

# Task Force on Harbourfront Developments On Hong Kong Island

For discussion  
on 31 October 2025

TFHK/03/2025

## Proposed Iconic Cultural Entertainment Venue, Al Fresco Dining and Residential Development to Rejuvenate the Quarry Bay Harbourfront

### PURPOSE

This paper seeks Members' views on a s.12A application to the Town Planning Board (TPB) on a site at Hoi Yu Street, Quarry Bay (Application Site). The site is zoned "Other Specified Uses (1)" ("OU(1)") annotated "Cultural and/or Commercial, Leisure and Tourism Related Uses" on the approved Quarry Bay Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/H21/28. A location plan is at **Annex A**. The application has been put forward by Marine Riches III, the current lot owner of I.L. 8590 RP (Part) and I.L. 8723 RP (Applicant).<sup>1</sup> The proposal envisions transforming the Application Site into a landmark destination along the Hong Kong Island harbourfront. The application requests approval from the TBP to include 'Flat' under column 2 of the "Other Specified Uses" annotated "Cultural and/or Commercial, Leisure and Tourism Related Uses" ("OU(Cultural and/or Commercial, Leisure and Tourism Related Uses)") zone<sup>2</sup> as a use permitted on application and a minor amendment of the building height restriction (BHR), for a cultural, leisure and tourism-led development supported by residential use.

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<sup>1</sup> The Applicant and current landowner, Marine Riches III, is majority owned by MBK Partners ("MBKP"). Founded in 2005, MBKP is the largest independent private equity firm in North Asia with an exclusive focus on the region. One of its core areas of expertise is investing in and managing cultural, entertainment, and tourism destinations. Marine Riches III acquired the Application Lot in a receivership sale process in 2024.

<sup>2</sup> Sub-areas "OU(1)" and "OU(2)" of the "OU(Cultural and/or Commercial, Leisure and Tourism Related Uses)" zone are subject to a maximum building height of 35mPD and 25mPD respectively. Based on the individual merits of a development or redevelopment proposal, minor relaxation of the BHRs may be considered by the TPB under s.16 application.

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2. Designed by Foster + Partners, the project aims to redefine the waterfront experience with a purpose-built facility for immersive entertainment. The residential component of the development is intended to generate the capital necessary to build the cultural venue and sustain its operations from the outset. With a publicly accessible ground floor featuring diverse food and beverage offerings, the venue is poised to become a dynamic anchor point at the eastern end of the soon-to-be-completed East Coast Boardwalk. A pedestrian footbridge over the Island Eastern Corridor (IEC) will strengthen urban connectivity between Quarry Bay and the harbourfront, promoting walkability and waterfront access.

## **BACKGROUND**

3. The Application Site has undergone extensive planning and processing over the years. In 2001, the then lot owner Fine Tower Associates Limited, was granted approval to construct a 25-storey industrial building with a height of 80mPD and a plot ratio of 15. Although foundation works were commenced in 2017, they were put on hold at the request of the Government so as to find a development better suited to the future use of the harbourfront. This approved industrial building scheme remains valid, and continues to represent the only financially viable fallback option for the Applicant (See **Annex B**). In 2003, as per the TPB's agreement, part of the I.L. 8590 RP (Part) and I.L. 8723 RP and the adjoining government land were rezoned to "OU(1)" annotated "Cultural and/or Commercial, Leisure and Tourism Related Uses" with a maximum BHR of 35mPD and "Open Space". These zonings remain unchanged since then.

4. In 2018, an alternative development involving harbourfront leisure, tourism and commercial development was presented to the Harbourfront Commission (HC), which recognized that such a development would be more compatible with the surrounding environment in place of the industrial building under

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development; and which welcomed a design with varied building height (BH) based on the maximum BHR of 35mPD. A s.16 planning application (No. A/H21/150) was submitted by the then lot owner and approved by the TPB in 2019<sup>3</sup> (Approved Scheme). It included a proposed mixed development with hotel, office, shop and services, eating place, place of recreation, sports or culture uses and an elevated walkway connecting to the Quarry Bay hinterland as well as for minor relaxation of the BHR from 35mPD to a range of 39–41mPD (see **Annex C**).

