

Task Force on Harbourfront Developments in Kowloon, Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing

For discussion
on 22 January 2013

TFK/03/2013

Revitalising Tsim Sha Tsui Waterfront

1. Purpose

This paper outlines a proposal for a comprehensive public realm enhancement for the Tsim Sha Tsui Waterfront (TST Waterfront) and a conceptual landscape design specifically for the vicinity of TST Waterfront adjacent to the New World Centre and Palace Mall sites. This paper addresses broad issues and is primarily to promote discussion and to obtain members comments and input.

2. Background

The Tsim Sha Tsui Waterfront

- 2.1 The TST Waterfront stretches from the Star Ferry Pier to the west, Cultural Centre/Museum of Art/Space Museum, Salisbury Garden/Palace Mall, New World Centre/Intercontinental Hotel in the centre, and extends to the TST East Waterfront leading towards the International Mail Centre at Hung Hom. This area of the TST Waterfront can be seen in the aerial photo in **Figure 1**.
- 2.2 The TST Waterfront is located at an iconic and prominent part of the Victoria Harbour. It is adjacent to and has the potential to serve as an integrated extension of the commercial, retail and tourism hub at TST. The views towards Hong Kong Island are simply magnificent; they are among the most inspiring, dynamic, and dramatic skyline views anywhere in the world. The TST Waterfront promenade facilitates access and appreciation of the Victoria Harbour for public enjoyment. The waterfront has been, and should continue to be, a prime attraction in Hong Kong.
- 2.3 It is important to envision, design, and manage the whole TST Waterfront as a fully integrated precinct for leisure, culture, recreation, education and tourism. The TST Waterfront serves as an important gateway and critical interface between the waters of Victoria Harbour and the adjacent thriving urbanism of West Kowloon.
- 2.4 It must be recognised at the outset, that the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) is the main manager and operator of the facilities along the TST waterfront. LCSD has an on-going programme to prepare a strategic plan to re-energise the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Complex comprising the Hong Kong Space Museum, Hong Kong Cultural Centre Complex Hong Kong Museum of Art and the Salisbury Garden. Elements of this strategic plan are at various stages of planning and implementation and it is not the

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intention of this paper to interfere with these projects, but rather to identify common elements which can be applied in a more general way to all parts of the TST waterfront.

3. The Need for a Comprehensive Landscape Plan

- 3.1 While LCSD's initiatives mentioned in paragraph 2.4 are focused mainly on the western portion of the TST waterfront, there is no apparent comprehensive landscape plan for the public realm of the whole TST Waterfront that has been considered by the Harbourfront Commission. Such a comprehensive landscape plan could guide and integrate the various parts of the Waterfront to enhance its appearance, expand its physical and programmatic amenities, improve connections to adjacent areas, and enhance public use, not just by attracting and welcoming more people, but also by providing a higher quality experience for all who visit the TST Waterfront. The existence of such a landscape plan would ensure coordination among the various bodies with responsibility for the waterfront. It would help to optimise the public and private investments necessary to develop facilities, expand amenities, offer diverse programmes and attractions, and ensure viable long-term operations and high quality maintenance in order to make best use of the waterfront along the Victoria Harbour.
- 3.2 With the re-modelling of the New World Centre, an opportunity has been provided for a comprehensive conceptual review to be undertaken of the TST Waterfront. Although it is not the responsibility of the proponent to prepare one, New World Development Company Limited has engaged James Corner Field Operations (JCFO), a leading-edge landscape architecture and urban design firm based in New York City, to develop a holistic and coherent plan for the revitalisation of the entire TST Waterfront. JCFO is renowned for strong contemporary design and a commitment to a vibrant and dynamic public realm. Their design practice is focused on delivering high quality and innovative solutions for modern cities bringing beauty, engagement, health, and vitality to the diverse environments in which people live, work, learn, recreate, and interact. Accordingly, the purpose of this submission is to consider a holistic and coherent revitalisation of the entire waterfront, while focusing more specifically on the central area of the TST Waterfront comprising the Avenue of Stars and Salisbury Garden. Every attempt has been made to look at how the focus area could fit into the overall TST Waterfront context as shown on the overall landscape public realm area plan attached as **Figure 2**.
- 3.3 The public realm concept design does not show detailed proposals but suggests the potential for a holistic improvement of the entire waterfront area and includes a conceptual outline for how areas such as the Cultural

