

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

For discussion
on 12 February 2014

TFK/03/2014

Minor Relaxation of the Development Intensity of the West Kowloon Cultural District Site

PURPOSE

This paper serves to seek Members' views on the proposed Town Planning Board (TPB) submission for minor relaxation of the development intensity of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) site.

BACKGROUND

2. At the last meeting of the Task Force on Harbourfront Developments in Kowloon, Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing on 2 December 2013, the WKCD Authority (WKCDA) reported that, with the support of the Government, it would apply for minor relaxation of maximum gross floor area (GFA) and/or building height restrictions under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance in order to optimise the development potential of the WKCD site. Subsequently, the WKCDA appointed a planning consultant to conduct a study on the proposed increase in total GFA and the feasibility of the proposal to ascertain that it will not generate unacceptable impacts to the surrounding areas.

STATUTORY PLANNING CONTROL IN THE APPROVED DEVELOPMENT PLAN (DP)

3. The overall development intensity of the WKCD site is restricted to a maximum total GFA of 740 350m², which is equivalent to a plot ratio of 1.81 for a land area of 40.91 hectares (ha). For GFA control of different uses, they are only applicable to hotel/office/residential (HOR) uses, i.e. total HOR GFA shall not exceed 318 800m² and total residential GFA shall not exceed 148 070m² (i.e. 20% of the overall maximum GFA for the whole site). Developments are subject to building height restrictions of 1 or 3

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storeys in “Open Space” zones and 50, 70 or 100 metres above Principal Datum (mPD) in “Other Specified Uses” zones¹ (**Annex 1** refers). Moreover, public open space of not less than 23 ha (including 3 ha of piazza areas and a waterfront promenade of not less than 20m in width) shall be provided within the WKCD.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY AND COMPONENTS

4. The objective of the planning application is to optimise the development potential of the whole WKCD site. The latest study by the WKCDA has suggested that a 15% increase in total GFA is a reasonable target. It is also considered that the GFA of different land uses should be increased on a pro-rata basis to ensure a balanced development mix with good day and night vibrancy in the WKCD. In other words, the GFA mix provided in the Explanatory Statement of the approved DP will be maintained as follows –

Arts and Cultural Facilities	35-40% of total GFA
Retail/Dining/Entertainment (RDE)	15-20% of total GFA
Hotel/Office	20-25% of total GFA
Residential	Not more than 20% of total GFA
Government/Institution/Community (GIC)	Not less than 1% of total GFA
Total:	100%

5. A comparison of the key planning parameters stipulated in the approved DP and the proposal is summarised in the table below.

¹ For the proposed electricity substation and the existing ventilation buildings of Airport Express and Western Harbour Crossing within the WKCD, the building height restrictions stipulated in the DP are 33mPD, 30mPD and 40mPD respectively.

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Key Planning Parameters

	Approved Development Plan	Proposal	Proposed Changes to DP
Maximum total GFA for the whole site	740 350m ²	851 400m ²	+111 050m ² (+15%)
Maximum GFA for HOR uses	318 800m ²	366 620m ²	+47 820m ² (+15%)
Maximum GFA for residential use	148 070m ² (20% of total GFA)	170 280m ² (20% of total GFA)	+22 210m ² (+15%)
<i>Remaining GFA for Arts and Cultural Facilities, RDE and GIC ("Non-HOR GFA")</i>	421 550m ²	484 780m ²	+63 230m ² (+15%)
Equivalent to Plot Ratio	1.81	2.08	+0.27 (+15%)
Public Open Space	23 ha	23 ha	No change

6. The original development scale of the planned core arts and cultural venues will remain unchanged. The increase of about 63 000m² non-HOR GFA will allow development of more arts and cultural facilities ancillary to or in support of the core arts and cultural venues. The facilities being considered include a hostel/hotel for visiting artists, rehearsal facilities/offices for arts groups and creative space for young people and artists. These will help further promote the image of the whole district as an arts and cultural hub, and provide necessary space to support both artists and practitioners of the creative industries. It is also proposed to provide office accommodation for the WKCDA to reduce its operating expenditure as well as dining facilities to increase the recurrent

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revenue of the WKCDA to support the operation of the arts and cultural facilities in the WKCD.

7. The additional HOR GFA of about 48 000m² will help increase hotel, office and housing supply in the urban area. The proposed increase in HOR GFA and the relaxation of maximum GFA for residential use from 148 070m² to 170 280m² are based on a pro-rata increase of 15%, which is the same as the percentage increase in total GFA for the whole site.

8. In view of the current stage of the WKCD development, the planning application will not be scheme specific in order to allow adequate flexibility in future developments. With a view to coping with the increase in development intensity and to facilitate variation in building heights to promote a more interesting skyline in the district, minor relaxation of building height restrictions may be considered.

TECHNICAL ASSESSMENTS

9. A full range of technical assessments are being carried out by the consultant who has been looking into the traffic, environmental, air ventilation, visual impacts and building height implications of the proposal. Mitigation measures and design requirements will be set out in the application to ensure that the resultant development will be technically feasible, and the original urban design concept as spelt out in the approved DP will be maintained.

SUBMISSION TIMEFRAME

10. According to the study programme, the result of the technical assessments will be available for the consideration of relevant government departments by end of February 2014. The TPB application will be submitted by March 2014 with a view to obtaining approval in May 2014 so that the detailed design of the integrated basement and related infrastructure supporting the WKCD development can commence around mid-2014.

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ADVICE SOUGHT

11. Members are invited to provide comments on the proposed minor relaxation of development intensity for the WKCD site.

**West Kowloon Cultural District Authority
February 2014**