5. In 2021, the Government announced that the Executive Council had approved an in-situ land exchange to replace the original plan of the then lot owner for a 25-storey high industrial building development, meaning that subject to payment of full market premium, the then lot owner may, in accordance with the approval given by the TPB, pursue the proposed waterfront project at the re-grant lot.<sup>4</sup> Although an application for the land exchange was submitted and basic terms were presented, the basic terms were not accepted and as a result, the development did not proceed.

## PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

6. A proposed conceptual scheme has been specifically developed for the s.12A application to fulfil the vision of establishing a new, attractive waterfront destination that is also financially sustainable (Conceptual Scheme) at **Annex D**. This innovative approach aims to create a vibrant locale that will appeal to both residents and visitors, enhancing the area's appeal and

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<sup>3</sup> The approved planning application (No. A/H21/150) involves a site area of about 1.2ha with 8,532m<sup>2</sup> zoned "OU(1)" annotated "Cultural and/or Commercial, Leisure and Tourism Related Uses" and 3,504m<sup>2</sup> zoned "Other Specified Uses" annotated "Elevated Walkway" ("OU(Elevated Walkway)").

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202103/03/P2021030300443.htm>

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supporting its long-term success.

## ***Innovative Design***

7. An iconic dome-shaped architectural structure is proposed as the central piece. It will provide a high-quality, purposely designed, permanent cultural venue for immersive experience content providers. A new cultural tourism attraction will therefore be created for Hong Kong. This is a notable contrast with the Approved Scheme, which had no specific cultural, leisure or tourism attraction component. The Conceptual Scheme will better achieve the planning intention of the “OU(1)” zone and more effectively meet recent government policy objectives to boost the cultural and tourism sectors. The facility will be suitable for accommodating a wide range of cultural activities.

8. Recognising the site’s unique waterfront location and its significance in redefining this part of Quarry Bay, the Conceptual Scheme has adopted visually interesting building forms and incorporated various design features. This includes building setbacks, stepped BH, terrace design and building gaps, which are enabled by the proposed BH of 44mPD. The result is an innovative and iconic architectural design that is unique, while maintaining a low to medium-rise profile to ensure compatibility with the surrounding environment. The BH includes an approximately 1.5m increase in the existing site formation level for storm surge mitigation, ensuring a sustainable, climate-resilient development. Please refer to **Table 1** below for development parameters of the Approved Scheme and the Proposed Conceptual Scheme:

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Table 1: Comparison of Approved Scheme and Proposed Conceptual Scheme

Major Parameters	Approved Scheme	Proposed Conceptual Scheme
Total Site Area	12,036 m <sup>2</sup> (about)	8,532 m <sup>2</sup> (about) #
- Portion Zoned "OU(1)"	- 8,532 m <sup>2</sup> (about)	- 8,532 m <sup>2</sup> (about)
- Public Elevated Footbridge	- 3,504 m <sup>2</sup> (about)	
Total GFA	37,155 m <sup>2</sup> (about)	39,480 m <sup>2</sup> (about)
Total Non-domestic GFA	37,155 m <sup>2</sup> (about)	12,935 m <sup>2</sup> (about)
- Cultural, Leisure and Entertainment uses	- 0	- 7,703 (about)
- Hotel	- 17,548 m <sup>2</sup>	- 0
- Office	- 8,070 m <sup>2</sup>	- 0
- Eating Place and Shops and Services	- 11,537 m <sup>2</sup>	- 4,617 m <sup>2</sup> (about)*
- Covered Public Open Space	- 0	- 615 m <sup>2</sup> (about)
Total Domestic GFA	0	26,545 m <sup>2</sup> (about)
Plot Ratio (Portion Zoned "OU(1)")	4.40 (about)	4.63 (about)
No of Blocks	5	4
Maximum Building Heights		
- Non-domestic	- 34mPD, 39mPD, 41mPD	- 26.3mPD
- Domestic	- N/A	- 40.7mPD, 44.0mPD
No. of Storeys	10, 11, 12, 13 Including 1-storey of podium and 2 basement levels	8, 13, 14 Including 1 storey of podium (i.e. eating place and shop and services at ground floor level) and 3

