

**Harbour-front Enhancement Committee
Progress Report on
Urban Design Study for the New Central Harbourfront**

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the latest progress of the “Urban Design Study for the New Central Harbourfront” (the Study) commissioned by the Planning Department (PlanD).

Background

2. In response to the request of the Town Planning Board (TPB), PlanD commissioned the Study in late March 2007. On 18.4.2007, the then HEC Sub-committee on Harbour Plan Review was briefed on the commencement and scope of the Study. On 10.5.2007, the Sub-committee was briefed on the public engagement strategy and programme as well as the launch of the Stage 1 Public Engagement for the Study.

3. The Study aims to refine the existing urban design framework and to prepare design briefs for the key sites in the new Central harbourfront. The Stage 1 Public Engagement for the Study commenced on 3.5.2007. In this stage, public views on the urban design objectives, urban design issues and sustainable design assessment framework for the Study and the major urban design considerations for the key sites were solicited. The possible locations and design ideas for reconstructing the old Star Ferry Clock Tower and reassembling Queen’s Pier were also explored.

Progress of the Study

4. During the Stage 1 Public Engagement, a series of public engagement activities were organized. A Focus Group Workshop for professional and academic institutions and a Community Engagement Forum for the general public and stakeholders were held on 5.5.2007 and 12.5.2007 respectively. Parallel briefings and consultation sessions were held with various public and advisory bodies including

the TPB, the then HEC Sub-committee on Harbour Plan Review, relevant District Councils, Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Planning, Lands and Works Sub-committee to Review the Planning for the Central Waterfront (including the Tamar Site), LegCo Panel on Home Affairs Sub-committee on Heritage Conservation, etc.

5. An exhibition was held at the Star Ferry Pier from May to June 2007. A bilingual pamphlet on the Stage 1 Public Engagement was prepared and distributed through the Public Enquiry Counters of the PlanD, relevant District Offices, the exhibition venue of Star Ferry Pier, major public libraries, etc. To facilitate dissemination of relevant information on the Study including details of the public engagement programme to the public, a web page at PlanD's web site has been set up.

6. A questionnaire was designed for the Stage 1 Public Engagement to collect opinions on three main areas, namely: (a) urban design objectives and urban design issues for the new Central harbourfront and the key sites; (b) sustainability principles and criteria; and (c) alternative concepts for reconstructing the old Star Ferry Clock Tower and reassembling Queen's Pier. In addition, the public was invited to make written submissions and to provide comments on the Study.

7. The Stage 1 Public Engagement Report is now under preparation and will be issued for public information in due course. Meanwhile, the study consultant has made reference to the initial findings of the Stage 1 Public Engagement in formulating proposals for the refinement of the urban design framework and design options for the key sites.

8. Generally speaking, the opinions collected from different channels in the Stage 1 Public Engagement on the urban design objectives and issues, sustainability principles and criteria, and urban design considerations for the key sites were compatible with those suggested by the study consultants. The difference was mainly on the priority order for certain criteria and considerations. For the issue on the possible locations and design ideas for reassembling Queen's Pier and reconstructing the old Star Ferry Clock Tower, the opinions were diverse. For Queen's Pier, some preferred the original location, some preferred a waterfront location, and some considered that there was no need for reassembling.

9. The study consultant is now undertaking Tasks 2 and 3 of the Assignment Brief in refining the existing urban design framework, preparing Landscape Strategy Plan

and Pedestrian Network Plan, and examining the design concepts for the key sites and the architectural feasibility of the design options.

Stage 2 Public Engagement

10. The Stage 2 Public Engagement is planned to commence in January 2008. It will focus on the refined urban design framework for the Central Harbourfront, alternative design concepts for the key sites, and the alternative locations for reconstructing the old Star Ferry clock tower and reassembling the Queen's Pier. In seeking the views of the public, more illustrative materials including physical models would be used to facilitate better understanding and visual appreciation of the design proposals by the public.

11. Public views and suggestions collected in the Stage 2 Public Engagement will provide inputs for the study consultants to formulate the study recommendations, including the proposed design concepts for the key sites together with design briefs and the proposed locations of the reconstructed Star Ferry clock tower and the reassembled Queen's Pier. The Study is expected to complete in July/August 2008.

Way Forward

12. HEC would be involved in key stages of the Study. As mentioned above, the study consultant is examining the design concepts for key sites and making preparation for the Stage 2 Public Engagement. We would seek advice and suggestions from HEC on the study proposals and the arrangement for the public engagement before commencement of the Stage 2 Public Engagement.

Advice Sought

13. Members are invited to note the progress of the Study.

Planning Department

October 2007