

# Task Force on Harbourfront Developments on Hong Kong Island

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For discussion  
on 21 February 2013

TFHK/04/2013

## Proposed Cooked Food Market, Ground Floor, Central Terminal Building, Central

### PURPOSE

This Paper is to present Members the Conceptual Background for the development of cooked food stalls in the evening, weekends and Public Holidays on the ground floor level of the Central Terminal Building, between Central Piers 7 and 8, and to request endorsement of taking the concept further in revitalising the Central Waterfront.

### INTRODUCTION

2. The future planning and use of the Central Waterfront has been presented to the public as a place of recreation and entertainment for the general public to enjoy. While focus has been on the Central Reclamation development, little attention has been placed on the possible significant improvements that could be made to the existing adjacent waterfront to help create an active and vibrant space compatible and complimentary to the Central Reclamation. The ground floor of the Central Terminal Building is rather lifeless at the moment (**See Photographs 1 and 2**). It has the potential to become a hive of activity. With low cost movable food stalls and have associated tables and chairs to eat at, the area could provide an alternative and affordable eating destination on the harbourfront.

3. Currently when passengers are embarking or disembarking from the Star Ferry, they are in quite a sterile environment isolated from Central. The harbour is one of Hong Kong's best assets and should be celebrated by maximising the harbour front wherever possible. The ground floor of the Central Terminal Building is currently extremely underutilised. It would be ideal for food stalls on the ground floor because it is a large space able to accommodate both food stalls and seating for potentially quite a large number of people. Additionally, the space is sheltered from the weather and with the high floor to ceiling height there should be adequate public viewing areas as well as allowing for good natural ventilation.

4. This paper has therefore been prepared and submitted on behalf of the "Star" Ferry Company Limited. The paper is by its nature an introductory paper and brings to the attention of the Task Force some of the issues which are likely to arise during future discussions with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and some other departments.

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5. There would remain flexibility in the use of the site as the food stalls and tables and chairs would not be present during the day. The market would be set up between 5pm and midnight during weekdays, and from 11am to midnight on weekends and public holidays.



**Photograph 1** : Looking East across the proposed location of the night market. Illustrates how underutilised the space is at present.



**Photograph 2** : Looking north-east across the proposed location of the night market, with Pier 8 in the background.

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## INITIAL CONCEPT

6. This is a very simple concept and easy to implement quickly. The concept is to provide cheap, local food cooked at cooked food stalls and served to customers at tables on the ground floor under the Central Terminal Building. The cooked food stalls and associated tables and chairs would be set up for operation at 5pm each day and packed up each night and put in storage off site.

7. There is a long history of cooked food stalls and markets in Hong Kong, and the central waterfront is currently a location where it is very difficult to find affordable food. This would be a way to introduce waterfront dining to an entirely new segment of the population.

## SIMILAR MARKETS AROUND THE WORLD

8. Asia has a long history of markets selling food from hawker like stalls. Some examples are mentioned briefly below, and includes an example of how this concept has also been successfully adopted in Australia.

a) Hong Kong – Dai Pai Dong

Hong Kong is known for having great markets of cooked food stalls. These have however been disappearing in the last decade. The previous “Poor Man’s Night Club” market which used to be established every night at the Macau Ferry Pier is perhaps the most famous example. However, that was lost with the development of the Shun Tak Centre and is unknown to the younger generation. The concept proposed in this paper would re-create this iconic waterfront attraction in a central and high profile location.

b) Singapore

Singapore is famous for its hawker centres selling Asian food with seating. The proposed night market cooked food stalls would result in something similar to this.

c) Taiwan – Shilin Night Market

Probably the biggest and most famous night market in Taiwan, the primary attraction is where hawkers sell food from stalls, however there are also non-food related stalls as well.

d) Luna 1878

There is a winter night market in Melbourne, Australia called “Luna 1878” set in the heritage building of the former Queen Victoria Market. 2012 was the inaugural winter night market and

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was very popular as is demonstrated in **Photograph 3** below.



