

Harbourfront Commission
Task Force on Harbourfront Developments on Hong Kong Island

Minutes of Fourteenth Meeting

Date : 24 October 2013
Time : 9:30 a.m.
Venue : Conference Room, 15/F, North point Government Offices,
333 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong

Present

Mr Nicholas Brooke	Chair
Mrs Margaret Brooke	Representing Business Environment Council
Mrs Karen Barretto	Representing Friends of the Earth
Mr Lam Kin-lai	Representing the Conservancy Association
Mr Andy Leung	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Architects
Mr Paul Chan	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects
Dr Peter Cookson Smith	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Planners
Mr Ivan Ho	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design
Mr Shuki Leung	Representing Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong (REDA)
Mr Eric Fok	
Mr Brian David Li	
Mr Vincent Ng	
Mr Thomas Chan	Deputy Secretary (Planning and Lands)1, Development Bureau (DEVB)
Ms Emily Mo	Assistant Commissioner 2, Tourism Commission
Mr Chan Chung-yuen	Chief Traffic Engineer/Hong Kong, Transport Department
Mr Mak Chi-biu	Chief Engineer/Hong Kong 1, Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD)
Miss Olivia Chan	Assistant Director (Leisure Services)2, Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Ms Irene Lai	Senior Town Planner/Hong Kong 2, Planning Department (PlanD)
Mr Larry Chu	Secretary

In Attendance

Mrs Winnie Kang	Principal Assistant Secretary (Harbour), DEVB
Mr Frederick Yu	Assistant Secretary (Harbour) SD, DEVB
Miss Venus Tsoi	Assistant Secretary (Harbour) 2, DEVB
Mr Peter Mok	Project Manager (Harbour), DEVB

Absent with Apologies

Mr Leung Kong-yui	Representing Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in Hong Kong
Mr Lau Chun-kong	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors
Ir Peter Wong	Representing Hong Kong Institution of Engineers
Mr Paul Zimmerman	Representing Society for Protection of the Harbour (SPH)
Mr Chan Hok-fung	
Mr Walter Chan	
Ms Lily Chow	
Mrs Ayesha Macpherson Lau	
Mr Raj Sital Motwani	

Matters Arising

Mr KM Bok	Deputy Project Manager/Major Works (2), Highways Department (HyD)
Mr Victor Chan	Chief Engineer 4/MW, HyD
Mr LK Tsang	Senior Engineer 7/Central-Wan Chai Bypass, HyD
Mr Alex Li	Associate Director, AECOM
Mr SK Lo	Chief Resident Engineer, AECOM

For Agenda Item 5

Mr Mak Chi-biu	Chief Engineer/Hong Kong 1, CEDD
Mr Eddie Lam	Senior Engineer 7/Hong Kong Island Division 1, CEDD
Ms Anna Yeung	Senior Engineer, Atkins China Ltd
Mr Kentis Beh	Associate, A. LEAD Architects Limited

For Agenda Item 6

Mr Vincent Chu	Design Manager - Shatin to Central Link (SCL), MTRCL
Mr Joseph Wong	Senior Design Management Architect,

Mr Kelvin Wu	MTRCL
Ms Floran Lee	Senior Liaison Engineer, MTRCL
	Public Relations Manager – Projects and Properties, MTRCL
Mr Jonathan Leung	Chief Engineer/Railway Development 1-2, HyD
Mr Cyrus Wong	Senior Engineer/SCL(4), HyD
Mr David Chan	Engineer/SCL(2), HyD

For Agenda Item 7

Mr Kelvin Ip	Director, Ronald Lu & Partners (Hong Kong) Ltd
Ms Bella Fan	Senior Associate, Ronald Lu & Partners (Hong Kong) Ltd
Mr Alan Macdonald	Director, Urbis Limited
Miss Janice Lo	Planner, Urbis Limited
Mr Dickson Hui	Director, Llewelyn-Davies Hong Kong Ltd

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Welcoming Message

Mr Nicholas Brooke, Harbourfront Commission Chair welcomed all to the meeting. He informed Members that Ms Irene Lai, Senior Town Planner/Hong Kong 2 of PlanD attended this meeting on behalf of Ms Ginger Kiang, District Planning Officer/Hong Kong.

