

# Harbourfront Commission

For discussion  
on 3 April 2024

HC/01/2024

## **Introducing commercial facilities such as food and beverages, retail and entertainment on a pilot basis at selected suitable harbourfront locations**

### **PURPOSE**

This paper seeks Members' views on the initiative of introducing commercial facilities such as food and beverages (F&B), retail and entertainment on a pilot basis at selected suitable harbourfront locations along the Victoria Harbour, as proposed in the 2024-25 Budget Speech, with a view to bringing convenience and better experience to visitors.

### **BACKGROUND**

2. It is the policy objective and vision of the Government to provide the public with harbourfront sites that are diversified, vibrant, accessible and harmonious by enhancing the Victoria Harbourfront. Guided by the principle of developing the harbourfront under an incremental approach, efforts in the past years have been put on improving connectivity to enable early public enjoyment of a more connected promenade. Going forward, we will shift the focus to enhancing the "software" to create a more lively vibe for the harbourfront and draw more people to the areas by bringing in different elements particularly F&B, retail and entertainment.

#### Current situation

3. At present, catering facilities, with Government's involvement to various extent, are provided in certain harbourfront sites in different forms. There are restaurants at selected locations along the harbourfront, for example the one at Kwun Tong Promenade, as well as at the Water Sports and Recreation Precinct at Wan Chai, both with table service providing light meals. There are also kiosks at harbourfront sites under the management of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department providing mainly packaged drinks and snacks; some are provided as ancillary services to an activity or a specific event at the sites granted to private operators under short term tenancy (e.g. F&B

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stores near the Hong Kong Observation Wheel, event-specific refreshment kiosks at the event spaces, etc.). The remaining ones are mostly in the form of conventional vending machines selling different types of drinks.

4. Moreover, new commercial developments providing F&B, retail and entertainment are coming on stream to bring vibrancy to the harbourfront areas. For example, the 25-story new hotel development at the waterfront at Lai Ying Street, Cheung Sha Wan, aims to create a commercial node with a 25 metre walkway to be activated by vibrant retail / F&B frontage. The Kai Tak Sports Park will provide high quality facilities, not only for major events but also for daily enjoyment by the community, with a wide variety of sports venues, open spaces, park facilities, retail and dining outlets. The Kai Tak Sports Park Limited will make good use of the public open space at the harbourfront to organise a wide range of sports, cultural and arts activities to promote the development of the brand of the Kai Tak Sports Park. In addition to office accommodation, Site 3 of the New Central Harbourfront will also provide a wide variety of retail elements including F&B with alfresco dining, shops, convention area and entertainment. It will also provide multi levels public open space at grade, landscaped deck and at roof level which allow events and different activities to take place.

5. With improvements in the connectivity and hardware of the harbourfront sites in recent years, the aspiration for a more vibrant and diversified harbourfront, which can provide more convenience to the public and visitors, is on the rise. Notwithstanding the existing facilities as mentioned in the above paragraphs, there have been consistent calls to unlock the potential of the harbourfront by making good use of the creativity and efficiency of the market to make the harbourfront more diversified, not only in terms of dining options but also shopping and entertainment experiences. The importance of offering more commercial activities, in particular on F&B provision, at the harbourfront sites is also stressed, for example, during discussions with the Harbourfront Commission (HC) and the LegCo Subcommittee to Study Policy Issues Relating to the Harbourfront.

## Initiatives under the 2024-25 Budget

6. As proposed in the 2024-25 Budget Speech<sup>1</sup>, the Development Bureau will introduce commercial facilities such as F&B, retail and entertainment on a pilot basis at selected suitable harbourfront locations to bring convenience and better experience to visitors.

### **PROPOSALS**

7. We have come up with some proposals to introduce commercial facilities at harbourfront sites in the short, medium and long terms. Members' views are sought on the proposed measures, suitable locations for the measures and other ideas in meeting the policy objectives.

#### Short term measures

8. As a quick win measure, we plan to set up smart specialty vending facilities providing popular light snacks and beverages on both sides of the Victoria Harbour, tentatively at the Water Sports and Recreation Precinct in Wan Chai North and Cha Kwo Ling Promenade in Kowloon East by phases from mid-2024 as pilot sites (proposed locations indicated in **Annex A**). With a specially designed outlook to attract visitors, each vending facility will house several smart vending machines and offer a combination of light snacks and beverages (e.g. ice-cream, popcorns, smoothies, etc.).

9. Subject to Members' views and implementation of the quick win measure, we will closely monitor its utilization, assess its effectiveness, attentively listen to public feedback, and make appropriate adjustments and expansions to other suitable locations in order to bring more vibrancy along the harbour.