**Photograph 3** : The 'Luna 1878' Night Market in Melbourne, Australia

## ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

9. An illustrative plan has been prepared and is attached as **Figure 1**. The proposed food stalls are all within the site area as set out under the unified management mandate of the Star Ferry in association with its Ferry Franchise.

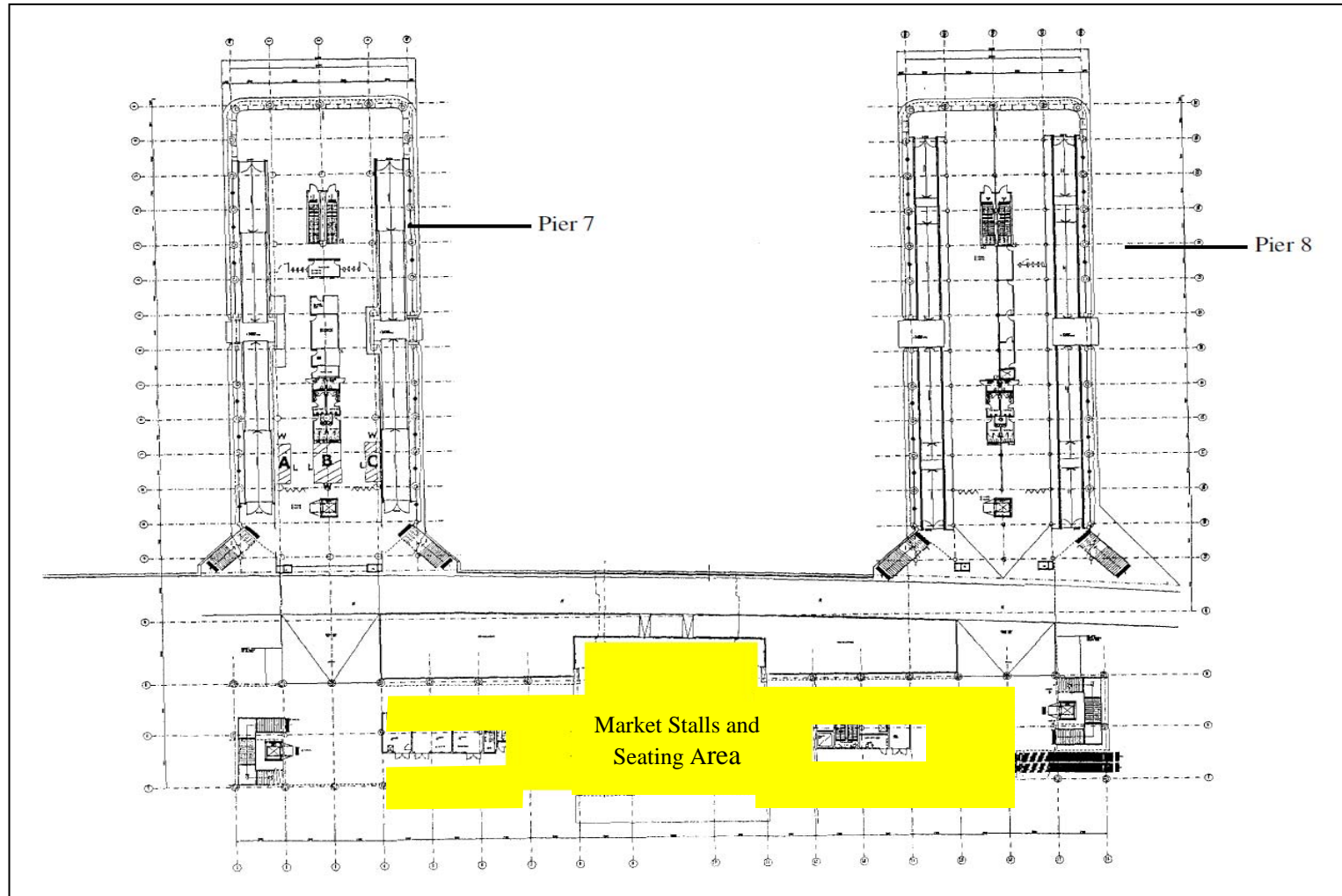
## USAGE

10. It is anticipated that the venue would be used for cooked food stalls every evening. There would be a number of different stores that would offer a number of different types of food. There would be tables and chairs set out which would be available for patrons.