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Centre/Museum area and the East TST Waterfront Promenade might be enhanced and revitalised, even though these areas are not the main focus for this Paper. In conceptual terms, and as shown in **Figure 3**, the TST Waterfront should:-

- Include a spectacular series of interconnected open spaces that connect the city to its waterfront, welcome local residents and foreign visitors, and provide generous spaces for gathering and celebration;
- Respond to the dense urbanism of Hong Kong as well as the fluid dynamic of Victoria Harbour and its tropical environment;
- Provide gracious places for civic events, artistic performance and intimate spaces for relaxation and repose as well as dynamic places that support community life and encourage social interaction;
- Encourage interactions between the private and public realms;
- Include lush landscape gardens, a spectacular waterfront promenade replete with comfortable furniture, generous shade structures, informative signage and a well-designed and carefully crafted railing that creates a sense of place appropriate to the Victoria Harbour;
- Facilitate a positive pedestrian experience between the different realms for enjoyment along the Victoria Harbour;
- Provide convenient and effective linkages to the hinterland;
- Facilitate tourism and events on the waterfront and on the water.

The Focus Area: The Avenue of Stars and Salisbury Garden

- 3.4 The specific focus of this Paper is the central part of the TST Waterfront, around the New World Centre site and Palace Mall which is currently under remodelling by New World Development Company Limited. The works being undertaken by the owner on these sites directly impacts the Avenue of Stars (AOS) and Salisbury Garden. In addition, LCSD has both short-term and long-term plans to renovate the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Complex area by phases as mentioned in paragraph 2.4. The short term plan includes the Phase 1 renovation of the western part of Salisbury Garden fronting the Museum of Art for creating a new Art Square for presentation of thematic art installations and sculptures by Hong Kong artists. The works will commence in early 2013 for completion in late 2013. Long-term plans include the Phase 2 renovation of the eastern part of Salisbury Garden (the space behind the entrance to the underground Palace Mall), and the renovation of Museum of Art and Hong Kong Culture Centre. This provides a unique opportunity for integration through coordinated improvements.
- 3.5 The renovation of the Museum of Art, remodelling of New World Centre and the scheduled alterations work at Palace Mall (both anticipated completion by 4th quarter of 2016) represent a good opportunity to carry out adjustment work at AOS and Salisbury Garden. Concurrent work would facilitate

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construction, as vehicles and machinery could obtain access to the waterfront promenade via the construction site, reducing the inconvenience incurred to the public. The rejuvenation of these spaces would provide a new branding image to revitalise the entire TST Waterfront precinct. Concurrent work within a coordinated design framework would bring about outcomes which could not be achieved should works be undertaken in various parts at scattered locations around the TST Waterfront.

- 3.6 The approach taken to this focus area has been to identify issues and then to address them together with opportunities to provide an enhancement to the public realm in order to improve the public's enjoyment of the waterfront experience.

4. Existing Issues

Linkages from Tsim Sha Tsui to the Waterfront

- 4.1 There are difficult and indirect linkages between the central areas of TST and the waterfront. This has been an issue considered previously by the Task Force and now needs to be addressed in relation to the proposed improvements to these public spaces.
- 4.2 There is a missing direct and at-grade pedestrian connection midway along the waterfront, namely between the southern end of Nathan Road and Salisbury Garden. Existing pedestrian connections between the commercial/retail hub at TST and the waterfront across the Salisbury Road include the following:-
- To the east: A pedestrian bridge at Chatham Road South/Salisbury Road junction that is 250 metres from the neighbouring subway crossing at Nathan Road;
 - In the middle: A subway at the southern end of Nathan Road via Sheraton Hotel and Palace Mall lacks signage for wayfinding, and a sense of insecurity at night and other times. Since there is no direct underground connection between TST MTR Station and this subway, people would most likely navigate around the TST East Station subway which has much longer distance;
 - To the west: An at-grade crossing at Canton Road/Salisbury Road junction. It is 200 metres from the neighbouring subway crossing at Nathan Road and is the only at-grade crossing along the entire Salisbury Road.
- 4.3 A direct and at-grade crossing mid-way is fundamental, considering the length of the waterfront between Star Ferry Pier and TST East Waterfront. The missing connection is at the southern end of Nathan Road, where

