

**Harbour Front Enhancement Committee (HEC)
Task Group on Urban Design Study
for the New Central Harbourfront (TGUDS)**

Findings of the Stage 1 Public Engagement of the Study

Purpose

1. This Paper briefs Members on the findings of the Stage 1 Public Engagement for the Urban Design Study for the New Central Harbourfront (the Study).

Background

2. At the last TGUDS meeting held on 6 December 2007, Members requested the study team to, inter alia, brief the TGUDS on the findings of the Stage 1 Public Engagement for the Study.

3. The Stage 1 Public Engagement was launched on 3 May 2007. Public views and suggestions received during the consultation period up to September 2007 are collated and analyzed in a full report on the Stage 1 Public Engagement being finalized by the public engagement consultant of the Study, CityU Professional Services Ltd. The findings are summarized in this Paper for Members' consideration.

Highlights of the Stage 1 Public Engagement

4. The focus of the Stage 1 Public Engagement was to collect public views and suggestions on three major aspects, viz. (a) urban design objectives/issues for the study area and sustainable design assessment framework; (b) major urban design considerations for the key sites in the study area; and (c) possible locations

and design ideas for reconstructing the old Star Ferry Clock Tower and re-assembling Queen's Pier.

5. During the Stage 1 Public Engagement, bilingual pamphlets and view collection forms (VCF) were distributed to the public through various channels, and a webpage on the Study was set up to help disseminate information and to collect public views. The public was also encouraged to make submissions to relay their views on the Study. An exhibition was held at the new Central Star Ferry Pier from May to June 2007. In addition, a series of public engagement activities were organized to widely canvass public views, including (a) a Focus Group Workshop (FGW) held on 5 May 2007 for the professional and academic institutions with a view to facilitating an in-depth discussion on the urban design issues pertaining to the Study; (b) a Community Engagement Forum (CEF) held on 12 May 2007 for the general public, relevant stakeholders and concern groups, and members of the relevant public and advisory bodies with a view to gathering wider community views on the Study; and (c) various briefings to the following public and advisory bodies as follows:

Date	Public and Advisory Bodies
4 May 2007	Town Planning Board (TPB)
10 May 2007	Harbour Enhancement Committee (HEC)'s Sub-committee on Harbour Plan Review
18 May 2007	Central & Western District Council (DC)
22 May 2007	Wanchai District Council's Planning, Traffic and Environmental Protection Committee
28 May 2007	Islands District Council's Environmental Improvement and Food Hygiene Committee
18 June 2007	Planning Sub-committee of the Land and Building Advisory Committee
26 June 2007	Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Home Affairs' Sub-committee on Heritage Conservation
28 June 2007	The then LegCo Panel on Planning, Lands and Works' Sub-committee to Review the Planning for the Central Waterfront (including the Tamar Site)

6. The overall conclusion of the public views collected through the aforementioned channels and activities is summarized below.

Major Findings

7. Generally speaking, opinions collected in the Stage 1 Public Engagement were diverse. The participants of the FGW had a balanced discussion, taking into account various design and technical considerations. For the CEF, which was mainly attended by the public and concern groups, the focus of the discussion was more on the preservation of Queen's Pier and the old Star Ferry Clock Tower which was a hot issue at the time of the CEF. The respondents to the VCF represented a wider spectrum of the society and the focus and opinions were more balanced.

8. The urban design objectives and issues, urban design considerations for key sites and sustainability design principles and criteria were less controversial than the arrangements for re-assembling Queen's Pier and the old Star Ferry Clock Tower. There was general concurrence with the urban design issues identified by the study consultant, although different priorities were accorded to the various criteria and considerations. For the re-assembly and reconstruction arrangements for Queen's Pier and the old Star Ferry Clock Tower, opinions were divided on the original or waterfront locations. Other options including "no re-assembly" had also been suggested.

Urban Design Objectives for the New Central Harbourfront

9. The urban design objectives proposed by the study consultant were generally agreed. Some of the proposed objectives were considered more important. The urban design objectives with the wording refined, taking into account the public views and suggestions received, are highlighted below:

- (a) to project a distinctive identity for the Central Business District (CBD) and the harbourfront;
- (b) to create an attractive harbourfront with high quality development and a luxuriant landscape;
- (c) to create a vibrant harbourfront with a mix of uses and diverse activities;
- (d) to improve accessibility to the harbourfront for public enjoyment;
- (e) to ensure a sustainable design for the harbourfront;
- (f) to create a harmonious visual and physical relationship with the

- ridgeline, harbour setting and CBD; and
- (g) to respect the cultural and historical context of the Central District.

Urban Design Issues for the Study Area

10. There was general concurrence with the urban design issues identified by the study consultant, although some issues were accorded higher priorities than the others. The major ones suggested for consideration are summarized as follows:

- (a) appropriate built forms, heights, massing and layout design responding to the natural context and integrating with the surrounding areas;
- (b) harbourfront enhancement;
- (c) a sustainable transport system and comprehensive pedestrian linkage to enhance connectivity to the harbourfront;
- (d) environmentally friendly design, a landscape strategy and greening; and
- (e) establishing a sustainable design framework with the preservation of cultural heritage.

