

HEC Sub-committee on Harbour Plan Review

Minutes of Seventeenth Meeting

Date : 18 April 2007
Time : 2:30 pm
Venue : Conference Room
15/F, North Point Government Offices
333 Java Road, North Point

Present

Mr Vincent Ng (Chairman)	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Architects (HKIA)
Dr Andrew Thomson	Representing Business Environment Council
Mr Leung Kong-yui	Representing Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in Hong Kong
Dr Alvin Kwok	Representing Conservancy Association
Mr Kim Chan	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Planners
Mr Louis Loong	Representing Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong (REDA)
Mr Charles Nicholas Brooke	
Mr Raymond WM Wong	Assistant Director/Territorial, Planning Department (PlanD)
Mr Peter Mok	Senior Engineer/Kowloon 2, Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD)
Mr Andy Yau	Chief Traffic Engineer/Hong Kong, Transport Department
Miss Linda Law	Senior Administrative Officer (2), Home Affairs Department
Ms Sally Fong (Secretary)	Senior Town Planner/Sub-Regional 3, PlanD

In Attendance

Ms Lydia Lam	Assistant Secretary (Planning) 3, Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau (HPLB)
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Mr Raymond Lee	Chief Town Planner/Sub-regional, PlanD
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For Item 3

Mr Augustine Wong	Henderson Land Development Co. Ltd.
Mr Kenneth To	Kenneth To & Associates Ltd.
Mr Yim Shun-see	Handi Design Ltd.
Mr Raymond Yau	Ove Arup & Partners Hong Kong Ltd.
Mr Alan MacDonald	Urbis Ltd.

For Item 4

Ms Phyllis Li	Chief Town Planner/Special Duties, PlanD
Mr Roy Li	Senior Town Planner/Special Duties (2), PlanD
Ms Agnes Tang	Town Planner/Special Duties 4, PlanD

Absent with Apologies

Mrs Mei Ng	Representing Friends of the Earth
Mr Leslie Chen	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects
Mr Bernard Chan	Representing Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors
Mr Jimmy Kwok	
Miss Annie Tam	Deputy Secretary (Planning and Lands) 1, HPLB

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The Chairman extended a welcome to all Members. He informed the meeting that Mr CB Mak had replaced Mr Talis Wong as Chief Engineer (Kowloon) representing CEDD at the Sub-committee since 6 February 2007.

Item 1 Confirmation of Minutes of Last Meeting

- 1.1 The draft minutes of the 16th meeting held on 31 January 2007 were circulated to Members on 16 April 2007. The meeting confirmed the minutes without amendments.

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Item 2 Matters Arising

Harbour Planning Guidelines for Victoria Harbour and Its Harbourfront Areas *[para. 2.1 of the minutes of the 16th meeting]*

- 2.1 **The Secretary** reported that the draft Harbour Planning Guidelines (HPGs) were issued to about 130 stakeholders in February 2007 for consultation until 20 April 2007. Representatives from the Task Group on Harbour Planning Principles (HPPs) also briefed the Town Planning Board (TPB) and the Strategy Sub-committee of the Council for Sustainable Development on the draft HPGs on 16 March 2007 and 3 April 2007 respectively. Written comments had been received from 10 organisations so far. While there were some comments relating to both principles and specific text, most expressed support to the draft HPGs. All comments received would be considered by the Task Group prior to the submission of the revised draft HPGs to the Sub-committee for consideration.

**Task Group
on HPPs**

Hoardings around Edinburgh Place *[para. 4.1 of the minutes of the 16th meeting]*

- 2.2 **Mr Peter Mok** said that CEDD would not clear the materials left by the protesters on the hoardings around Edinburgh Place unless such materials obstructed the implementation of the Central Reclamation Phase III works or pedestrian access.

