

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

For discussion
on 2 December 2013

TFK/09/2013

Progress Update on the West Kowloon Cultural District

PURPOSE

This paper serves to update Members on the progress of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) development.

BACKGROUND

2. According to the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCDA) Ordinance, the WKCDA is required to prepare a Development Plan (DP) to layout the land uses for WKCD. Following extensive public consultation and the statutory planning process, the DP was approved by the Chief Executive in Council in January 2013 which provides a statutory land use planning framework to guide the development and redevelopment of land within the WKCD.

3. In June 2013, the Board of WKCDA endorsed a pragmatic approach to implement the WKCD project according to the following principles –

- (a) Rigorous cost containment of individual facilities to a level as close to the recommendations of the Consultative Committee on the Core Arts and Cultural Facilities of WKCD as possible;
- (b) Emphasis on content rather than form of these facilities; and
- (c) Early delivery of the Park as well as some arts and cultural facilities for public enjoyment.

4. The WKCD facilities will be implemented in three batches with completion starting from 2015. Facilities in the first batch include Xiqu Centre, M+, the Park (including the Arts Pavilion) and Freespace (a blackbox and an outdoor stage in the form of an acoustic shell). The second batch of facilities could include Lyric Theatre, Medium Theatre I, Centre for Contemporary Performance and some resident company facilities that are strongly demanded by the performing arts groups. The remaining venues can only be built after the completion of the integrated basement. The

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progress made so far in taking forward the first-batch facilities are given in the following paragraphs.

PROGRESS OF WKCD DEVELOPMENT

Xiqu Centre

5. The seven-storey Xiqu Centre, which sits on a prime site of 13 800m² on the corner of Canton Road and Austin Road West, will provide more than 23 700m² of gross floor area (GFA). The winning design was provided by a joint venture partnership formed by Bing Thom Architects and Ronald Lu & Partners Company Ltd. It will house a 1 100-seat main theatre and a tea house with a performance stage, in addition to 2 000m² of arts education facilities, and generous public leisure space. To give the audience an all-round experience, there will also be provision of retail space and dining facilities.

6. The ground-breaking ceremony for the foundation works for Xiqu Centre was held on 24 September 2013 and the works are progressing well according to schedule. Rigorous value engineering exercises were conducted with the aim of producing cost-effective design and reducing the total project budget by up to \$100M. The main areas of savings are attributable to design optimization in structure and façade, efficiency in floor space usage, reduction in floor area of the retail/dining/entertainment (RDE) facilities and optimization of the basement car parking arrangement. Stakeholders and experts of the Xiqu community were engaged and consulted throughout the design process. The tender out date for the main contract is scheduled for the first/second quarter of 2014 with target completion in 2016.

M+

7. Following an international competition, the Swiss architect firm of Herzog & de Meuron, in joint venture with Hong Kong-based TFP Farrells and Ove Arup & Partners Hong Kong, has been selected to design and administer the M+ building project. Scheduled for completion in late 2017, the building project with approximately 60 000m² in GFA will create an iconic presence for M+ and Hong Kong, on the museum's site overlooking Victoria Harbour. A striking, semi-transparent vertical plane, housing education facilities, dining facilities and museum offices, will rise atop an impressive horizontal slab offering a diversity of well-considered gallery spaces. At ground and lower levels, access will be provided to the Park and other WKCD facilities, alongside a public resource centre, theatres, retail and dining facilities, and back-of-house functions including conservation and storage

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facilities. Of particular note, Herzog & de Meuron, who is also known for its Tate Modern museum in London, National Stadium in Beijing and other notable designs, has firmly anchored the M+ building on its reclaimed-land site, excavating a new “found space” for large-scale installations from around the existing Airport Express tunnel that runs underneath.

8. The M+ design consultancy services commenced in September 2013 and the scheme design is progressing well with detailed design anticipated to start in February 2014. To implement the M+ project with a fast track approach, the scheduled tender out date for the foundation contract is end April 2014. The M+ project is targeted to be completed by end 2017.

Arts Pavilion

9. The Arts Pavilion aims to provide an exhibition and event space for artists, designers, organisations and other parties to stage independent small-scale exhibitions and events in the WKCD. In the run-up to the completion of the M+, the Arts Pavilion will also serve as the museum's primary site for its exhibitions, to further extend the museum's mission into the Park and public sphere. The Arts Pavilion is planned to be completed in 2015.

10. The Arts Pavilion Design Competition was launched on 27 September 2013. The competition was open to all interested parties including architects and designers, and submissions were anonymous. To ensure the successful delivery of the winning design, the contestants are expected to team up with a firm registered under the Hong Kong Institute of Architects, together with nominated Authorised Person and Registered Structural Engineer in the team. A total of 127 registrations for the competition have been received, of which over 100 teams satisfied the initial registration verification. Adjudication of the competition entries submitted by the closing date of 22 November will be held in early December and a final decision on the appointment of a design team is scheduled for end December 2013.

The Park

11. Following the decision of the WKCDA Board in June 2013 to adopt a pragmatic approach for development of the Park which includes a black box and an outdoor stage, WKCDA has revised the approach to implement the Park development emphasizing on early delivery, quality open space and cost containment while retaining the original design intention of the “City Park” concept under the WKCD DP. The revised scope of the design consultancy was issued to the original six shortlisted Park Design

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Teams for re-tendering. Tender proposals were returned on 27 November and the assessment process will be completed by end December 2013. Works for the Park is scheduled to commence in 2014 and targeted for completion by end 2015.

12. As a pilot scheme, the WKCD Authority will be launching a SmartBike system to provide an automated bicycle rental service on the West Kowloon Waterfront Promenade for public enjoyment with potential collaboration with a local social enterprise as the operator.

MINOR RELAXATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY OF THE WKCD SITE

13. The WKCD Authority is conducting a study on the feasibility to increase the development potential of the WKCD site. Potential uses of the additional GFA would include other arts and cultural facilities, RDE facilities and hotel/office/residential uses to increase the efficiency and vibrancy of the WKCD. The WKCD Authority will conduct relevant impact assessments including traffic, air ventilation and visual impacts to ascertain that the proposal will not generate unacceptable impacts to the surrounding areas. If the proposal is proved to be feasible, an application for minor relaxation of the total GFA restriction will be submitted to the Town Planning Board around March 2014. WKCD Authority will consult the Harbourfront Commission and relevant stakeholders including the LegCo Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the WKCD Project and the Yau Tsim Mong District Council early next year.

ADVICE SOUGHT

14. Members are advised to note the progress of the WKCD development.

**West Kowloon Cultural District Authority
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