Sustainability Design Principles

11. Generally speaking, the following sustainability design principles were considered the most important:

- (a) diverse uses and activities;
- (b) responding to the natural context and existing urban fabric;
- (c) promoting harbourfront enhancement;
- (d) improving pedestrian accessibility and connectivity;
- (e) promoting environmentally friendly building design and greening; and
- (f) respecting cultural heritage.

Urban Design Considerations for Key Sites

12. Regarding the eight key sites (**Figure 1**), the major urban design considerations suggested are summarized as follows:

Sites 1 and 2: “Commercial” and “Comprehensive Development Area” (“CDA”) Sites north of IFC II

- (a) harmony of development and design with IFC II and the surrounding waterfront and careful control of building height;
- (b) integration of Sites 1 and 2 in design and improvement to the design of the piers;
- (c) opportunity for leisure and catering facilities to add vibrancy;
- (d) greening opportunity; and
- (e) improvement to the pedestrian linkages with IFC II and the ferry piers, and provision of a continuous promenade.

Site 3: “CDA” Site north of Statue Square

- (a) urban design controls to prevent massive development;
- (b) at-grade open space as an alternative to a landscaped deck;
- (c) low-rise and low-density development preferred;
- (d) breaking up of development footprints for diversified development and better air ventilation for the surrounding areas;
- (e) mixed uses including hotel, office, retail space and open space;
- (f) visual permeability to the waterfront; and
- (g) enhancement of north-south pedestrian connections to waterfront.

Site 4: Waterfront Related Commercial and Leisure Uses (WRCLU) Sites north of City Hall

- (a) urban design controls to prevent massive development;
- (b) low-rise development preferred;
- (c) smaller development footprints and less site coverage;
- (d) harmony of design with the City Hall cluster and maintenance of visual permeability between the City Hall and the harbour; and
- (e) pedestrian accessibility to the waterfront promenade.

Site 5: Site to the north of CITIC Tower

- (a) harmony of design with the adjacent developments, including the Tamar development, and careful control of building height;
- (b) arts, cultural, leisure or civic uses for public enjoyment preferred; and
- (c) physical connectivity with and visual permeability to adjacent buildings and facilities.

Site 6: WRCLU Sites north of CITIC Tower

- (a) harmony of design with waterfront developments and careful control of building height;
- (b) leisure uses and water related activities preferred; and
- (c) improving accessibility and connectivity to the Wan Chai waterfront.

Site 7: Promenade along Waterfront of Central Reclamation Phase III

- (a) a ‘people-oriented’ design;
- (b) integration with the Tamar development;
- (c) integration of the design of the promenade and the PLA berth which should be open to the public when not in use;
- (c) a mix of uses including open spaces, arts, cultural and/or recreational uses;
- (d) a continuous waterfront promenade with natural shadings for pedestrians; and
- (e) provision of environmentally friendly transportation.

Site 8: WRCLU Site near Central Ferry Piers No. 9 and 10

- (a) integration of the design with the waterfront promenade; and
- (b) a multi-functional design, including leisure uses with ancillary commercial uses.

Alternative Concepts for Re-assembling Queen’s Pier and Reconstructing the Old Star Ferry Clock Tower

13. Four alternative concepts for re-assembling Queen’s Pier and reconstructing the old Star Ferry Clock Tower were proposed for the Stage 1 Public Engagement to facilitate public discussion, namely:

- Concept A1- Re-assembly of Queen’s Pier at the original location and with the Clock Tower close by;
- Concept A2- Re-assembly of Queen’s Pier close to the original location and with the Clock Tower close by;
- Concept B1- City Hall, the Clock Tower and Queen’s Pier standing on an axis with clear visual connection; and

- Concept B2- Queen's Pier placed between Central Ferry Piers No. 9 and 10 and with the Clock Tower forming a visual link between the Harbour and the City.

14. Major views and suggestions on these alternative concepts are summarized below.

(a) Queen's Pier

There were diverse public views on the future location and design ideas for re-assembling Queen's Pier. On one hand, there was support for re-assembling Queen's Pier at the original location (i.e. Concept A1) with a view to maintaining the integrated cultural and architectural relations between the pier, the City Hall precinct and Edinburgh Place. On the other hand, there was also support for locating the re-assembled Queen's Pier at the new Central waterfront and adopting an axial approach in re-assembling Queen's Pier (Concept B1) to achieve visual prominence while ensuring an integrated relationship between the re-assembled Queen's Pier, the reconstructed Star Ferry Clock Tower and the City Hall complex. There was also support for adopting a functional approach in re-assembling Queen's Pier (Concept B2) at the waterfront and considered that the pier design should be carefully integrated with that of Central Piers No. 9 and 10 and preserving the marine operation. Relatively speaking, there was less support for re-assembling Queen's Pier adjacent to (or slightly shifted from) the original location (Concept A2). There were also other suggestions for in-situ preservation of Queen's Pier (instead of reassembly) or no re-assembly for the Pier at all. Some considered that there should be some water elements in the future design of the re-assembled Queen's Pier at the original location while some considered a natural setting on the waterfront was important.