Wan Chai Waterfront Promenade

- 2.3 Referring to a note tabled at the meeting, **Mr Peter Mok** reported that the Wan Chai Waterfront Promenade was open to the public on 23 March 2007. A formal opening ceremony was jointly organised by the Wan Chai District Council, HEC Sub-committee on Wan Chai Development Phase II (WDII) Review and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty of Animals on 1 April 2007.
- 2.4 **Mr Charles Nicholas Brooke** said there was not enough shady area within the promenade and suggested to add some temporary structures to provide shelter for public enjoyment. **Mr Peter Mok** pointed out that some temporary structures were erected at the roadside of the promenade to provide shelter for the public. He would convey Member's comments to the relevant CEDD colleagues for consideration.

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Hung Hom District Study

- 2.5 **The Secretary** reported that the Stage 1 Public Engagement Programme had been completed. A Working Paper summarising the findings of the programme had been circulated to Members for agreement and no comments had been received from Members. The consultant of the District Study was now formulating the draft District Plan, which would be presented to the public in mid 2007.
- 2.6 **Mr Charles Nicholas Brooke** said that instead of one District Plan, various alternatives should be prepared. In response, **Mr Raymond Lee** said that different development options would be explored and assessed during the study process. If required, such development options could be explained to the public at the Stage 2 Public Engagement exercise.

Inventory of Known Projects around the Harbour

- 2.7 Members noted the updated inventory list of known projects as tabled at the meeting.
- 2.8 **The Secretary** said that Items No. YT1 and C2 would be discussed under Agenda Items 3 and 4 respectively. She also briefed Members on the 3 new items (No. WC5, NP6 and HH5) added to the inventory list.
- 2.9 With regard to Item No. WC5, **Dr Andrew Thomson** said that the new planning application for proposed hotel, arts and cultural development was a major project affecting the Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter area. The project proponent should be encouraged to take into account the HPPs and HPGs in pursuing the proposed development. He considered it difficult to comment on the application based on the little information included in the inventory list. More details about the proposed development, particularly waterfront enhancement measures, should be provided to the Sub-committee for comment.
- 2.10 **Mr Leung Kong-yui** said that the site fell within the WDII area. The project proponent had already briefed the Sub-committee on WDII Review on their preliminary development proposal in 2005. The proposal had neither been incorporated in the WDII Concept Plan nor the WDII Recommended Outline Development Plan, with reasons stated in the report of the Realisation Stage of HER. As for the

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proposal under the current planning application, it had been published for public comment under the Town Planning Ordinance (TPO).

- 2.11 **Mr Raymond Lee** said that the inventory list only served to update Members on the known projects around the Harbour. There were provisions under TPO for consulting the public on planning applications received by TPB. Administratively, the HEC Secretariat would also inform Members of those planning applications falling within harbour-front areas. Members could convey their comments on this application to TPB according to the established practices.
- 2.12 **The Chairman** said that this Sub-committee should not duplicate the work of the other HEC Sub-committees. The meeting agreed not to invite the project proponent to brief the Sub-committee on the planning application.

**Item 3 Proposed Development of Yau Tong Bay
Comprehensive Development Area**

- 3.1 **The Chairman and Mr Louis Loong**, representing respectively HKIA and REDA at the Sub-committee, declared interests in this item as the project team of the proposed development comprised members of HKIA and REDA. The project team was then invited to brief Members on the proposed development.
- 3.2 With the aid of powerpoint slides and a physical model, **Messrs Augustine Wong, Kenneth To, Yim Shun-see, Raymond Yau and Alan MacDonald**, representing the consortium formed by the owners of Yau Tong Bay, presented their proposal with the following main points:
- (a) at the HEC briefing in April 2005, HEC appreciated the dilemma of redeveloping Yau Tong Bay, with the objectives to remove incompatible uses and provide an accessible waterfront on one hand and the need to address the concern on reclamation on the other;
 - (b) taking into account HEC's advice, the consortium submit a "no reclamation" proposal to TPB in April 2006 but the proposed development intensity was considered excessive by TPB. The current proposal was prepared based on a design scheme submitted for the design competition organised by the consortium;