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Major Parameters	Approved Scheme	Proposed Conceptual Scheme
		basement levels
Site Coverage	On G/F: 92% (about)  Up to 41mPD: 36% (about)	On L02 deck level (11.9mPD): 60% (about) Roof levels (44mPD): 55% (about)
Number of Hotel Units	400	0
Number of Flats	0	189 - 225
Estimated Number of Residents	N/A	530-630^
Total Private Open Space	3,780 m <sup>2</sup> (about)	5,010 m <sup>2</sup> (about)
- Private Open Space Accessible to the Public [A]	- 0 m <sup>2</sup>	- 2,315 m <sup>2</sup> (about)
- Private Open Space	- 3,780 m <sup>2</sup> (about)	- 2,695 m <sup>2</sup> (about)
Total Public Open Space (POS) [B]	3,990 m <sup>2</sup> (about)  [ <b>Remark:</b> The public open space outside the "OU(1)" in the approved application had an area of about 7,200 m <sup>2</sup> . Approximately 3,210m <sup>2</sup> of that area is now being implemented by government or existing promenade]	4,918 m <sup>2</sup> (about) @
- POS outside the site to be constructed, managed and maintained by the Applicant	- 0 m <sup>2</sup>	- 4,080 m <sup>2</sup> (about) (Includes promenade and proposed harbour steps)
- POS outside the site to be constructed by the Applicant and managed and	- 3,152 m <sup>2</sup> (about) (Promenade)	- 838 m <sup>2</sup> (about) (Re-provisioned Pet Garden)

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Major Parameters	Approved Scheme	Proposed Conceptual Scheme
maintained by the Government	- 838 m <sup>2</sup> (about) (Re-provisioned pet garden)	
Total Open Space Accessible to the Public [A] + [B]	- 3,990 m <sup>2</sup>	- 7,233 m <sup>2</sup>

Remarks:

# The footbridge area of about 538 m<sup>2</sup> is not part of the S.12A Application Site boundary as no amendments to the Plan are proposed in relation to the proposed footbridge. However, the footbridge is an integrated part of the Conceptual Scheme, and its final alignment and area will be determined at the detailed design stage.

\*A portion of the ground level include publicly accessible open areas to be used as part of the commercial activities, such as indoor-outdoor dining. This has been counted as part of the Eating Place and Shops and Services GFA, and so it has been excluded from the overall open space calculation.

^Assuming a Person-Per-Flat ratio of 2.8, based on the average domestic household size in Eastern District in 2021 released by Census and Statistics Department.

@ Subject to detailed design, and discussion and agreement with the Government.

### ***Enhanced Pedestrian Connections and Experience***

9. The previously proposed footbridge over the IEC that cuts across Quarry Bay Park (QBP), would have significant adverse impacts on the existing trees within the park. As an improved alternative, two vital connections are proposed: 1) a ground-level connection through QBP, and 2) a shorter footbridge across the IEC connecting the “OU(1)” site to QBP. After provision, these would be handed to government for management and maintenance. These connections will enable pedestrians to enjoy a green, leisurely walk through QBP, whilst providing more efficient and direct access to the waterfront. The footbridge will lead pedestrians from the park to the central piazza in the development and down

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to the waterfront.

## ***Alternative Conceptual Scheme Enabling Greater Planning and Design Merits***

10. In response to departmental comments received during the s.12A pre-application submission stage, an Alternative Conceptual Scheme has also subsequently been formulated to achieve additional planning and design merits (Alternative Conceptual Scheme). It is also included in the s.12A application. The Alternative Conceptual Scheme maintains the same floor area. It has been simply modified by the removal of the residential component located above and behind the cultural venue. To achieve this, a further minor BH increase of +3mPD, to 47mPD is proposed. The slight increase in BH (about 1 storey) allows for greater planning and design merits to be achieved, such as improved BH variation, greater visual and air permeability, enhanced iconic feature and removal of interface issues between residential and cultural and community uses.

## ***Landscape Master Plan***

11. The Conceptual Scheme Landscape Master Plan is designed to blend the new development seamlessly into its surroundings, bringing attractive open spaces together with the architecture. The design connects large areas like QBP and the new boardwalk beneath the IEC, as well as smaller spaces that add energy and make the site unique.