(b) Old Star Ferry Clock Tower

There was support for locating the reconstructed old Star Ferry Clock Tower along the new Central harbourfront to create a visual linkage between the harbour and the city and to form a nodal point and anchoring space. Some preferred locating the reconstructed Clock

Tower at the original location. However, some considered that the Clock Tower should not be rebuilt as a replica. There were also a few suggestions for placing the reconstructed Clock Tower further away from the new Star Ferry Pier, or in other parts of Hong Kong.

Way Forward

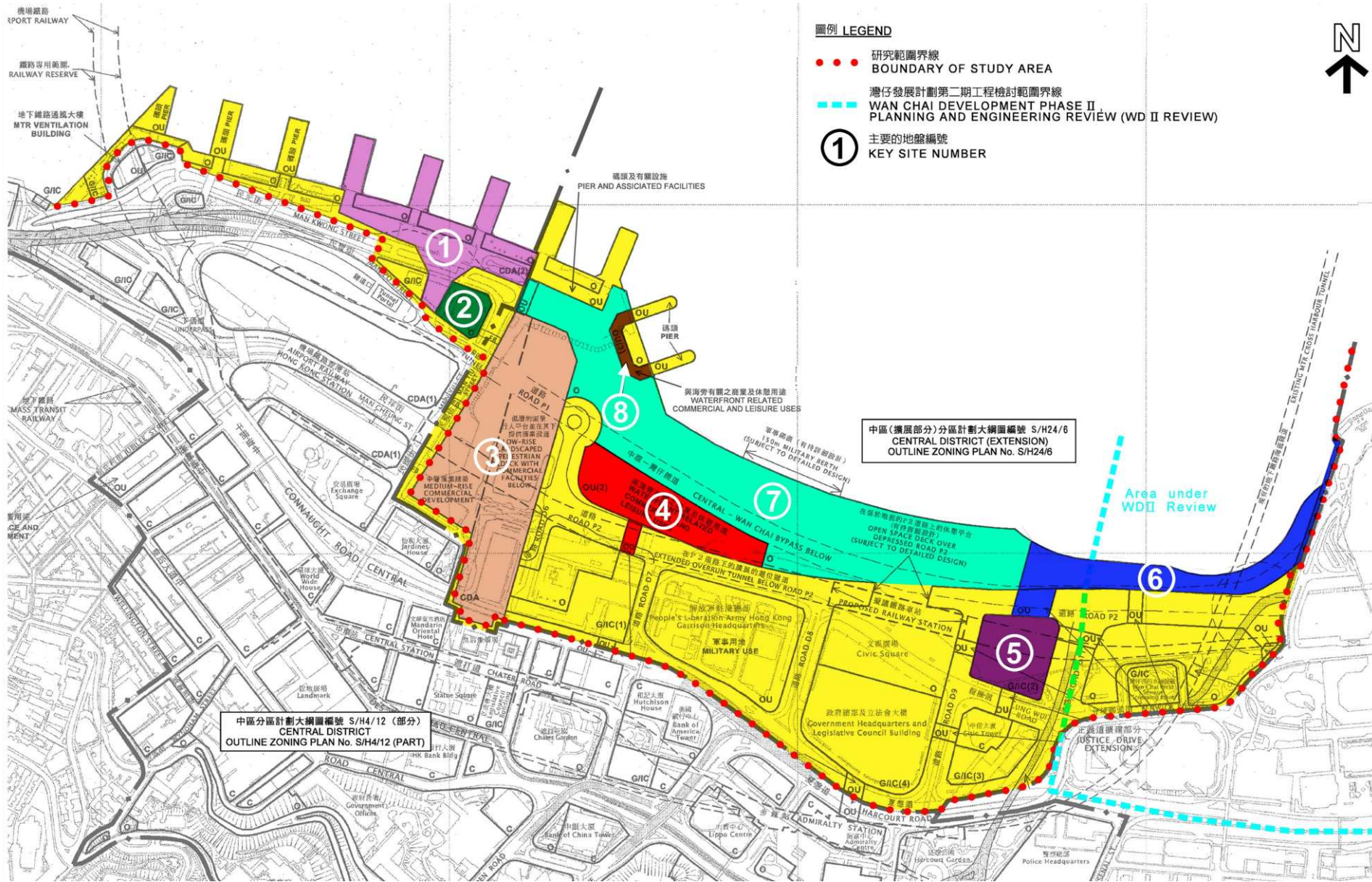
15. Taking into consideration the findings of the Stage 1 Public Engagement, the study consultant, Aedas Ltd, is developing proposals for refining the existing urban design framework for the new Central harbourfront and design concepts for the key sites for the forthcoming Stage 2 Public Engagement to be held in March 2008.

16. More detailed design proposals will be submitted to the TGUDS at a separate working session.

Advice Sought

17. Members are invited to note and consider the findings of the Stage 1 Public Engagement.

**CityU Professional Services Ltd
Planning Department
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中環新海濱城市設計研究的主要用地
Key Sites in the Urban Design Study for the New Central Harbourfront

規劃署
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FIGURE
1