10. We would make good use of the Central Harbourfront Event Space (CHES) and the Wan Chai Harbourfront Event Space (WCHES) to tap the creativity and efficiency of the market to make the harbourfront sites more vibrant and diversified. CHES has

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<sup>1</sup> Please refer to paragraphs 62 and 63 of the 2024-25 Budget Speech.

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successfully hosted a variety of large-scale events over the years such as “Wine and Dine Festival”, “Art Central”, and various large-scale concerts and carnivals offering entertainment as well as F&B in most occasions. Going forward, we will consider granting longer-term lease in future in a bid to encourage the tenant to make longer-term investment, and provide more attractive facilities and leisurely initiatives. As for WCHES, while it is newly opened, it has also showcased how entertainment and F&B elements can synergize to draw visitors through its recent events namely “A-Maze-ing Harbourfront” and “illuminate! Run Beyond”. We will explore feasibility to arrange provision of F&B, or facilitate such arrangement, at events at these venues to further enrich the experiences available to the public.

## Medium term measures

11. Where the harbourfront sites allow, we would make catering facilities a standing element of new harbourfront projects. For example, space and infrastructure have been reserved at harbourfront sites such as the Boardwalk under the Island Eastern Corridor and the Open Space at Eastern Street North that are currently under construction to provide facilities providing F&B. We will ensure the timely completion of these projects and make good use of such hardware to provide unique dining facilities. Other supporting facilities such as shelters, dining tables and seating would also be provided to offer a pleasant experience for visitors.

12. We will also explore the introduction of mobile “pop-up” facilities for sale of snacks and beverages, say, items which may require manual preparation and reheating, to increase choices and diversity. The scale of these mobile “pop-up” facilities will be carefully assessed so as to make up a reasonable cluster and size offering different choices and selections, hence improving business viability. We will consider collaborating with other relevant parties, event organisers and departments, such that these mobile “pop-up” facilities could be packaged with other events, performances, shows or sports races, etc., for a holistic programme to make the event more appealing to visitors. We will look into possible ways to relax existing requirements in licensing for example, to provide flexibility in the setting up of mobile “pop-up” facilities.

## Longer term measures

13. While making strenuous efforts to inject more commercial element in the existing harbourfront sites (as mentioned in the above paragraph), we consider it important in the long term to tap the opportunities of potential development projects along the harbourfront to incorporate dining, retail, and entertainment facilities on a larger scale, so as to draw visitors to the harbourfront and bring them fresh experience.

14. Accordingly, the feasibility of providing dining, retail, and entertainment facilities on a larger scale will be examined in the context of planning studies on suitable locations along the Victoria Harbour waterfront. The following are two harbourfront locations with studies currently underway, (locations as shown at **Annex B**), and we will capitalise on these studies to explore the possibility:

**(a) Waterfront Area adjacent to the Hong Kong Coliseum in Hung Hom:** As an initiative announced in the 2023 Policy Address proposed, the Government has invited the MTR Corporation Limited to conduct a preliminary study and submit proposals this year to re-plan and develop the Hung Hom Station and the railway facility sites in the vicinity. The focus includes reviewing the waterfront and pier facility sites to the south of the Hong Kong Coliseum with an area of about 5 hectares, giving consideration to introducing dining and leisure amenities of sizeable scale to activate the harbourfront, with a view to enhancing the connectivity between the hinterland and the harbourfront in Hung Hom, as well as connecting the waterfront promenades. When the study and any subsequent revitalisation works are going on, we will examine the feasibility of opening up the waterfront sites in the interim on a short-term basis as far as land rights and working time table permit; and

**(b) Development above the Exhibition Centre Station in Wan Chai North:** Located at the core district of the area, the topside development of the Exhibition Centre Station is adjacent to a number of convention and exhibition

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facilities, hotels and Grade A offices, complemented with comprehensive transport facilities and pedestrian networks. The site is thus suitable for developing into a new commercial and tourist landmark. Besides, in close proximity to the Pierside Precinct, the topside development at the Exhibition Centre Station is expected to achieve synergy with the Pierside Precinct, where F&B facilities will be provided alongside a range of harbourfront activities. The scope of the study will take into account the development of nearby harbourfront sites as a whole, so as to formulate a viable development proposal. The study is expected to be completed in 2025.

## **ADVICE SOUGHT**

15. Members are invited to offer views on the proposed short, medium and longer term measures in introducing commercial facilities such as F&B, retail and entertainment along the harbourfront.