12. The new proposal will provide around 5,010 m<sup>2</sup> of open space, a 32.7% increase from the Approved Schemes Plan of 3,780 m<sup>2</sup> [Note: Approximately 3,210 m<sup>2</sup> of the open space proposed in the approved scheme is now being implemented by government as part of the boardwalk project or is existing promenade and has been excluded from this comparison]. This includes open spaces owned privately but accessible to the public, plus private green

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areas, all created to be welcoming and linked with the city. At least 20% of the area will be green, meeting official standards—this includes a minimum of 10% greenery in main zones close to street level. Overall, there will be at least 2,150 m<sup>2</sup> of green coverage, roughly 25% of the site.

13. The landscaping encourages people to meet and spend time together in modern urban settings that use coordinated materials, lighting, signs, and furniture. These spaces will be lively, safe, and easy to access throughout the site.

### ***Technical Assessments***

14. Various technical assessments have been carried out based on the Conceptual Scheme, including Traffic Impact Assessment, Environmental Assessment (including noise impact assessment), Air Quality Impact Assessment, Air Ventilation Assessment (Expert Evaluation), Visual Impact Assessment, Tree Preservation Proposal and Landscape Master Plan. It was found that with appropriate mitigation measures, the proposed amendment to include residential use at the “OU(1)” site is technically feasible.

### ***Public Benefits***

15. The proposal encompasses a range of public benefits. In addition to introducing a new privately funded and operated cultural attraction for the public to enjoy, the proposed scheme will provide ample open space accessible to the public, enhance the public realm and the harbourfront, and improve the connectivity and walkability throughout this part of Quarry Bay. The cultural attraction, featuring technologically advanced forms of entertainment, will also support the growth of local arts and cultural sectors, boost the tourism industry, and contribute positively to Hong Kong’s economy.

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## **JUSTIFICATIONS FOR THE PROPOSAL**

### ***Economic and Tourism Changes***

16. The Applicant considers that the Approved Scheme, which focused on hotel and office use, is not financially viable due to market shifts and commercial feasibility constraints. Since the TPB's approval in 2019, Hong Kong has faced major economic shifts which have reshaped the market fundamentals for tourism and demand for office space. Although restrictions arisen from the pandemic have lifted, the recovery has been gradual, with reduced demand for office space and changing visitor habits. In recent years, the hospitality sector has undergone significant market recalibration, evidenced by revised visitor patterns, a reduction in investment for new hotel development, and the trend of repurposing existing properties for alternative uses such as student housing.

17. In consideration of broader policy objectives at both the national and local levels to position Hong Kong as a cultural hub, the focus has shifted to revitalising the city's tourism through cultural development. Key initiatives include museum expansions and the promotion of arts and heritage to enhance visitor experiences<sup>5</sup>.

### ***Inclusion of Residential Use to Ensure Project Viability***

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<sup>5</sup> Recent surveys show a shift in visitor trends from shopping toward deeper, more meaningful cultural experiences, which highlights the need for a new approach that blends tourism with arts, heritage, and creativity to enhance Hong Kong's position as a vibrant and attractive destination. LC Paper No. CB(4)373/2024(02) Legislative Council Panel on Economic Development: Hong Kong Tourism Board Work Plan for 2024-25

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18. Although cultural and tourism facilities remain central to the planning intention of the “OU(1)” zone, they typically require outside funding or government subsidies to fully cover construction costs. For instance, similar challenges are observed in projects such as Ocean Park and the West Kowloon Cultural District, which face challenges in ongoing financial sustainability.

19. The Conceptual Scheme introduces a more practical and self-sustaining approach by using proceeds from residential sales to fund the construction of cultural and tourism amenities. This model enables the Applicant to construct and operate these facilities independently, without relying on government subsidies, ensuring long-term viability and public benefit.

20. The Conceptual Scheme addresses two major challenges in Hong Kong’s cultural sector, (1) limited availability of suitable venues for long-term exhibition leases and (2) prevailing market rental rates. These constraints are addressed through purpose-built spaces and potential long-term partnerships with content providers, based on profit-sharing rather than fixed rent arrangements.

21. To make the project viable, the Applicant proposes including ‘Flat’ use under Column 2 of the “OU(Cultural and/or Commercial, Leisure and Tourism Related Uses)” zone, and a minor amendment to the BHR from 35mPD to 47mPD. This approach also enables the TBP to assess the Conceptual Scheme in greater detail as part of the s.16 planning application further on in the process.