Item 1 Election of Task Force Chair

1.1 **Mr Vincent Ng** suggested re-electing **Mr Nicholas Brooke** to chair the Task Force for the second term. Members supported and **Mr Nicholas Brooke** was elected the Chair of the Task Force. He thanked Members' support.

Item 2 Confirmation of Terms of Reference of the Task Force

2.1 **The Chair** invited Members to consider the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Task Force tabled at the meeting, which was the same as the one for the last term. There being no other comments or objection from Members, the ToR was confirmed.

Item 3 Confirmation of Minutes of the 13th Meeting

- 3.1 **The Chair** said that the Secretariat circulated the draft minutes of the 13th meeting to Members on 10 September 2013. After incorporating the proposed amendments received, the revised draft minutes were circulated to Members on 23 September 2013. There being no further amendment, the revised draft minutes were confirmed at the meeting.

Item 4 Matters Arising

Central-Wan Chai Bypass (CWB) and Island Eastern Corridor Link – Appearance of CWB Noise Mitigation Measures at the Harbourfront of North Point (paragraph 2.2 of the confirmed minutes of the 13th meeting)

- 4.1 As Mr Vincent Ng was a Director of AGC Design Ltd which was one of the consultants of the project, **the Chair** suggested and **Members** agreed that he could stay in the meeting but should refrain from participating in the discussion.
- 4.2 **The Chair** said that HyD's written response, which set out the result of its review on the feasibility of opening the landscaped deck above the CWB tunnel at North Point for public access under the CWB project, was circulated to Members on 22 October 2013 and tabled at the meeting for Members' reference. He welcomed the project team to the meeting. **Mr KM Bok** and **Mr Victor Chan** elaborated on HyD's response, with the aid of a PowerPoint.
- 4.3 In addition to the pedestrian subway as suggested by the project team, **the Chair** asked whether there was other feasible option to connect to the landscaped deck from the adjacent open space.
- 4.4 **Mr Lam Kin-lai** added that given the size of the site, there should be alternative ways to connect the adjacent open space to the landscaped deck, for example, by building a ramp from the eastern side. He commented that the additional cost involved was minimal as compared to the total cost of the CWB project, and HyD should take forward the enabling works to allow early public enjoyment at this waterfront area. He reiterated that the proposed noise barriers and semi-enclosures were undesirable in appearance, and asked the project team to reconsider its conclusion as set out in the written response.

- 4.5 **Mr Andy Leung** commented that the highways structures should allow flexibility for future planning of this waterfront area, instead of imposing constraint to the pedestrian access to the landscaped deck in future. It was unreasonable to deny public access to the landscaped deck because of the objection from nearby residents. On the other hand, the deck design should encourage public access and minimise level difference. He suggested convening a separate working session to discuss the matters in detail.
- 4.6 **Dr Peter Cookson Smith** suggested that the project team should provide more three-dimensional illustrations to show the details of the site including the proposed pedestrian circulation. He queried the need for further consultation on public access to the deck despite objection from nearby residents. He commented that the interest of community at large should be given priority.
- 4.7 **Mr Shuki Leung** suggested that the deck design might be modified in order to make part of the deck publicly accessible, provided that it would not affect completion of CWB project in 2017, safety of the tunnel and the total cost of the project. He asked the project team to elaborate whether the current deck design had provided allowance for future public access.
- 4.8 **Mr Ivan Ho** commented that from urban design perspective, a people-oriented master plan for the area should be prepared early at the planning stage, instead of mitigating problems after the commencement of construction. Quoting the example of Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park, he opined that public enjoyment should not be deprived due to technical difficulties.
- 4.9 In response, **Mr KM Bok** reaffirmed that the current structural design would not preclude the feasibility of subsequent retrofitting works on the landscaped deck and connecting it with the adjacent open space if it was opened up for public access in future. He said that it might be better to consider access points in a holistic manner in the context of the upcoming urban design study for the Wan Chai to North Point harbourfront which would cover the open space adjacent to the CWB tunnel area in North Point. It was also necessary to address nearby residents' concerns expressed during the public consultation for the CWB project.
- 4.10 In closing, **the Chair** suggested and **Mr KM Bok** agreed to

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further discuss the matter in detail at a separate working session.

