

Task Force on Harbourfront Developments on Hong Kong Island

For discussion
on 12 January 2012

TFHK/02/2012

Expansion of the Wanchai Campus of the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts

PURPOSE

This paper seeks Members' views on the proposal for expansion of the Wanchai campus of the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (Academy).

BACKGROUND

2. The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts established by Government Ordinance in 1984, is a leading university-sector institution in the performing arts in Asia. It provides professional undergraduate education and practice-based postgraduate programmes in Dance, Drama, Film and Television, Music, Theatre and Entertainment Arts, and Chinese Traditional Theatre. Its educational philosophy reflects the cultural diversity of Hong Kong with emphasis on Chinese and Western traditions, and interdisciplinary learning.

3. The site of the main Academy campus located on the Wanchai waterfront was provided by the Hong Kong Government, which meets the capital and annual recurrent costs of the Academy. At inception of the institution, the Hong Kong Jockey Club donated \$300 million to cover the construction costs of the buildings which opened in 1985. Béthanie, the site of the Academy's Landmark, UNESCO listed Campus in Pokfulam, principally houses specialist facilities for the School of Film and Television.

4. Development of the Academy's academic programmes and gradual expansion of student population over the years have given rise to a demand for increased campus space. In line with the implementation of a new academic structure for secondary education and higher education, the Academy will migrate from its current three-year programmes to a four-year undergraduate degree programme structure commencing in the 2012/13 academic year. Space requirements will increase as a consequence of implementing new four-year programmes as under the new academic structure more classes, lectures, rehearsals and inter-disciplinary activities will be held concurrently.

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5. This campus expansion Project (the Project) strives to address the existing, historic space shortages and anticipated space demands of the Academy after implementation of the four-year undergraduate degree programme structure.

THE PROJECT

Proposed Scope of Works

6. The Academy has undertaken a comprehensive technical feasibility study to explore the possibilities of increasing space within the existing Wanchai campus. The proposal will involve construction of an extension adjoining the northeast corner of the existing campus near the Wanchai harbourfront along Fenwick Street. The master layout plan of the proposed extension can be found at **Appendix I**.

7. The scope of the Project includes construction of:-

- (a) a 9-storey high, structurally independent building block adjoining the north-east side of the Theatre Block area;
- (b) a one-storey light-weight structure over existing flat roof areas covering the Concert Hall, Lyric Theatre, TV Studio, Recital Hall and existing Theatre Block area; and
- (c) an additional mezzanine floor over the existing Painting Workshop area at UG/F of the Theatre Block.

Design Concept

8. A key concept of the proposed design is to balance the colour and material of the façade of the extension with existing Academy buildings. Feature windows in the new extension give a more representative vibrant and 'live' appearance to an Academy of performing arts and thus enhance the overall visual interest of the harbourfront view of the Wanchai area.

Space Provision

9. The Project will generate gross floor areas of approximately 10,000m², which will provide additional accommodation for the six disciplines of the

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Academy (Dance, Drama, Film/TV, Music, Theatre and Entertainment Arts, Chinese Traditional Theatre), with specialist workshops, rehearsal studios, music teaching, seminar and practice rooms, classrooms, faculty offices and meeting/tutorial rooms and an expanded Graduate Education Centre.

HARBOUR PLANNING PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

10. In delineating the proposed design, due reference and careful attention have been made to the Harbour Planning Principles and Guidelines:

Vibrant Harbour

- It is cited in the Harbour Planning Principles (Principle 6) that “it is essential to balance the use of the Harbour...”. The Project is able to provide cultural and educational facilities in the vicinity and hence create distinct and valuable use of the land complementary to open space provision and marine-related facilities.

Urban Design

- The Project will have minimal visual impact on the Victoria harbourfront view. The height of the buildings after the proposed extension, at 54.8mPD or 11 metres higher than the current constellation of Academy buildings, is still significantly lower than existing buildings in the neighborhood. The prospective outlook of the Academy premises with the extension may be found at **Appendix II**. The Project will have no significant impact on the ridgeline of the Victoria Peak. Existing and future harbourfront views after completion of the Project are illustrated at **Appendices III** and **IV** respectively.
- The Project will have no significant adverse impact on ventilation, sunlight and views of neighbouring areas since the 9-storey building will take up only a comparatively small footprint, while the rooftop extension will occupy but a minor part of the existing roof of the Theatre Block.