22. Given Hong Kong’s ongoing housing shortage and demand for larger, higher-quality flats, the waterfront site presents a prime opportunity for premium residential development. Environmental concerns such as air quality and traffic noise have been reviewed, and mitigation measures can ensure compliance with current standards.

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## **NEW HARBOURFRONT TOURIST ATTRACTION**

### ***Tourism***

23. The new proposal for the “OU(1)” site focuses on creating a dedicated immersive entertainment venue on Hong Kong’s waterfront, owned and managed by the private sector. An immersive exhibition is a multi-sensory, interactive experience that enables visitors to engage with curated content in a novel and experiential manner. Technology plays a central role in enabling these experiences, while innovation and differentiation are key drivers of growth in this emerging sector. This modern form of entertainment is not available in Hong Kong on the scale proposed despite its growing popularity worldwide.

24. The proposal fulfils the planning intention of the zone through addressing the identified need of affordable, long-term venues for cultural and entertainment events, with a target-oriented strategy to attract immersive experience content providers as anchor tenants and partners. Approximately 7,703 m<sup>2</sup> of GFA will be dedicated to these activities, with an estimated 5,000 visitors per day expected. Visitor projections suggest the venue could surpass Hong Kong Palace Museum attendance and reach about 70% of M+’s visitors, making it a major new tourist attraction.

25. Despite the GFA for entertainment and dining may appear modest compared to other attractions that have similar visitor numbers, its specifications for immersive experience attractions have been determined in consultation with the leading operators in the immersive experience space such as Neon Global. This targeted approach, combined with a program of flexible and evolving content, will ensure the venue remains a dynamic and adaptable cultural attraction whose value extends beyond tourism revenue. Lasting benefits for Hong Kong’s creative and technological sectors would be generated through technical

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training, academic partnerships, community outreach, and collaborations with local artists, creating a broader socio-economic impact that distinguishes this project from traditional cultural venues in both scope and nature.

### ***Foster + Partners Iconic Conceptual Scheme***

26. Foster + Partners' Conceptual Scheme at the Application Site aims to revitalise Hong Kong's harbourfront with a pedestrian-friendly cultural hub, public piazza, event spaces, and open areas. Over 33% of the site area is dedicated to public use, inspired by leading international waterfronts. The scheme features waterfront restaurants, cafes, and retail, offering the city's largest waterfront dining experience.

27. Residential units and the cultural venue are elevated above a fully accessible ground level, ensuring the public can enjoy indoor and outdoor amenities with direct harbour views. The proposal includes harbour steps to bring visitors closer to the water enhancing the connection between land and sea. This proposal has been developed as a conceptual proposal based on the new provisions of the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance. Detailed submissions for approval would be part of the implementation process, should the application be approved.

28. Enhanced connections for pedestrians and MTR users are central to the plan, including upgrades beneath the IEC that offer additional leisure opportunities, integrating the new boardwalk with Quarry Bay and transport routes. New public landing steps will improve harbour access, possibly serving water taxis and linking key destinations across Hong Kong.

29. The design prioritises active street-level access, fostering engagement with local communities and vibrant street life. Residences feature generous balconies with harbour views, green terraces, and sustainable design, contributing to a lively

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neighbourhood. Overall, the development aspires to set a new benchmark for Hong Kong's waterfront, encouraging further transformation along the harbourfront.

### ***Minor Relaxation of Building Height Restriction for Enhanced Waterfront Experience***

30. To support the planning intention of the "OU(1)" zone, the proposed development aims to create a vibrant waterfront destination that blends cultural entertainment with scenic public spaces, an attraction for both tourists and locals.

31. The design closely follows the planning guidelines outlined in the Explanatory Statement (ES) for the zone, which encourages integration with the waterfront promenade, setting back at street level and creation of piazza to provide a more interesting and spacious pedestrian environment. In response, the development features generous building setbacks at street level, forming a spacious piazza and inviting public zones that encourage community interaction and leisure.

32. To bring this innovative design to life, a minor increase in the maximum BH is proposed, from 35mPD to 47mPD. Compared to the previously Approved Scheme (41mPD), this represents a modest 6-meter adjustment. This change enables a more dynamic and functional urban landscape while ensuring the cultural entertainment facilities are appropriately sized and economically viable.