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pedestrian movements terminate at Salisbury Road. Nathan Road is the iconic north-south corridor running through the Kowloon Peninsula, carrying greater movements and activities than both Chatham Road South and Canton Road. Visually and for pedestrian convenience, it should continue to the waterfront promenade via a direct and at-grade pedestrian connection. It is a reasonable location for a connection between TST and the waterfront promenade and one existed there prior to 2000. The reintroduction of a direct and at-grade crossing at the location will significantly help facilitate better pedestrian circulation and walkability in the area, improve access to the Museum of Art / Space Museum / Cultural Centre.

The Avenue of Stars and Salisbury Garden

- 4.4 The TST Waterfront has been, and should continue to be, a prime attraction for Hong Kong capable of catering for an increasing number of locals and visitors together with their needs and expectations. However, there is a challenge as a result of the saturated capacity at AOS, and the unrealised potential of Salisbury Garden.
- 4.5 AOS, and the surrounding waterfront promenade in extension, is regularly saturated by large numbers of visitors, both in terms of its carrying capacity for visitors and its facilities which enable it to function as an attraction. Although there is a food and beverage outlet towards the eastern end of AOS, three glass kiosks providing small scale retail concessions, these represent an inadequate level of services in relation to the number of visitors that they should serve. There is an opportunity to create a truly spectacular world-class waterfront promenade replete with shade and seating offering respite and generous amenities. Circulation can be improved, connections enhanced and sociability encouraged. There is an opportunity to celebrate the harbour and create a unique and dynamic waterfront edge.
- 4.6 Salisbury Garden is at the Nathan Road/Salisbury Road junction, midway along the waterfront promenade, in the centre of the existing gateways to the east at the TST East Waterfront Podium Garden/ viewing platform/pedestrian bridge at Chatham Road South, and in the west, around the Clock Tower. It is also at one end of AOS, around the entrances to Palace Mall, Museum of Art and Space Museum. Salisbury Garden currently accommodates some landscaping and seating amidst mechanical and electrical buildings and a public toilet. It is under-utilised and has not been able to serve as an important gathering place, node or focus of activities. It is more or less a leftover space where pedestrian movements are predominantly restricted to thoroughfare and some resting places. As such, Salisbury Garden should be rehabilitated to capitalise on its geographically advantaged location, to form a gateway between Nathan Road and the

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waterfront and museums, and in extension, a significant leisure and gathering point for both visitors and the local citizens. There is an opportunity to create a unique urban garden that celebrates landscape, embraces culture, frames dramatic views, and improves circulation and connections. A revitalised Salisbury Garden can provide shade, integrate art, offer refreshments, and accommodate performances and community gatherings.

5. Concept Plan

5.1 AOS and Salisbury Garden in the heart of the Victoria Harbour already exist. They only require improvements to maximise patronage and dramatically enhance the experience to capitalise on the intrinsic value of Victoria Harbour and the spectacular views of Hong Kong Island. Hence, conceptual landscape design plans of a larger scale and providing a greater level of detail have been prepared for the following components and each is discussed below:

- Reconnect the Waterfront
- Rejuvenate the AOS
- Rehabilitate Salisbury Garden

Reconnecting Salisbury Road

5.2 Various ways of improving pedestrian connections between the waterfront and the hinterland have been considered. The priority is to have an at-grade crossing at the end of Nathan Road.

5.3 With regard to the Salisbury Road/Nathan Road junction to the waterfront, the preferred form of crossing is a signalised mesh crossing, prioritising pedestrian movements at the junction, in all directions in one signal. This approach has been utilised successfully in many cities around the world and there are numerous examples of dynamic and engaging designs that not only facilitate pedestrian safety, but also contribute to a high quality streetscape design and even, in some cases, great public art. An approach like this would inevitably impact on vehicular traffic. However, a change to full priority to pedestrians over vehicles is warranted, and a fully prioritised pedestrians crossing should be trialed as a temporary arrangement.