11. The customers would range from locals to tourists. Due to the anticipated low price of the food, it would be affordable to the general public.

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**Figure 1** : Indicates the proposed location of the Market Stalls and Seating Area.

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## **ISSUES**

12. A number of issues have arisen and these are briefly discussed below.

## **EVA AND UTILITIES**

13. The Ground Floor of the Central Terminal Building is not suitable for permanent structures due to the EVA requirements and the numerous utilities underground that require access.

14. The portion of the site which is indicated in **Figure 1** is not a critical area for EVA. The utilities can be accessed during the early hours of the morning or during the day time, when the stalls have been removed.

## **STORAGE OF STALLS WHEN NOT IN USE**

15. The stalls would need to be stored off site as there is insufficient space to store them at the site. There is good vehicular access to the site, and the stalls and their associated chairs and tables, are proposed to be loaded into a truck and taken to an off-site storage facility. Due to the simple nature of the food stalls themselves and the tables and chairs the setting up/removing process should be relatively quick each time.

## **ENHANCE THE WATERFRONT**

16. It is important that the layout and design of the food stalls adds vibrancy to the waterfront without detracting from the public enjoyment of the waterfront. As the area indicated in **Figure 1** demonstrates, the cooked food stalls and seating will be all contained in the middle portion of the ground floor of the main star ferry building. This ensures that the entrances to piers 7 and 8 are not obstructed, as well as the existing EVA along the waterfront, allowing for good pedestrian flows along the primary movement paths. The middle of the ground floor is not covered by any major movement path and is therefore currently a 'dead space'.

## **MANAGEMENT**

17. The overall management of the operation of the market would be undertaken by the Star Ferry. Any revenue gained from the operation of the market would be used to cross-subsidise the operation of its public ferry services. At present a successful organic farm market, a "Let Them Shine" market operated by a vulnerable group and an environmental workshop are

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run on a weekday afternoon and weekends in a on Level 1. A similar manner of operation and management could then be applied to the cooked food market.

## **LICENCING**

18. The Proponent has sought initial legal advice on the proposal and whether it is possible for it to be licenced within the current licencing regime operated by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD). Following this, an initial contact has been made with FEHD. The existing licencing system has been reviewed and it is concluded that the proposal could be implemented, but with some restrictions on food preparation on the site. For instance, it may not be possible to use gas-fired woks for cooking, but electrical appliances for re-heating food which has initially been prepared off-site in a licenced food factory may be acceptable. Should the concept of the market be accepted by the Task Force as worth taking forward, relevant details, such as a layout of the stalls on the site and types of food to be prepared and sold, would be submitted to FEHD for their consideration. It is the intention of the proponent to comply with the relevant licencing requirements in implementing the market.

## **CONSULTATION WITH OTHER BODIES**

19. Should the concept of for the cooked food stalls be accepted in principle the “Star” Ferry Company Limited would commence a process of engagement with relevant government departments and the Central and Western District Council.

## **ADVICE SOUGHT**

20. The Task Force is invited to :-

- a) Recognise that the ground floor of the Star Ferry Pier main building is an underutilised key space on the waterfront;
- b) Recognise that the location, and removable nature of the proposed cooked food stalls has taken into the account the pedestrian flows, the EVA requirements and maintenance of the underground utilities;
- c) Recognise that this would create an affordable waterfront dining experience for locals and tourists alike; and

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- d) Support-in-principle the establishment of a cooked food market on the space identified in this paper to create an affordable waterfront dining experience for locals and tourists alike.

**Masterplan Limited on behalf of  
The “Star” Ferry Company Limited  
February 2013**