[Post-meeting note: a separate working session was organised on 16 December 2013 for Members to discuss with HyD on a practicable way forward. HyD was asked to provide further information to show how the current CWB project would facilitate the opening of the deck in future. HyD would report the finding to Members at a separate working session.]

Topical Study on the Proposed Boardwalk underneath the Island Eastern Corridor (IEC) (paragraph 2.3 of the confirmed minutes of the 13th meeting)

- 4.11 On the Chair's invitation, **Mr Mak Chi-biu** briefed Members on the progress of the study including the refined alignment and the implication of the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance (PHO), with the aid of a PowerPoint.
- 4.12 **The Chair** remarked that he supported the refined alignment, which had incorporated Members' views expressed during the site visit cum discussion session on 24 June 2013.
- 4.13 **Mr Vincent Ng** said that the original purpose of the project was to bring people closer to the water and to provide a continuous promenade on the eastern part of Hong Kong Island. The height of the boardwalk should be closer to the water as far as possible, and the technical issues concerning fireboats and retractable bridges could be resolved. He asked CEDD to come up with an effective way to proceed with the overriding public need test with a view to taking forward the project.
- 4.14 In response, **Mr Thomas Chan** said that CEDD had briefed Members on the outcome of the topical study and some possible constraints, and would further refine the scheme and keep Members updated on the progress of the project. On PHO implication, he added that based on the legal advice obtained, it had been concluded that the proposed boardwalk fell within the definition of reclamation, and there were clear guidelines setting out the requirements for satisfying the overriding public need test as laid down in the court judgement. The Government appreciated Members' aspiration in taking forward the project and would make its best endeavour to proceed with the test. However, as Members had been previously briefed about the PHO and related jurisprudence and implications, the

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requirements to satisfy the test might impose certain constraints on the design of the boardwalk, ending up with a compromised scheme which might not be able to meet fully Members' expectations.

- 4.15 **Mr Andy Leung** respected the Government's interpretation of PHO. To bring the project to fruition, he suggested compiling a timetable for the project including the time needed to go through the overriding public need test. **Mrs Margaret Brooke** agreed that the refined scheme should be put to the test, so that the obstacles could be identified and then resolved.
- 4.16 **Dr Peter Cookson Smith** reiterated that cycling for recreational purpose should be catered for in other areas. He agreed that the Task Force should recommend the Government to proceed with the overriding public need test for the project. Quoting the example of the South Bank in London, he commented that a boardwalk of varying width, as narrow as 2 metres in some parts, should be acceptable.
- 4.17 **Mr Thomas Chan** said that the Government was prepared to proceed with the overriding public need test for the purpose of satisfying PHO, on the assumption that the refined scheme proposed by CEDD was supported by Members. He pointed out that public consultation was only one of the factors to be considered in establishing an overriding public need, and other technical factors to be assessed were outlined in CEDD's presentation. He cautioned that there might be a possibility that the scope of the project might have to be reduced after going through the test. He added that under the PHO as it currently worded, the Government was duty-bound to go through the test. There was no alternative and there would be no guarantee that the project could pass the test even with the present scope of the project. As to whether there could be other options, for instance legislative options, that would be a separate matter beyond the scope of the present project.
- 4.18 In closing, **the Chair** said that as Members had generally agreed on the refined scheme and remained the view that the Government should take forward the project as it would be more important to provide a continuous waterfront promenade at the eastern part of Hong Kong Island. He asked CEDD to come up with a preliminary implementation timetable and report back to the Task Force in due course.

