

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

Review of Outstanding Issues Raised at the Consolidation Forum

Purpose

1. This Paper briefs Members on the review undertaken by the Study Team on the outstanding issues raised at the Consolidation Forum (the Forum) held on 28.2.2009.

Background

2. The Forum was organized by the TGUDS, with the following main objectives:

- to report the public views gathered from different channels during the Stage 2 Public Engagement;
- to provide a platform for the public to present their alternative design proposals and other comments/suggestions, and the Study Team and concerned Government departments to respond; and
- to conduct a focused, in-depth and structured public discussion on the critical issues under the Urban Design Study for the New Central Harbourfront (the Study).

3. To facilitate discussion at the Forum, a paper on the Findings of the Stage 2 Public Engagement and Initial Design Responses had been uploaded to the study website and was distributed to the participants at the Forum.

4. The Forum was attended by about 140 members of the general public including some members from Harbour-front Enhancement Committee, Town Planning Board, District Councils (DC), professional and academic institutes, and concerned groups and organizations, etc.

5. Following the presentations by the Study Team and 16 individuals/ organizations and the floor discussion in the morning session, five major critical issues (**Annex A**) were drawn up for more in-depth discussion in the afternoon session.

6. A Technical Panel comprising the concerned technical departments and the study consultants responded to the comments and queries raised by the participants in the afternoon session. A report on the Forum prepared by CityU Professional Services Limited was submitted to the Chairman of TGUDS on 29.4.2009.

7. There were a few outstanding issues that the Technical Panel agreed to undertake further review following the discussion at the Forum. The findings of the review are highlighted in the following paragraphs.

Findings of the Review

8. (a) Technical feasibility of the “Lagoon” proposal

- Request to explore the possibility of providing a “Lagoon” to complement the Queen’s Pier at its original location as proposed by Hong Kong Institute of Architects (HKIA) (**Figure 1**).

Study Team’s Responses

- Transport Department (TD) advises that realigning Road P2 to join Road P1 and deleting Road D6 as proposed by HKIA in the “Lagoon” proposal is not viable as it would adversely affect the capacity of the existing main roads. If a lagoon has to be catered for, TD has come up with an alternative proposal for realigning Road P2 with the lagoon located to its south, and the QP reassembled at its original location

(Figure 2).

- While Civil Engineering and Development Department (CEDD) and Highways Department (HyD) have no adverse comment on the proposed realignment of Road P2, Drainage Services Department (DSD) raises concern about the access for future repair and maintenance of the proposed box culvert extension underneath the original alignment of Road P2. DSD also considers that the location of the proposed lagoon should be clear of the drainage reserve.
- If the realigned Road P2 as proposed by TD is adopted, it will diagonally bisect part of Sites 3 and 4, which is undesirable from urban design point of view. The proposed north-south pedestrian link extending from the core of CBD to the new Star Ferry Pier will be compromised. The depth of the lagoon will be constrained by the shallow water depth¹ due to various underground infrastructures including Airport Railway Extended Overrun Tunnel (AREOT), culvert and the formation level of the promenade, and the size of the lagoon by the realigned Road P2. There will be no contact of the lagoon with the harbourfront. QP will be at the eastern end of the lagoon, not overlooking it. Nevertheless, two options of the lagoon are prepared by the study consultants to illustrate the possible design **(Figure 3)**.
- The lagoon proposal represents a different design option. Whether it is a better option when compared with the one proposed by the Study Consultants in the Stage 2 Public Engagement is a matter of preference, which can be rather subjective.
- The lagoon proposal is put up mainly to complement the QP at its

¹ HyD advises that the top level of the AREOT varies from -1 to -3mPD. To allow a nominal separation of 3m for future maintenance, the base level of the lagoon shall not be lower than +2mPD. CEDD advises that the roof level of the culvert F extension is about +2.4mPD to +3.45mPD. The formation level of the promenade is 5.5mPD. The water depth will be further reduced by the protective layer of the lagoon.

original location. Noting that the reassembly of the QP by the harbour is preferred by the general public and there is clear support from the DCs (16 out of 18 DCs consulted have passed motion in support of QP by the harbour), the intention of having a lagoon to complement the QP at its original location could not be achieved if QP is to be reassembled by the harbour to revive its pier function.

(b) Star Ferry Clock Tower (SFCT) at Original Location

- Request for further study of the feasibility of putting SFCT at its original location, and the engineering solutions imposed by the underground AREOT reserve and utility facilities.