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- (c) the proposed development had a site area of 83,166m². Two schemes, with a total plot ratio of 6 (domestic plot ratio of 5 and non-domestic plot ratio of 1) and 5.8 (domestic plot ratio of 5.5 and non-domestic plot ratio of 0.3) respectively, were prepared for consideration of TPB. Thirteen blocks with building heights ranging from 15 to 48 storeys were proposed. A 15-20m waterfront promenade would be provided for public use. The proposed development scale was comparable with the adjacent “Residential (Group E)” zone (plot ratio 6). When comparing with the permissible development intensity under the Cha Kwo Ling, Yau Tong, Lei Yue Mun Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) where reclamation would be required, the total gross floor area of the current proposal was reduced by nearly half;
- (d) low-rise development was proposed at the eastern portion of the site near the Yau Tong MTR Station and a louver blade arrangement was proposed for the high-rise blocks in the northern and southern parts of the site. The existing residents around Yau Tong Bay would be able to enjoy a reasonable extent of sea view, with views from Yau Tong Estate at the inner end of Yau Tong Bay largely unobstructed;
- (e) low podia and wider spacing of buildings with varying heights were proposed to enhance visual variety, permeability and porosity. Landscape treatment to the publicly accessible open space would increase the visual amenity of the site;
- (f) from the key viewpoint at Quarry Bay, part of the ridgeline was visible through the view corridors between the tall blocks. The open view from the key viewpoint at Devil’s Peak would not be significantly compromised. The sea view from the key viewpoint at Hong Pak Court could be reasonably maintained as only one additional block would be visible there;
- (g) sea breeze could penetrate into the inland area and air circulation would be enhanced by the large podium/ building separations, aerodynamic built form, wind deflectors, sky gardens, low podia in the form of green knolls and building height variations. The low-rise buildings with large openings at the inner end of Yau

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Tong Bay enabled the formation of a huge wind nozzle with wind channelling effect which accelerated the incoming wind, especially for the open space and schools near the MTR station;

- (h) a small commercial centre, retail/restaurant/al-fresco dining areas, dense vegetation, garden space and other recreational facilities would be provided to increase the diversity of waterfront activities; and
- (i) the proposed development fulfilled the HPPs and HPGs. It was a balanced proposal in achieving no reclamation, early removal of incompatible uses with a reasonable scale of development and appropriate building height, and maximising opportunities for harbour-front enhancement.

3.3 **Dr Alvin Kwok** considered that the proposed development might not fully comply with the HPPs. He had the following comments:

- (a) although the louver blade design was an improvement to the conventional building design, the proposed buildings were not movable. The open view would only be preserved when one looked at Yau Tong Bay from a position directly in front of it. The high-rise blocks in the northern and southern parts of the site would block the sea view from other angles;
- (b) it was doubtful whether the residents in the surrounding areas had been fully informed of the proposed building height and visual impact during the public engagement activities carried out by the project proponent; and
- (c) the objective of removing incompatible uses was appreciated, but it did not follow that the area should be redeveloped into so many high-rise blocks.

3.4 **Mr Charles Nicholas Brooke** had the following comments:

- (a) the current planning context was substantially different from that in 1990s. Developers would now need to make compromises in pursuing developments without reclamation. Given the planning history of the site, the proposal demonstrated the proponent's attempts to take account of the HPPs, to enhance the waterfront, and to

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address such concerns as visual permeability, porosity, and air ventilation in a pragmatic way which were commendable; and

- (b) however, the proposed waterfront was rather passive with a lack of activities within the bay. More effort should be made in this aspect to increase the extent of planning gain for the community to accept the proposed development intensity.

3.5 Dr Andrew Thomson had the following views/questions:

- (a) the idea of creating a compatible waterfront environment by keeping lower podia in the form of green knolls to enrich ground level experiences was commendable;
- (b) the acceptability of the proposed building height was subject to public comment. While understanding that taller blocks were proposed to achieve the development intensity with smaller building footprints, he wondered whether the building height could be reduced to preserve the view of a continuous ridgeline and whether it was possible to keep the open view from the Hong Pak Court viewpoint;
- (c) whether the proposed development would block the view from Devil's Peak to the proposed cruise terminal which was an iconic development at the end of the former Kai Tak runway, and how the overall view from the end of the runway towards this part of the Harbour would be affected by the proposed development; and
- (d) on air ventilation aspect, whether an unpleasant windy environment would be created at pedestrian level.