### **FULFILLING THE HARBOUR PLANNING PRINCIPLES**

33. The Conceptual Scheme for the Application Site fully aligns with the Harbourfront Commission's eight Harbour Planning Principles (see **Table 2**). This approach represented a key element in the design process and guarantees a responsible, dynamic, and inclusive utilisation of the Harbour's edge.

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Table 2: How the Proposal Meets Each of the Harbour Planning Principles

Principle	Summary of Compliance
1. Preserving Victoria Harbour	Development stays within existing land; harbour remains untouched. Optional harbour steps may enhance water-promenade connection, all within the limits of the current Protection of the Harbour Ordinance.
2. Stakeholder Engagement	Consultations with Harbourfront Commission and Eastern District Council; public input via statutory planning process.
3. Sustainable Development	Adheres to BEAM Plus and Sustainable Building Design Guidelines to ensure long-term environmental and social value.
4. Integrated Planning	Supports long-term planning goals for arts, culture, retail, and residential uses; connects to East Coast Boardwalk for waterfront continuity.
5. Proactive Harbour Enhancement	Offers active management of public spaces; integrates cultural venues with open areas for events and recreation.
6. Vibrant Harbour	Creates a lively public realm with cultural attractions and residential spaces; potential marine access via vessel landing facilities.
7. Accessible Harbour	Enhances pedestrian connectivity through the East Coast Boardwalk and proposed footbridge linking QBP to the site.
8. Public Enjoyment	Delivers a landmark cultural hub with open space, exhibitions, performances,

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	and dining—unique along the 15km waterfront promenade.
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34. This proposal preserves the integrity of the harbour while enhancing the site into a vibrant, accessible, and culturally significant destination for both residents and visitors.

## DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE AND WAY FORWARD

35. The s.12A application was submitted to the TPB on the 26th of September 2025. Following the amendment to the OZP, should it be successful, the Applicant intends to promptly submit a s.16 application for approval by the TPB. The Applicant is committed to implementing the scheme at the earliest opportunity.

## ADVICE SOUGHT

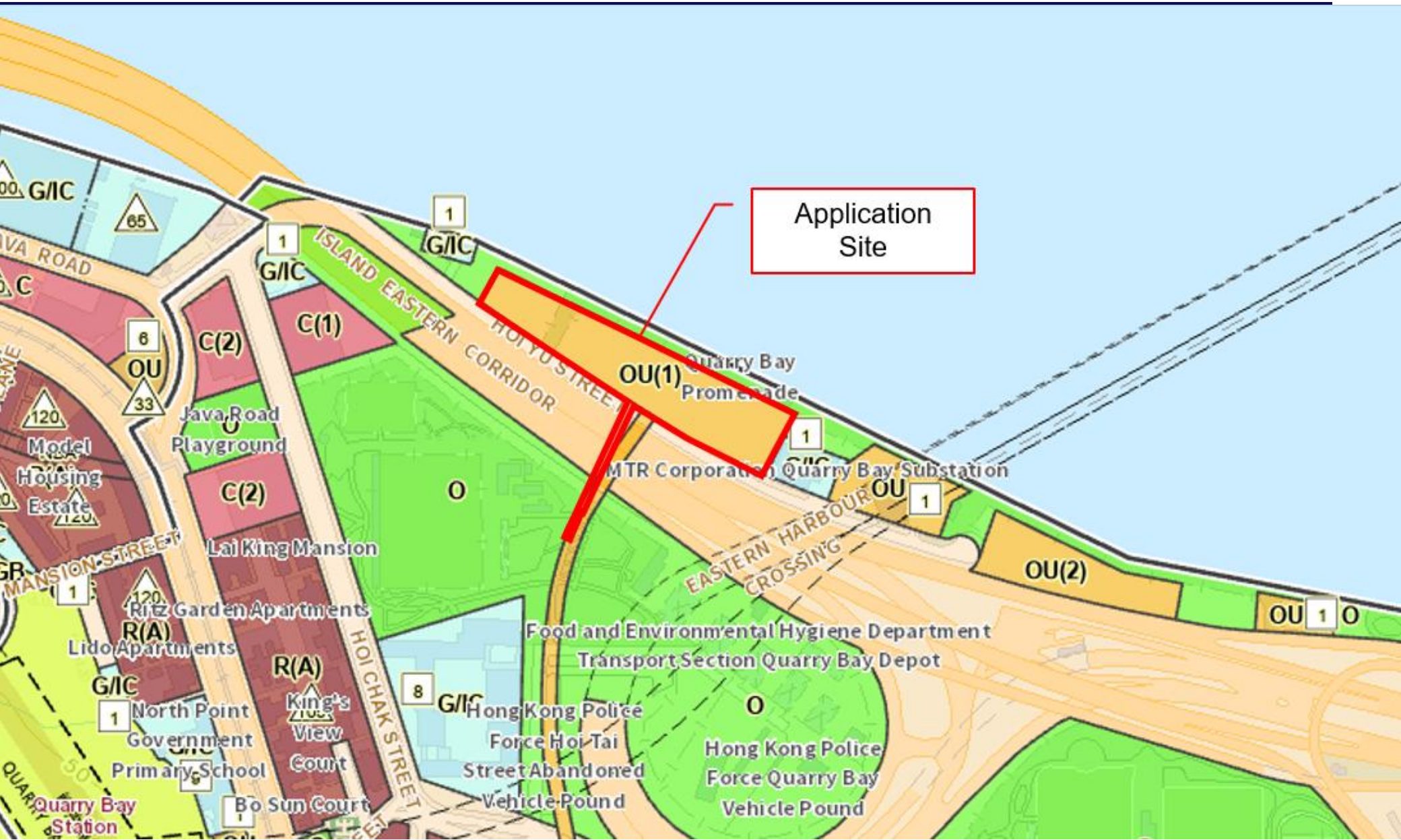
36. Members are invited to comment on the proposal to add 'Flat' use under Column 2 of the "OU(Cultural and/or Commercial, Leisure and Tourism Related Uses)" zone, and the proposed minor amendment to BHR, taking into account the Conceptual Scheme and Alternative Conceptual Scheme.