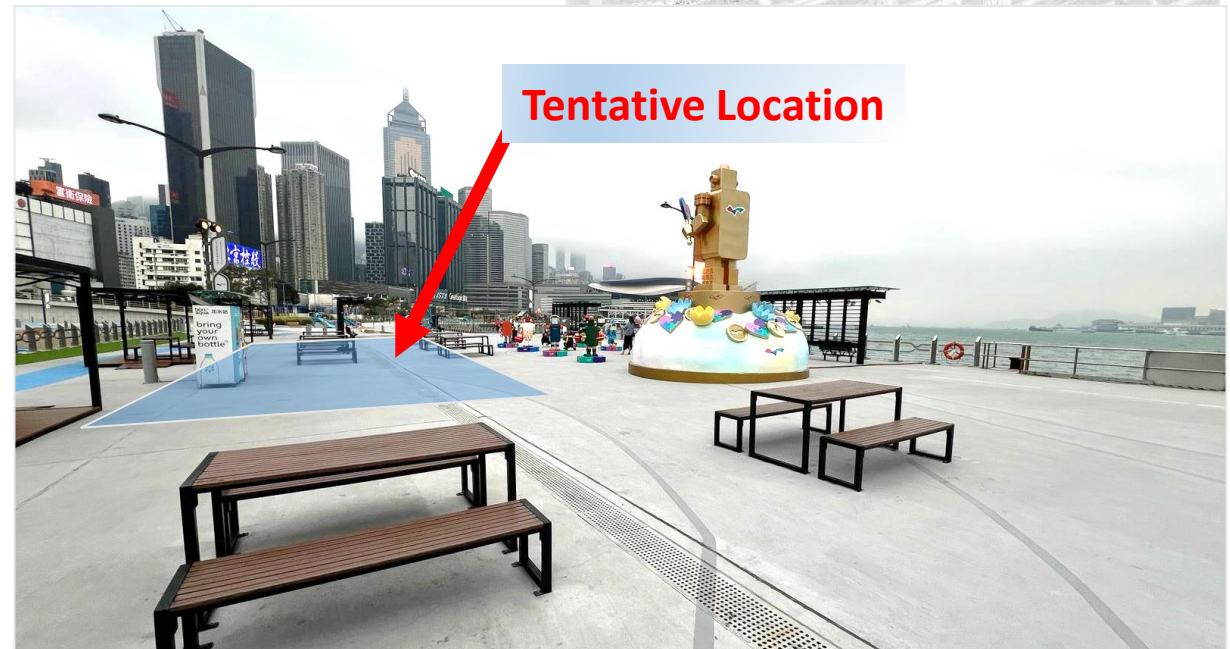
**Annex A      Proposed Locations of Smart Specialty Vending Facilities in Wan Chai North and Kowloon East**

**Annex B      Locations covered by two studies on development in Hung Hom and Wan Chai North**

**Development Bureau  
March 2024**

# Proposed Locations of Smart Specialty Vending Facilities

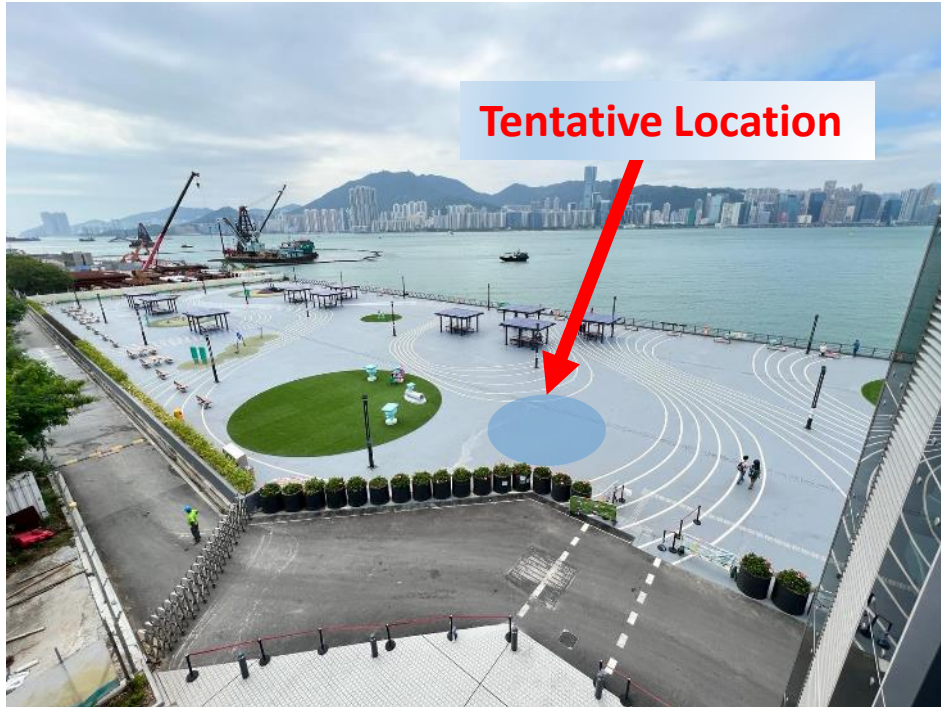
## Pilot Site 1 – Water Sports and Recreation Precinct, Wan Chai North