3.6 Mr Kim Chan raised the following comments:

- (a) it was important for the proposed development to bring enhancement to the waterfront of Yau Tong Bay. The proposed development concept had some desirable design merits, but more information on connectivity and measures to bring people to the proposed public open spaces along the waterfront should be provided;
- (b) the accuracy of the air ventilation assessment was

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doubtful; and

- (c) the compatibility of the proposed development with the wider area including the adjacent industrial developments and the 2 “Commercial” zones with a plot ratio of 12 at Ko Fai Road was a concern. Whether impact assessments had been carried out under the scenario of full development of the surrounding areas should be clarified.

3.7 The project team responded as follows:

- (a) the site involved 39 landowners with 48 long and narrow lots. The current incompatible uses could only be removed by redeveloping the site comprehensively. The planning intention for comprehensive residential development of the site was established in 1990s. The Government had no intention to redevelop the site into open space by resuming all the lots;
- (b) the proposed building heights ranged from 48mPD to 188mPD. In arranging the high-rise blocks, a building separation distance of 30m was adopted and the disposition of the buildings was carefully considered. At least one 30m wide visual corridor would be preserved for each existing residential flat around Yau Tong Bay;
- (c) for most (about 60-65%) time of the year, the site was exposed to the down-wind blowing from the landward side in the south-east rather than the south-westerly wind blowing from the seaward side. The sea breeze penetrating through the proposed development would not be at great wind speeds causing gusty environment;
- (d) the air ventilation assessment was carried out using Computational Fluid Dynamics Model and the developments in the nearby areas had been taken into account; and
- (e) the proposed cruise terminal development at the former Kai Tak runway would be visible to the future residents of the proposed development and the existing residents in the hinterland, but the overall view from Devil’s Peak to Kai Tak might be slightly compromised by the proposed development.

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- 3.8 In response to the question of **Mr Kim Chan** on the zoning mechanism of the site, **Mr Raymond Lee** said that the current Yau Tong Bay “Comprehensive Development Area” (“CDA”) zone involved reclamation in the Harbour. In the light of the Court of Final Appeal Judgment regarding the interpretation of the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance, the presumption against harbour reclamation could only be rebutted by meeting the “overriding public need” test. The Yau Tong Bay “CDA” zone therefore needed to be reviewed. Unlike the Wan Chai or Kai Tak areas where reviews of the reclamation projects were carried out by the Government, the site at Yau Tong Bay was mainly under private ownership. In the past few years, the project proponent had been liaising with the Government with a view to coming up with a proposal that would meet the planning intention of providing improvement to the area through comprehensive redevelopment as well as satisfying the “overriding public need” test. Members’ comments on the current proposal would be conveyed to TPB for consideration. If the proposal was accepted by TPB, the “CDA” zone would be amended and the statutory procedures of OZP amendment would then follow.
- 3.9 **The Chairman** concluded the discussion by remarking that redevelopment of the site was subject to the “no reclamation” constraint. The project team’s efforts in the overall design and various measures to enhance air ventilation and minimise visual impact were appreciated. However, Members of the Sub-committee had raised concerns on, amongst others, the proposed building height, which should be considered further by the project proponent. He then thanked the project team for attending the meeting.

Item 4 Central Reclamation Urban Design Study and the Associated Public Engagement Strategy and Programme (Paper No. 2/2007)

- 4.1 **The Chairman** invited Ms Phyllis Li to brief Members on the Central Reclamation Urban Design Study (CRUDS) and the associated Public Engagement Strategy and Programme (PESP).
- 4.2 **Ms Phyllis Li** said that Aedas Ltd. and CityU Professional Services Ltd. had been appointed to undertake the CRUDS and the associated PESP respectively. She then explained the study objectives, study area, key study tasks, and the overall programme of the CRUDS and the public engagement

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activities in detail.