5.4 Alternative forms of crossing at the junction are signals and traffic islands at the respective three crossings, or reduced to two or one crossing. A preliminary traffic impact assessment has been investigated for each option.

5.5 In parallel to the proposed at-grade crossing at the junction, is a proposed extension to the existing subway underneath Salisbury Road to allow a

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direct and convenient connection to the TST MTR station. Initial feasibility study has indicated that such connection is feasible, and improvement to the pedestrian experience at the subway through lighting and signage will be studied. An improved subway to serve the public arriving via the mass-transit railways together with the at-grade crossing which intends to serve the pedestrians within the area as to cater for the direct pedestrian movements at various levels to the waterfront. The two provisions form a holistic scheme and should be adopted together as an integrated solution.

- 5.6 There is an existing TST East MTR exit at Salisbury Road fronting New World Centre. The re-modelling of New World Centre represents an opportunity to modify the exit to facilitate convenient movements between New World Centre and the exit, and to better address the arriving patronage namely their vista to the harbour. Initial discussions with MTRC have been carried out in this regard.

Rejuvenating the Avenue of Stars

- 5.7 The proposed additional services and attractions at AOS include street furniture for shelter and rest, use of the existing water bodies bound by the land and the promenade bridge and provision of enhanced water transport connectivity. The rejuvenated AOS will include generous seating and plantings, new paving and railings, innovative and water features, and dramatic nighttime lighting.
- a. There are minimal shelters or resting places along AOS. New resting places along the waterfront promenade are warranted. Places to sit comfortably to view the Harbour and skyline as well as places to socialise and enjoy refreshments, read, or simply talk. These require a widened promenade to accommodate strolling and circulation while providing adequate and comfortable space to stop and linger. They also warrant visually interesting and modern design elements to be incorporated. They are proposed along the length of the promenade in form of bays or undulations, which could step down toward the water. The stepped areas provide seating on lower levels and unencumbered views from the upper level. The bays will also become stopping places for appreciation and enjoyment of the harbour.
 - b. Possibilities for new attractions for the visitors along AOS in addition to enhancing the existing handprints and sculptures are being explored. New attractions and facilities to also cater for the locals would also be explored to allow for a balanced provision to serve both tourists and the community.

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c. There are three water bodies bounded by the land and the promenade bridge. The concept plan indicates their potential use in connection with the intrinsic value of Victoria Harbour, through such ideas as event plaza, dramatic water features and perhaps even a floating platform suitable for performances.

5.8 Further, design of the New World Centre now under re-modelling gives opportunities to incorporate design elements which integrate the ground floor frontages with activities and uses with the AOS and the harbour. It could include food and beverages services with alfresco dining, which are generally considered to blend the private and public interface, facilitate movements and interactions between the two realms, and add interest and vibrancy. In cities around the world, highly successful urban waterfronts employ many of the design, programme, and integrations strategies proposed herein for the TST Waterfront. The viability of the proposed widening of the promenade, addition of stepped areas, and the enhancement of the water bodies would need to be further explored with the relevant government departments.

Rehabilitating Salisbury Garden

5.9 There is an early opportunity available, where a holistic and coherent design approach could benefit the revitalisation of Salisbury Garden, which is to start in 2013. LCSD, being the owner and manager of Salisbury Garden, has plans to convert the Garden into an active, dynamic and exciting open space, as well as a vibrant venue for visual arts, music, performances and other outdoor cultural and leisure programmes by two phases. Phase 1 of the renovation will create a new Art Square for presentation of art installations and sculptures by Hong Kong artists. The design and use of Phase 2 site will be carefully mapped out taking into account the detailed design for the Museum of Art and the alteration work at Palace Mall. New World Development Company Limited and LCSD could form partnership in developing a detailed design for the Phase 2 area in Salisbury Garden.

5.10 In consideration of the above mentioned reconnection between Nathan Road and Salisbury Garden, the Concept Plan has a vision to transform Salisbury Garden to be of such character and identity to function as a major gateway welcoming pedestrians from Nathan Road to the Harbourfront and museums. LCSD's Phase 1 Salisbury Garden renovation would be compatible with the broad principles of the holistic approach as set out in this paper. Phase 1 renovation plan will provide a quick deliverable for Salisbury Garden.