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Sustainable Development

- In terms of environmental impact, it is anticipated that the proposed extension will not pose any major impact to the surroundings. Moreover, mitigation measures have been identified and incorporated into Project work procedures through contractual clauses, they include, good site practice and management, and close enforcement of the resident engineers, and stipulate statutory compliance in tender/ work contract documents in respect of air-quality, water quality, and noise control and monitoring. They further include clauses to carry out regular and sufficient watering, enclosure of potential dust sources, to install sufficient silt removal facilities to settle out sediment of construction site waste water prior to discharge, to apply silenced plants or quality powered mechanical equipment, to erect noise enclosures, and to implement appropriate waste management plans.
- Green roofs will be provided at 7/F, 8/F and 9/F of the new building block to provide recreational and gathering places for students, and increase the green coverage of the Academy waterfront site.
- The Project is formative and key to strategic development in terms of human capital and cultural software development, education and training of local talented students for the performing arts and creative industries sectors and enriching further Hong Kong's talent pool in performing, technical and screen arts. The enhanced competitiveness that will accrue from development of the Academy's infrastructure will contribute to the sustained long-term development of our cultural and creative industries regionally, nationally and internationally.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Iterative consultation with the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) has taken place and with relevant Government bureaux and departments on the Project. Further consultation with the Wan Chai District Council after seeking views from Members of the Task Force, is scheduled in January 2012.

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OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Traffic Impact

11. The proposed extension will have no significant impact on the vehicular traffic flows or access in the vicinity. The facilities therein are designed for teaching purposes and do not include public performance/entertainment venues which would generate significant traffic flows. As most of the Academy's students rely on public transportation, the extension will not increase the number of parking spaces required.

Land Requirement

12. The proposed Project will be carried out within the site leased to the Academy and there is, therefore, no further requirement of additional land.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

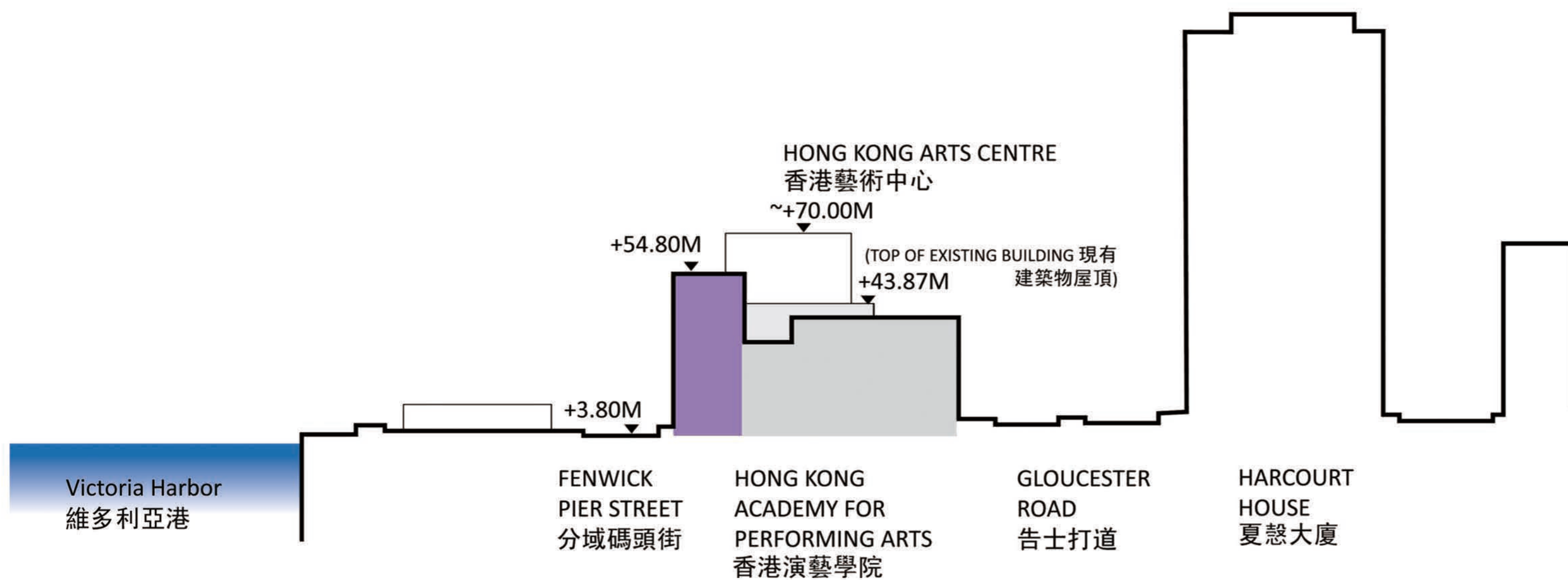
13. The Academy has obtained policy support of HAB for the Project. It has been working closely with the relevant Government departments to ensure that the Project is in full compliance with the rules and regulations of the requisite authorities. The Academy will consult the Wan Chai District Council in January 2012. Subject to the funding approval by the Legislative Council Finance Committee, the Project is expected to commence in April 2013 and complete in December 2015.

ADVICE SOUGHT

14. Members are invited to give their views on the Project.

**The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts
January 2012**









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