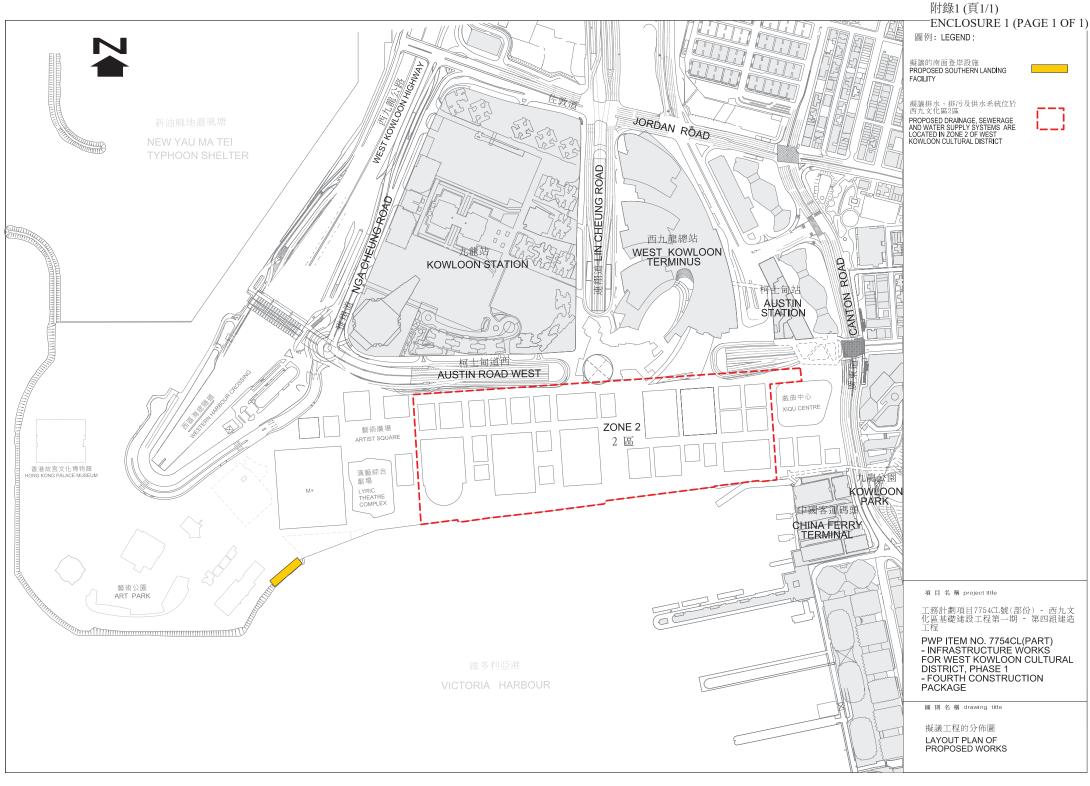
# WAY FORWARD

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

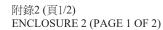
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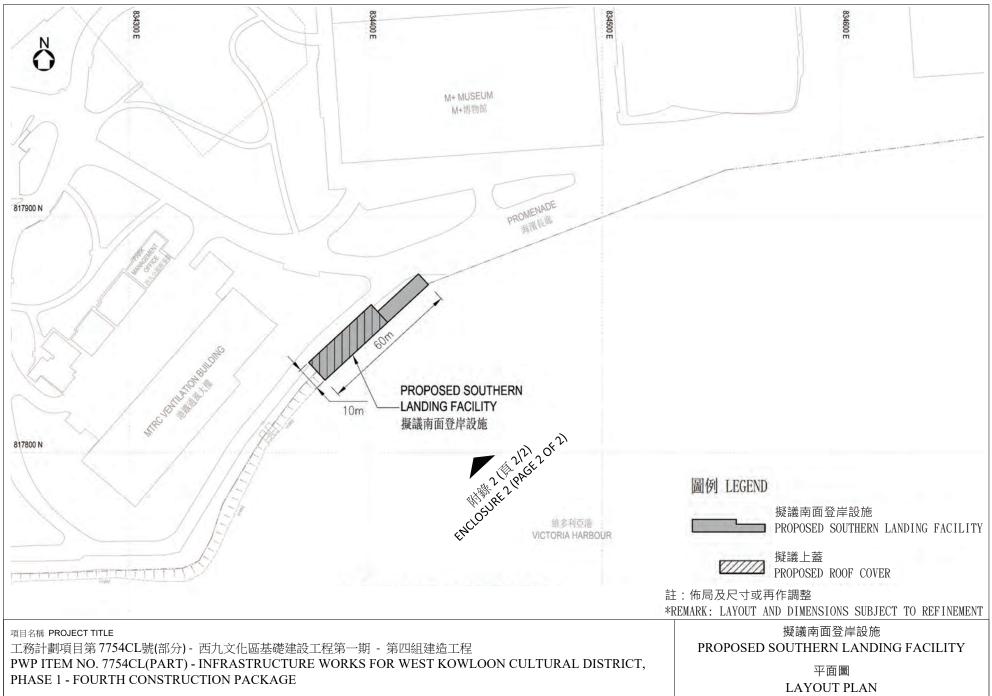
Home Affairs Bureau Civil Engineering and Development Department February 2021

Enclosure 1: Layout Plan of the Proposed WorksEnclosure 2: Layout Plan and Photomontage of the Proposed Southern Landing Facility



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<sup>項目名稱 PROJECT TITLE</sup> 工務計劃項目第 7754CL號(部分) - 西九文化區基礎建設工程第一期 - 第四組建造工程 PWP ITEM NO. 7754CL(PART) - INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS FOR WEST KOWLOON CULTURAL DISTRICT, PHASE 1 - FOURTH CONSTRUCTION PACKAGE 擬議南面登岸設施 PROPOSED SOUTHERN LANDING FACILITY

> 構想圖 PHOTOMONTAGE