CEDD

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Cargo Handling at the Promenade fronting Central Piers (paragraph 2.5 of the confirmed minutes of the 13th meeting)

- 4.19 **The Chair** said that a site visit to the Central Piers which aimed to let Members have a better understanding on the current situation and site constraints would be organised in November or December 2013. The Secretariat would issue invitation to Members in due course.

**the
Secretariat**

[Post-meeting note: the site visit to Central Piers was organised on 16 December 2013.]

Amendments to the Draft Central District (Extension) Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/H24/7 (paragraphs 2.9 and 2.10 of the confirmed minutes of the 13th meeting)

- 4.20 **The Chair** said that the SPH's letter to the Commission Chair, the Commission Chair's reply and the paper submitted by DEVB to the Legislative Council's Panel on Development were circulated to all Members of the Commission on 19 September 2013. He reiterated that as Members had already deliberated on the issue. The priority should be put on public access when the Central military dock was not in military use. The debate on whether and how the site should be rezoned should now be decided by the Town Planning Board (TPB).

Amendments to the Approved Wan Chai North OZP No. S/H25/2 (paragraphs 4.4, 4.17 and 4.23 of the confirmed minutes of the 13th meeting)

- 4.21 **The Chair** said that PlanD's written response was tabled for Members' reference. On his invitation, **Ms Irene Lai** briefed Members on the response.
- 4.22 In response to the Chair's question on whether there would be direct at-grade pedestrian connection to the waterfront at the western end of the site, **Ms Irene Lai** said that the present pedestrian connection network might not be entirely satisfactory but pedestrian connections relating to the topside development would be addressed when preparing the planning brief of the site, which would be presented to the Task Force in due course.
- 4.23 **Mr Lam Kin-lai** expressed concern on how to ensure that the topside development would not be used for exhibitions which

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would further worsen the traffic problem at the Wan Chai North area. He commented that the proposed 50-metre lay-by would not be sufficient for loading and unloading of coaches and a more detailed traffic study should be conducted to address the issue.

- 4.24 **Dr Peter Cookson Smith** opined that the ground-level environment to the south of Convention Avenue was not pedestrian-friendly and it should be addressed in the planning brief.
- 4.25 **Mr Andy Leung** remarked that if the elevated walkway at the middle of the site was the only pedestrian connection to the future open space to the north, there might be a bottleneck problem.
- 4.26 **Ms Irene Lai** responded that Members' comments relating to the topside development would be taken into account when preparing the planning brief for the site. While the plans tabled at the meeting mainly focused on the pedestrian connections in the vicinity of the Exhibition Station, the issue of pedestrian connection to the waterfront would be examined in the upcoming urban design study for the Wan Chai waterfront. **The Chair** requested PlanD to keep the Task Force posted of the topside development.

PlanD

Signature Project Scheme in Central and Western District: Harbourfront Enhancement and Revitalisation at the Western Wholesale Food Market (paragraph 5.11 of the confirmed minutes of the 13th meeting)

- 4.27 **The Chair** said the Central and Western District Office advised that it noted the Task Force's views and had been working full steam to expedite the project and bring early enjoyment to the public. Discussion with market operators on the width of the promenade was in progress. The Task Force would be consulted again when a detailed design was available.

Preliminary Land Use Proposal for the Western Part of Kennedy Town (paragraph 6.20 of the confirmed minutes of the 13th meeting)

- 4.28 **The Chair** updated Members that PlanD was reviewing the land use proposal in the light of issues raised by Members, relevant stakeholders as well as the views expressed at the two local public forums. The Task Force would be consulted on the

revised land use proposal in due course.

Open Space Outside the City Hall (paragraph 7.6 of the confirmed minutes of the 13th meeting)

- 4.29 **The Chair** said that the Task Force would be consulted when the detailed enhancement proposal was available.