- 4.3 **Dr Alvin Kwok** noted that the nature of CRUDS being an urban design study was rather different from that of the WDII Review and Kai Tak Planning Review. He raised questions on the public engagement activities and the involvement of HEC in this aspect. In the light of the recent events over the old Star Ferry Pier and Queen's Pier, he considered that the public might have no interest to participate in this exercise if the planning framework under the current OZPs would be followed. Public sentiment would be aroused if their previous views were not accommodated in the CRUDS.
- 4.4 **Dr Andrew Thomson** said that the public comments relating to building mass, Road P2, etc. should be seriously considered in preparing the design briefs. HPPs and HPGs should also be taken into account.
- 4.5 Noting that the southern boundary of the study area was defined by Connaught Road Central, **Mr Charles Nicholas Brooke** pointed out the need to integrate the study area with the surroundings and to strengthen the north-south pedestrian linkages from the waterfront to the area south of Connaught Road Central.
- 4.6 **Mr Kim Chan** said that various measures should be considered to enhance connectivity and public accessibility to the Central waterfront, even under hot and humid weather, and to make the Central waterfront an attractive place for both tourists and local people.
- 4.7 **Ms Phyllis Li** responded as follows:
- (a) the objective of the CRUDS was to refine the existing urban design framework of the Central Reclamation on the OZPs. A public engagement strategy and programme would be formulated to solicit inputs from the public and key stakeholders for the study. As suggested by HEC in July 2006, PlanD would consult the Sub-committee throughout the study process;
 - (b) issues relating to building mass and Road P2 would be addressed under the study. Due regard would be given to HPPs and HPGs;
 - (c) a comprehensive pedestrian network integrated with

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multi-modal transport would be formulated to improve the east-west linkages from the WDII area to Sheung Wan and the north-south linkages from the waterfront to the inner part of Central; and

- (d) the attractiveness of the Central waterfront would be enhanced by an appropriate mix of land uses. Apart from the sites earmarked to support the commercial function of the Central Business District, a lot of open space would be provided to attract the public and the visitors to the Central waterfront.

- 4.8 **Ms Lydia Lam** added that the study was commissioned by PlanD upon TPB's earlier request for refining the urban design framework of the current OZPs. As such, the planned uses and development parameters of various zones on the OZPs would form the basis and "starting point" for the study. To take into account the recent public views, the study would examine the locations and design ideas of reconstructing the old Star Ferry clock tower and reassembly of the retainable parts of the Queen's Pier. In formulating the public engagement strategy and programme, reference would be made to the experiences of HEC in similar studies.
- 4.9 **Mr Charles Nicholas Brooke** said that the public engagement exercise should be well structured. It might be necessary to narrow down choices to the public. He suggested that a briefing could be arranged to solicit Members' advice on formulating a PESP for the study.
- 4.10 **Mr Leung Kong-yui** said that unlike the planning reviews undertaken by HEC for which public engagement was carried out without a pre-determined scheme, the public might not be fully aware of the development constraints embedded in the current OZPs. Factors affecting the zonings, alignments of Road P2 and the extended overrun tunnel of the airport railway, etc. should be clarified to the public. The past experiences of Members would be useful in formulating a public engagement strategy which enabled the public to make an informed choice.
- 4.11 **Dr Andrew Thomson** stressed the importance of presenting the information in simple and layman terms to facilitate the public to understand the key issues involved and the choices available.
- 4.12 **Mr Kim Chan** said that the long-term intentions and land use

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requirements of the Central Reclamation should be made clear to the public at the outset of the public engagement programme.

4.13 In response, **Ms Phyllis Li** made the following points:

- (a) the land use zones on the 2-dimensional OZPs were broad brush in nature. Different design concepts for the sites and ways to improve the urban design of the Central waterfront would be considered under the study. The “starting point” provided by the OZPs would be clearly explained to the public. Physical models and other suitable illustrative materials would be used to enable the public to understand the matters; and
- (b) the consultant of the PESP would be invited to brief the Sub-committee. Due to the tight study programme, Stage 1 public engagement activities focusing on the urban design objectives and urban design issues would be carried out in early May 2007.