5.11 There are few open spaces which act as gathering points or nodes along the waterfront, other than the plaza around the Clock Tower and the steps at the Cultural Centre, which has proven to be popular gathering points for the

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public. The rehabilitation of Salisbury Garden makes it a prime location for a gathering point and node extending to part of the waterfront promenade. The design of Salisbury Garden can also accommodate a diverse range of spaces for the temporary exhibition of art, performances and concerts, and a range of community gatherings and civic celebrations to diversify the functions and the public's experience along the harbourfront.

- 5.12 In addition to a rehabilitated gateway at Salisbury Garden, the remodelling of the New World Centre also gives opportunities to supplement the waterfront gateway around Chatham Road South, by generally addressing the movement of pedestrian traffic from the north to the harbour. On the ground floor level there will be a shared pedestrian access/vehicular drop-off area leading through to the AOS and the harbour, providing an alternative entry experience.

6. Way Forward

- 6.1 New World Development Company Limited has engaged JCFO to develop a public realm landscape design for the TST Waterfront, and is ready and willing to work with all the stakeholders and develop a mutually beneficial solution and design approach which can accommodate the interest of the general public for the renovation of the AOS and Salisbury Garden, having given consideration to the following:-

- LCSD's plans to enliven the TST Waterfront with short-term and long-term plans to improve and renovate the major facilities in the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Complex by phases. The objective is to enhance the accessibility, attractiveness and vibrancy of the Complex;
- New World Development Company Limited has a history of involvement in the management of AOS and has extensive knowledge in the design and construction of AOS and Salisbury Garden;
- The re-modelling work currently being undertaken at New World Centre and the renovation work scheduled at Palace Mall give opportunities to implement the work identified in the concept plan for AOS and Salisbury Garden concurrently, thus minimising disruption to the public;
- Consideration needs to be given to the coordination of improvements to the public spaces in relation to the completion of the New World Centre and the renovations to the Palace Mall, the Museum of Art and the Hong Kong Cultural Centre.

- 6.2 New World Development Company Limited also proposes a review of the existing mode of operation and management of the AOS and opines that a

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holistic approach to the future management, operations and financial model of the rejuvenated AOS and Salisbury Garden be formulated together with the various stakeholders including Leisure and Cultural Services Department and others. It is recommended that a Not-for-Profit Organisation (NPO) be setup and ultimately responsible for a sustainable operation and management of the focus areas. This would be discussed further with the relevant government departments and bureau.

- 6.3 Based on the vision captured in the Public Realm Concept Plan, and through close consultation between New World Development Company Limited and the concerned governmental departments, there will be scope for developing the detailed design and implementation with regards to the future of the AOS and Salisbury Garden.

7. Advice Sought

- 7.1 The Task Force is invited to note and advise on:-
- a. The need for a comprehensive landscape plan and associated principles to facilitate the coordination of the design of the TST Waterfront;
 - b. A holistic approach to rejuvenate the AOS and rehabilitate Salisbury Garden;
 - c. The need to improve connections to the TST Waterfront, through the implementation of an at-grade fully prioritised pedestrian crossing at the Salisbury Road/Nathan Road junction, as a matter of urgency;
 - d. The principle of a widened promenade with provisions for public use or enjoyment, subject to further design and consideration of Protection of the Harbour Ordinance issues;
 - e. The further investigation of a sustainable approach to the management of the AOS and Salisbury Garden, in cooperation with relevant authorities and other bodies.