Odour and Fencing at Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter (CBTS) (paragraph 7.8 of the confirmed minutes of the 13th meeting)

- 4.30 **The Chair** said that it was advised by HyD that in the course of carrying out the temporary reclamations for the construction of the CWB tunnel in CBTS, the marine mud on part of the seabed within CBTS would be removed in stages, and this would help relieve the odour problem in CBTS. At present, while there was no plan to pump seawater from the middle of the harbour to CBTS, HyD would continue to monitor the odour issue in CBTS during the course of the CWB works and implement appropriate mitigation measures as and when required. Enhancement to the fencing would be considered along with the overall enhancement to the Wan Chai to North Point waterfront.

Item 5 Façade Treatment Proposals for the five Electricity Supply Buildings (ESBs) and the Ventilation Shafts of an Underground Pump House under the Central Reclamation Phase III Project (Paper No. TFHK/09/2013)

- 5.1 **The Chair** welcomed the project team to the meeting. **Mr Mak Chi-biu** and **Ms Anna Yeung** presented the paper, with the aid of a PowerPoint.
- 5.2 **The Chair** expressed concern that the proposals might only address the issue in an isolated manner without a holistic consideration on the open space in the vicinity.
- 5.3 Instead of just beautifying their façade, **Mr Lam Kin-lai** suggested adding canopy, seating and greening to the ESBs so that the public could be used as a resting place. The ESBs could also provide temporary power sources for events to be held at the adjacent open space.
- 5.4 **Mr Eric Fok** opined that the ESBs should blend well with the surrounding environment instead of being iconic buildings. He

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added that the extra maintenance cost might arise from using climbers in option 1, and suggested that the ESBs could be multi-functional as the storage for facilities of events to be held at the adjacent open space.

- 5.5 **Mr Ivan Ho** queried the need to make the ESBs iconic and highlighted at the harbourfront. To address the issue holistically, he suggested integrating other leisure facilities into the design so as to enhance public enjoyment at the open space.
- 5.6 **Dr Peter Cookson Smith** commented that the ESBs should not be prominent structures at the harbourfront. He expressed that the proposed design could not grasp the opportunity to achieve a better urban design for the open space and the proposed “cube” seating was undesirable.
- 5.7 **Mr Shuki Leung** appreciated CEDD’s intention to make the utility facilities look better. As the ESBs might become the assembly points for the public visiting the area, he suggested that the ESBs could be multi-functional by providing shelter and refreshment kiosk.
- 5.8 In response, **Mrs Winnie Kang** said that the ESBs were existing structures at the new Central harbourfront. To ensure that the structures would blend in well with the surroundings, CEDD was requested by the Town Planning Board (TPB) to submit their façade design for TPB’s consideration. While understanding that Members might like to enhance public enjoyment at the area, she said that there were already planned interim uses for the adjacent sites. With the aid of a PowerPoint, she updated Members on the temporary uses at the new Central harbourfront. The ESBs would be integrated with the temporary passive open space, and sheltered seating and landscaping would also be provided in the open space. The areas that would be used for hosting events already had separate power supply and storage area. As some ESBs were under private ownership, the Government could only apply basic façade treatment to these buildings. She suggested that Members should better focus the discussion on the design of the enhancement works.
- 5.9 **Mr Andy Leung** expressed concern on whether the ESBs could be integrated into the design of the future open space. As these public utility facilities should not be designed as free standing buildings at the harbourfront, he suggested preparing some

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design guidelines for these facilities in the long run.

- 5.10 **Mr Vincent Ng** emphasised the importance of urban design when dealing similar issues at the harbourfront. While the proposed façade treatment aimed to beautify the ESBs, the design for the façade treatment should not stand out but blend well with the surrounding environment. He suggested that project proponents should also present the holistic context of the site in future.
- 5.11 **Mrs Margaret Brooke** concurred that Members needed more information about the entire area when considering projects at the harbourfront. In view of the climatic and environmental conditions, she suggested using durable materials for the façade treatment.
- 5.12 In summing up, **the Chair** suggested that CEDD should come up with a low-key and sustainable design for the façade treatment to integrate the ESBs with the adjacent open space. **Mr Mak Chi-biu** appreciated Members' comments and explained that as the long term design of the adjacent open space was not available at this stage, CEDD aimed to adopt low-key, natural and sustainable façade design for the existing ESBs to blend them well with the surrounding environment. He agreed to further discuss with Members on the design at a separate working session.