Study Team's Responses

- Although the reassembly of SFCT at its original location will be in conflict with a major drainage culvert directly underneath, CEDD advises that it is technically feasible to adopt a supporting deck to span over the culvert for the SFCT and the exhibition gallery. For this option, piles could be driven on both sides of the culvert to support a deck upon which the SFCT and the exhibition gallery would be located with sufficient headroom for future maintenance of the drainage culvert.
- HyD is concerned about the less than 5m separation between the culvert and AREOT for the construction of the supporting deck of SFCT to span over the culvert. However, CEDD considers the allowable space (4.5m to 5m) for the piling foundation of the supporting deck is sufficient, and the additional foundation cost involved for putting SCFT at its original location would be in the rough order of \$20M. If this option will be adopted, further detailed study and site investigation would be required to confirm the engineering feasibility and ascertain the cost.
- The Study Consultants have assessed two alternative design schemes for reconstructing the Clock Tower, i.e. Concept A at Site 4 and Concept B at its original location at Site 3 (**Figure 4**).

- A comparison of the two concepts by the Study Consultants, from urban design perspective, is summarized in the following table.

Concept A (at Site 4)	Concept B (at Site 3)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A new linear relationship can be formed with City Hall and the harbourfront to create a visual and physical connection. - The Clock Tower and gallery design will harmoniously integrate with the surrounding low-scale developments at Site 4 (currently proposed at +20mPD) - Relatively high greening ratio is proposed for the waterfront promenade and the surrounding landscape of the promenade will enhance the Clock Tower. The Clock Tower and gallery clearly visible from various parts of the waterfront from all four directions. - The Clock Tower may need to be integrated with the promenade design to be maintained by the government, giving a degree of certainty to its surrounding environment. - The Clock Tower will be situated relatively closer to the existing new Star Ferry Clock Tower as compared to Concept B and may visually conflict one another. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allows visitors to reminisce the original location of the old Star Ferry Pier and the previous Central coastline. - The Clock Tower and gallery fairly visible from various parts of the waterfront but the landscaped deck and developments adjacent to the Clock Tower may obstruct views from the eastern direction. The Clock Tower and gallery will become a design consideration for Site 3 design. Its visual prominence may be jeopardized in view of the proposed building height of +50mPD for Site 3. - The Clock Tower at its original location may be very close to Road P2 and the noise level may be high at times. - The Clock Tower may need to be integrated with the design of Site 3 development, which is uncertain at this stage. - The Clock Tower will be situated relatively further away from the existing new Star Ferry Clock Tower as compared to Concept A and would have less visual conflict.

(c) Comprehensive Review on Public Transport Facilities

- Request TD to further review the traffic demand and location of drop-offs and bus stops in front of the ferry piers.

Study Team's Responses

- TD has conducted a comprehensive review on the public transport facilities in the study area. The public transport interchange originally planned in Site 2 will be removed to allow more ground level space and street level activities at the harbourfront. Public transport facilities to be provided in the new Central Harbourfront are as follows (**Figure 5**):
 - Site 1 : 2 taxi pick-up/drop-off points, 4 bus lay-bys, 1 taxi stand, 1 cross harbour taxi stand, and 1 loading/unloading bay; and
 - Site 3 : 4 GMB bays, 2 coach bays, 1 loading/unloading bay, and 1 taxi stand.

(d) Additional Decks over Roads

- Suggest for further examination of the provision of additional decks over major roads to allow a smooth connection to the waterfront at Site 6.

Study Team's Responses

- Both at-grade and grade separated facilities (including landscaped decks and elevated walkways) have been provided to facilitate pedestrian circulation in this area. TD confirms that the existing and planned provisions of footbridge, landscaped deck and at-grade crossings are sufficient to address local pedestrian circulation needs.
- As a large landscape deck will be provided in the western part of the new Central harbourfront, the Study Team does not consider that an extensive deck should be adopted in the eastern part, particularly in consideration that an extensive elevated deck-over coverage has been

and will be provided in Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (the Atrium Link) and Tamar. Additional decks in this area may affect the visual corridor to the harbour, which is considered not desirable.

- HyD advises that the foundation of proposed pedestrian deck shall not intrude into the protection zone of either the Central – Wan Chai Bypass (CWB) tunnel or the nearby MTR Tsuen Wan Line.
- The waterfront open space around Site 6 is limited as the minimum reclamation requirement for CWB has to be observed under the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance. The proposed deck and access stairs/ramps will further reduce the size of the waterfront open space.

Advice Sought

9. Members are invited to note and comment on the findings of the review undertaken by the Study Team in respect of the outstanding issues raised at the Forum.

10. Members have been briefed on the findings of the Stage 2 Public Engagement of the Study, including the initial design responses from the Study Team at previous meetings held on 10.12.2008 and 8.1.2009. A Report on the Consolidation Forum held on 28.2.2009 has been submitted to TGUDS on 29.4.2009. Now that the Stage 2 Public Engagement has been completed, Members are invited to formulate your views on the overall design concepts and proposals of the Study for HEC's consideration.

Planning Department
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