## ATTACHMENTS

- Annex A** Location Plan
- Annex B** Image of the Approved Industrial Scheme
- Annex C** Image of the Approved Scheme (A/H21/150)
- Annex D** Images of the Conceptual Scheme
- Annex E** Images Comparing the Conceptual Scheme and the Alternative Conceptual Scheme

**Masterplan Limited**  
**October 2025**

# Annex A: Location Plan



# Annex B: The Approved Industrial Scheme

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## Section of the Industrial Scheme

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- Section of the approved 80mPD industrial building
- **No land premium required**
- **Foundation works have commenced, but since been paused at the request of the government**
- **This is the only financially viable fallback position**

# Annex C: Approved Scheme (A/H21/150)

## Renderings of the Approved Scheme



- **Building height of the Approved Scheme is 39-41mPD**
- **The Approved Scheme is not financially viable and will not be implemented**

# Annex D: Images of the Conceptual Scheme

## Conceptual Scheme

*Relationship between the cultural component and waterfront promenade, leading down the harbour steps to the water*



# Annex D: Images of the Conceptual Scheme

## Conceptual Scheme



# Annex D: Images of the Conceptual Scheme

## Conceptual Scheme



# Annex D: Images of the Conceptual Scheme

## Conceptual Scheme



# Annex E: Images Comparing the Conceptual Scheme and the Alternative Conceptual Scheme

**Conceptual Scheme**

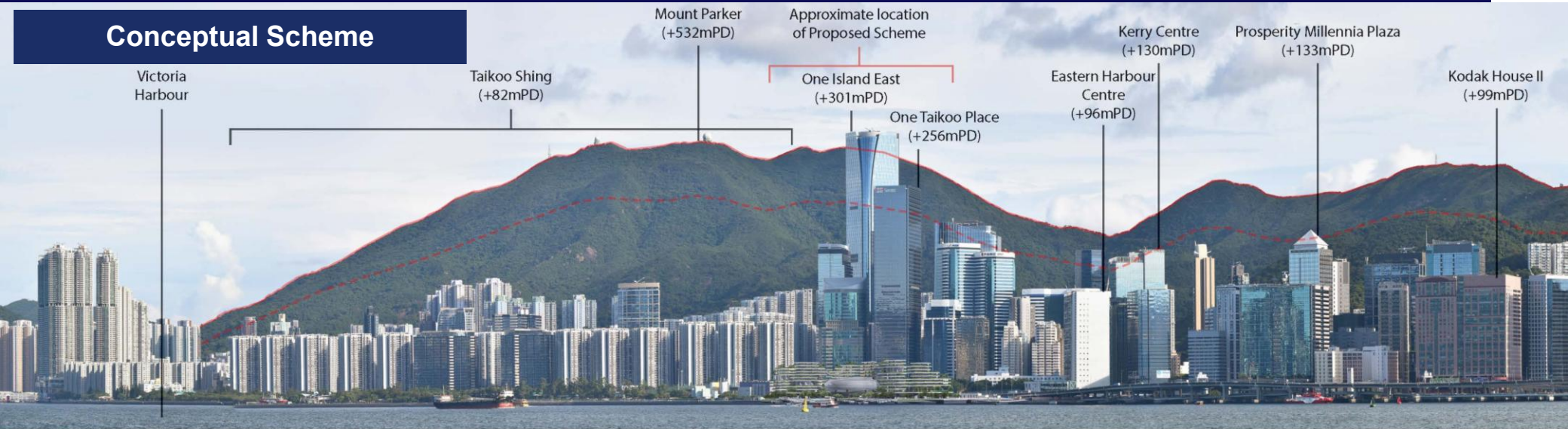


**Alternative Conceptual Scheme**



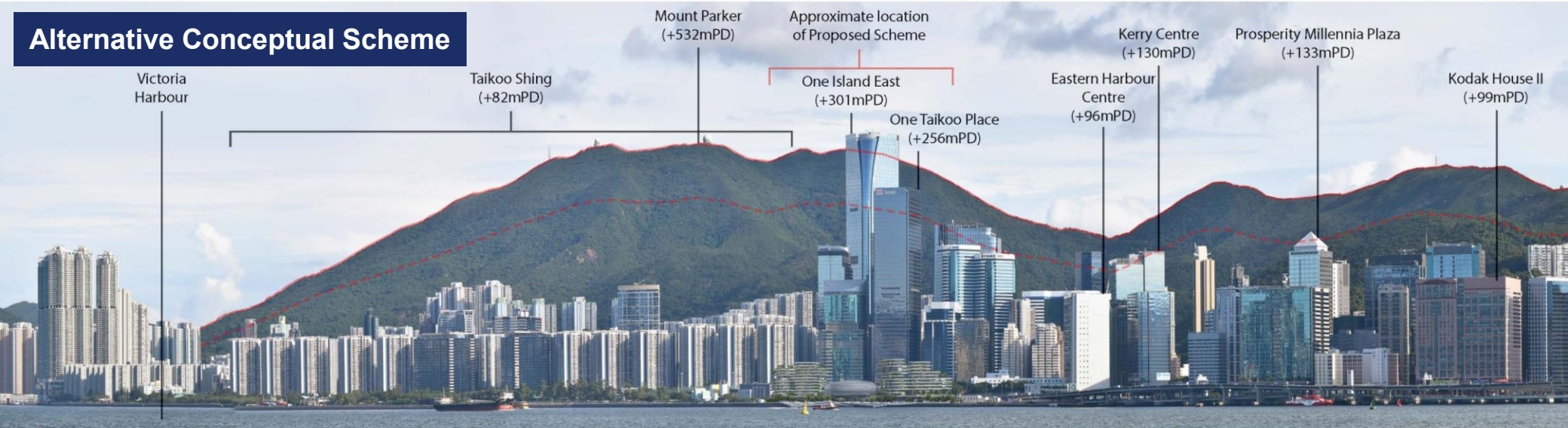
# Annex E: Images Comparing the Conceptual Scheme and the Alternative Conceptual Scheme

## Conceptual Scheme



Strategic Viewing Point 3: Waterfront Promenade at Kai Tak Development (Views towards eastern Hong Kong Island) (Proposed Scheme)

## Alternative Conceptual Scheme



Strategic Viewing Point 3: Waterfront Promenade at Kai Tak Development (Views towards eastern Hong Kong Island) (Alternate Scheme)