CEDD

[Post-meeting note: a separate working session was organised on 16 December 2013 for Members to discuss with CEDD on the enhanced proposal. CEDD was asked to take into account Members' comments and proceed to seek TPB's approval on the refined enhancement proposal.]

Item 6 Progress Update on the Hong Kong Island Section of the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) (Paper No. TFHK/10/2013)

- 6.1 **The Chair** welcomed the presentation team to the meeting. **Mr Jonathan Leung** and **Mr Vincent Chu** presented the paper, with the aid of a PowerPoint.
- A. *Police Officers' Club (POC) and South Ventilation Building (SOV)*
- 6.2 **The Chair** appreciated that proposed design of POC would improve connectivity from hinterland to the waterfront in that area.

6.3 **Mr Lam Kin-lai** asked whether the existing car parking spaces at POC would be reprovisioned. **Mr Andy Leung** enquired whether the pedestrian passageway between SOV and Gloucester Road would be widened to improve pedestrian accessibility to Percival Street via the existing footbridge.

6.4 While appreciating the use of vertical greening to dress up the fence wall between the POC and the pedestrian passageway, **Mr Vincent Ng** asked whether the fence wall was necessary as it would make the public passageway quite narrow, and reduce visual permeability.

6.5 In response, **Mr Vincent Chu** said that:-

(a) In line with the technical requirements provided by the Police, about 70 car parking spaces would be provided in the new POC;

(b) the existing pedestrian passageway outside POC along Gloucester Road was about 0.9 metre wide. Upon the completion of the SOV, the SOV building footprint at ground floor level would be setback while the upper portion of building would be projected to provide a widened walkway at-grade for pedestrians; and

(c) the EVA would be used by POC and MTRCL on a sharing basis. For safety and security reasons, there was a genuine need for the fence wall on the lot boundary to segregate the EVA from the public pedestrian passageway. After the completion of the enhancement works, the passageway would have a uniform width of 4.4 metres which was considered appropriate.

6.6 In response to the Chair's enquiry, **Mr Vincent Chu** added that the existing chain link fence at the site would be replaced by fences with vertical greening.

B. *Exhibition Station, Wan Chai Swimming Pool, Harbour Road Sports Centre and Fenwick Pier Emergency Egress Point*

6.7 **Dr Peter Cookson Smith** asked whether it was possible to coordinate the construction timetables of the various MTR buildings with the future topside development at the Exhibition Station.

- 6.8 In response, **Mr Vincent Chu** said that the construction works of the Exhibition Station was scheduled for completion in 2020 by MTRCL while the proposed topside development would be undertaken by another party. MTRCL had no knowledge about the timetable for the topside development.
- 6.9 In closing the discussion, **the Chair** asked the team to take into account Members' comments and keep the Task Force updated on the progress of the SCL project on a regular basis.

Item 7 Scheme Options of the Proposed Comprehensive Development for Residential and Commercial Uses at Java Road and Tin Chiu Street, North Point, Hong Kong (Paper No. TFHK/11/2013)

- 7.1 Before discussion, **Mr Shuki Leung** declared that the project proponent was a member of REDA. Members also noted that Dr Peter Cookson Smith was a Director of Urbis Limited and Mr Andy Leung was a Director of Ronald Lu & Partners (Hong Kong) Ltd, which were consultants of the project. **The Chair** suggested and **Members** agreed that they could stay in the meeting but should refrain from participating in the discussion.
- 7.2 **The Chair** welcomed the presentation team to the meeting. **Mr Alan Macdonald** and **Mr Kelvin Ip** presented the paper, with the aid of a PowerPoint and a physical model.
- 7.3 Members unanimously preferred the nine-tower option which would increase the gap between buildings while maintaining a varying building height profile within the scheme.

Item 8 Any Other Business

- 8.1 There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.