

Harbourfront Commission

For discussion
on 15 June 2015

HC/07/2015

Progress Report from Task Force on Harbourfront Developments on Hong Kong Island

REPORTING PERIOD

This progress report covers the period from April to June 2015.

MEETING(S) HELD AND THE MAJOR OUTCOME, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Nineteenth Meeting – 5 May 2015

2. The Task Force discussed the following issues/items –

(a) Urban Design Study for the Wan Chai North and North Point Harbourfront Areas (UDS) – Progress Update

- The Planning Department (PlanD) reported the key points discussed at the first Meeting of the Working Group on the Urban Design Study for the Wan Chai North and North Point Harbourfront Areas (WGUDS) (31 March 2015). The WGUDS was briefed on the draft urban design baseline consideration plan, draft urban design framework plan and the proposed public engagement (PE) work plan. Members' concerns on pedestrian connectivity, the use of the water space, and the invitation for cross-sectoral discussion during the public engagement (PE) exercise would be taken into account when refining the plans.
- PlanD also updated Members on the latest progress of the UDS, including the preparation for the Stage 1 PE, which would be launched in June this year. PlanD would continue to work with the study team and present the updated plans at the next meeting of the WGUDS in end of May.

(b) Land Use Review on the Western Part of Kennedy Town

- PlanD briefed the Task Force on the amendments to the Preliminary Land Use Proposal under the Land Use Review

on the Western Part of Kennedy Town (the Review) as a result of previous public consultations, and sought Members' views on the revised proposal.

- In general, the Task Force viewed that the historical particularities of Kennedy Town should be an important context for formulating the land use proposal. Members cast doubt over the validity of the traffic impact assessment, where the existence of tramway routes had not been factored into consideration, and asked for a more thorough examination into the impact on connectivity, transport demand, and road alignments arising from the increased development intensity. Some Members also opined that the proposed zonings were not concrete enough, and the key waterfront and pier sites should be specified for both recreational and marine uses in order to enhance water-land interface and integration.
- PlanD reminded Members that the Preliminary Land Use Proposal served mainly as a directional and conceptual guide for the area, and sufficient flexibility and incentive should be left for the future proponent(s). If Members had no strong objection towards the proposed zonings, the detailed use, design, and development plan for each site could be deliberated and worked out gradually at the next stage.
- After further deliberation, it was concluded that a separate working session would be organised to continue the dialogue and to work out a mutually agreeable plan.

(c) Signature Project Scheme in the Eastern District: Eastern District Cultural Square

- The Eastern District Office (EDO) and the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) sought the Task Force's views on the proposed design of the Eastern District Cultural Square at Tam Kung Temple Road under the Signature Project Scheme for the Eastern District.
- The Task Force expressed in general support for the design scheme, which had by and large incorporated and reflected their earlier comments made when they were previously consulted on the project (17th Task Force Meeting on 15 September 2014). Some Members enquired about the usage of the Cultural Square at times when there was no

performance, and the traffic arrangements to cope with the surge in patronage during large-scale functions and events. Some also suggested EDO to consider the possible provision of shaded seatings, as well as food and beverages facilities in the area.

- The Task Force appreciated the efforts made by EDO and ArchSD and indicated their support to expedite the implementation for public enjoyment. EDO and ArchSD would continue to work on the detailed design and share with the Task Force when ready.

(d) Proposed Design Concept for the Ferry Plaza at the Central Waterfront, with the Celestial Star Ferry Attraction and Public Amenity Space

- The Star Ferry Limited briefed the Task Force on their proposal for the Ferry Plaza at the Central waterfront, with the Celestial Star Ferry displayed on land as an attraction and restaurant for the public.
- Members expressed appreciation for the proponent's good intention to donate the retired ferry, and agreed that it would be nice to recognise the historic importance of the ferry in some form for the branding and recognition of Victoria Harbour. However, the Task Force generally held reservations towards the proposal. From the Chinese cultural perspective, only retired ship would end up on land, and while the Star Ferry service was still in good operation, the idea of running an artificial dry dock alongside as a themed restaurant might not be too auspicious a move.
- The proponent revealed that if the proposal was not supported by Members, they might need to scrap the retired ferry due to high maintenance costs. The Task Force agreed that the site should be put into better use, and advised that the proponent might wish to work out alternative solutions for preserving the ferry.