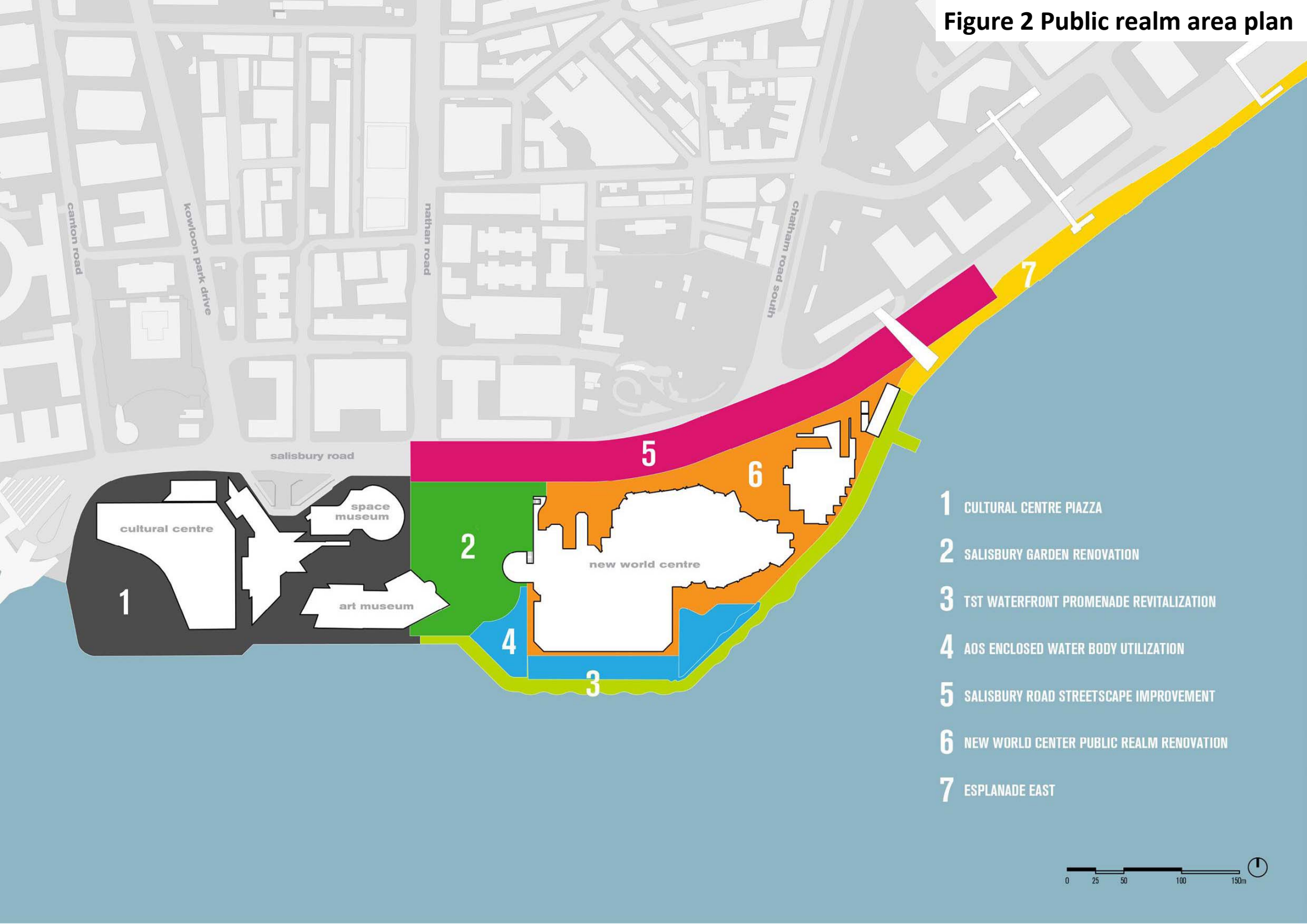
Masterplan Limited
On behalf of New World Development Company Limited
January 2013

Figure 1 Aerial Photo



- 1 Star Ferry Pier
 - 2 Cultural Center
 - 3 Space Museum
 - 4 Museum of Art
 - 5 Salisbury Garden/ Palace Mall
 - 6 Intercontinental Hotel
 - 7 New World Centre Site
 - 8 Tsim Sha Tsui East Waterfront
 - 9 International Mail Centre
- Base map source: google map

Figure 2 Public realm area plan



- 1 CULTURAL CENTRE PIAZZA
- 2 SALISBURY GARDEN RENOVATION
- 3 TST WATERFRONT PROMENADE REVITALIZATION
- 4 ADS ENCLOSED WATER BODY UTILIZATION
- 5 SALISBURY ROAD STREETScape IMPROVEMENT
- 6 NEW WORLD CENTER PUBLIC REALM RENOVATION
- 7 ESPLANADE EAST

Figure 3



POTENTIAL PROGRAMS