4.14 **Dr Alvin Kwok** considered it more useful for the Sub-committee to provide comments on the PESP in an early stage.

4.15 **The Chairman** remarked as follows:

- (a) the Government should be more accommodating in considering different views and comments collected from the public engagement exercise. In addition to preparing planning/design briefs for key development sites, adjustments of zoning boundaries and transport alignments to meet public aspiration should be considered wherever practicable;
- (b) emphasis should be placed on aligning different views and building community consensus through the public engagement process; and
- (c) Members were encouraged to monitor the public engagement process by actively participating in various public engagement activities and providing feedback to PlanD.

Item 5 Harbour Plan Review – Progress & Way Forward

5.1 **Mr Raymond Wong** recapped the 2-tier approach for the formulation of Harbour Plan as agreed by HEC in 2005.

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Referring to a flow chart shown at the meeting, he explained the progress of the Harbour Plan Review by covering the following aspects:

- (a) the work relating to HPPs, HPGs, Metroplan and the HK2030 Study at strategic level;
- (b) progress of various studies/reviews at the district level;
- (c) monitoring known harbour-front projects through regular updating of the inventory list;
- (d) on-going identification of opportunities for harbour-front enhancements; and
- (e) based on the findings of district reviews and the latest current/planned uses, identifying key elements, such as broad planned uses, development themes, connectivity, etc., for formulation of an integrated Harbour Plan.

- 5.2 **Mr Raymond Wong** further stated that to take account of the comments raised at the HEC meeting on 22 March 2007, PlanD proposed to develop an electronic database to facilitate public access of harbour-related information through the website. **Mr Raymond Lee** then showed Members how the electronic database worked by a computer demonstration, and explained that the database would include the available information on current and planned land uses, waterfront promenade, fairway and anchorage area, cruise terminals, areas covered by district reviews and site photos, etc.
- 5.3 Members generally appreciated the effort of PlanD in developing the electronic database. **The Chairman** said that the electronic database served to record the works of HEC and its Sub-committees in a systematic way. **Dr Alvin Kwok** suggested to promote it to the wider community and schools. **Mr Leung Kong-yui** shared this view by pointing out the trend for the younger generation to obtain electronic information through websites.
- 5.4 **Dr Andrew Thomson** said that the information included in the database appeared to be too technical for layman. As the objective was to share information with the public, the legend should be improved and the amount of information might need to be reduced to make the database more user-friendly. While supporting the idea to link up the database with the websites of

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current studies/reviews, he raised concern on the progress of the review of West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) and Kowloon Central, the time table for starting the other reviews, and how the Harbour Plan would be integrated.

5.5 In response, **Mr Raymond Wong** made the following points:

- (a) simple terminology would be used to enhance public understanding of the electronic information. Members' views would be considered to improve the user friendliness of the database;
- (b) the review of WKCD was undertaken by the Consultative Committee chaired by the Chief Secretary. Regarding Kowloon Central, as enhancement works of the Tsim Sha Tsui harbour-front was already underway, the district review of the Kowloon Central area would focus on the Hung Hom harbour-front and its hinterland. As the Hung Hom District Study was now underway, other district review studies would be conducted upon availability of resources. Members would be consulted on the review priority in due course; and
- (c) the findings of the district reviews would be integrated to form the overall Harbour Plan.

Item 6 Any Other Business

6.1 **The Chairman** said that the progress of the CRUDS and Hung Hom District Study should be reported to the Sub-committee at the next meeting. **PlanD**

6.2 There being no other business, the meeting closed at 5:15 pm.

[Post-meeting Note : An ad hoc meeting to brief Members on the CRUDS was held on 10 May 2007.]

**HEC Sub-committee on
Harbour Plan Review
June 2007**