Target commissioning in mid 2024

# Proposed Locations of Smart Specialty Vending Facilities

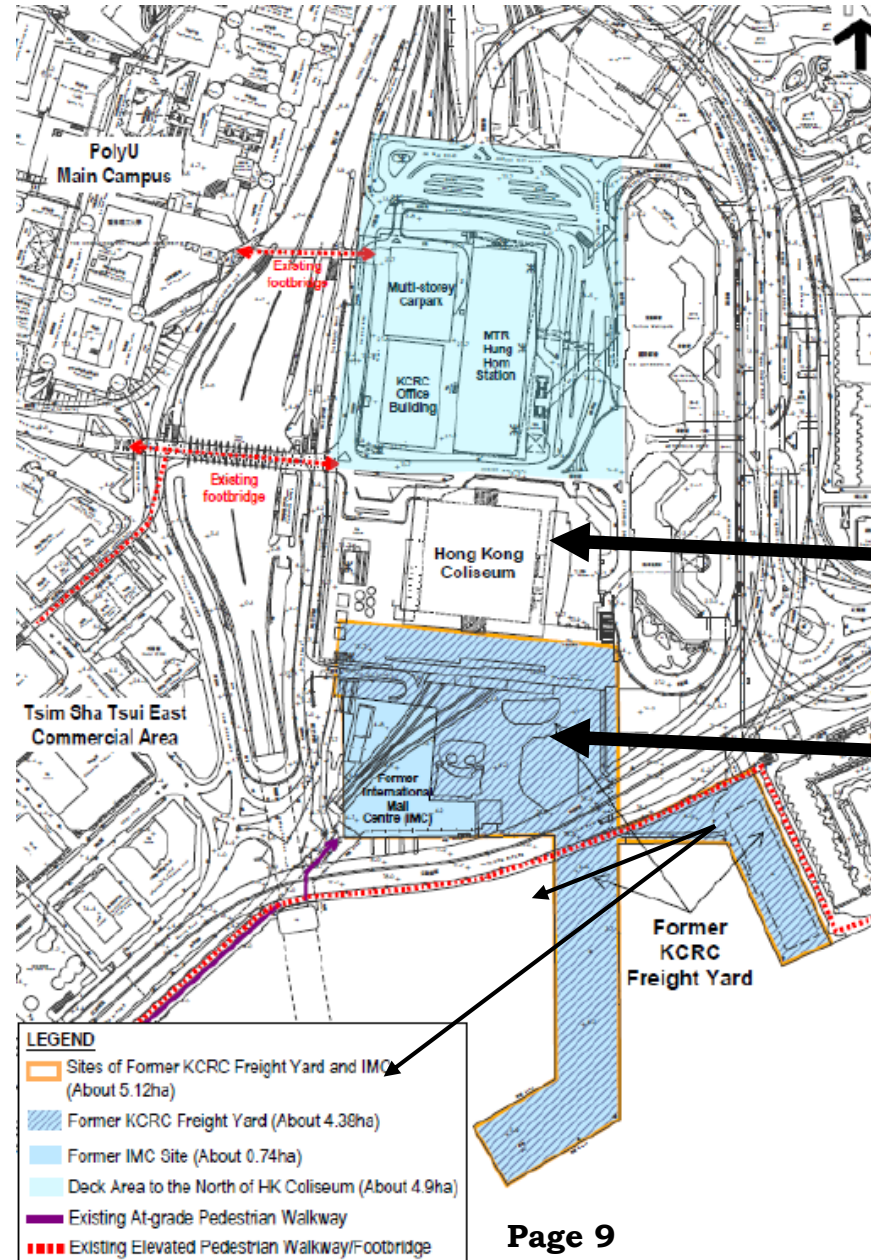
## Pilot Site 2 – Cha Kwo Ling Promenade, Kowloon East



Target commissioning in **end 2024**



# Locations covered by two studies on development in Hung Hom and Wan Chai North



Hong Kong Coliseum

Waterfront Area adjacent to the Hong Kong Coliseum in Hung Hom

# Locations covered by two studies on development in Hung Hom and Wan Chai North

