

## **Harbour-front Enhancement Committee**

### **Revised Harbour Planning Guidelines**

#### **1. Purpose**

This paper aims to brief Members on the outcome of the consultation on the draft Harbour Planning Guidelines (HPGs) and seek Members' endorsement of the revised HPGs at **Annex A** as suitable for promulgation to the public.

#### **2. Background**

2.1 On 27 April 2006, the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee (HEC) endorsed revisions to the Harbour Planning Principles (HPPs), which would serve as a set of guidelines for all individuals and organisations to facilitate the sustainable planning, preservation, development and management of Victoria Harbour and the harbour-front areas.

2.2 To enable relevant stakeholders and members of the public to better understand the intentions and requirements of the HPPs, a set of HPGs serving as a useful checklist was drawn up under the guidance of the Task Group on HPPs of the Sub-committee on Harbour Plan Review (HPR Sub-committee).

2.3 At the HEC meeting on 25 January 2007, Members discussed and agreed to adopt the document as a working draft for further consultation with relevant stakeholders.

#### **3. Consultation**

3.1 In February 2007, the draft HPGs were issued to about 130 relevant organizations/stakeholders, including the organizations/bodies represented at the HEC. The HPGs have also been uploaded onto the HEC website for public viewing and comment.

- 3.2 On 16 March and 3 April respectively, two briefings on the draft HPGs were made to the Town Planning Board and the Strategy Sub-committee of the Council of Sustainable Development.
- 3.3 Upon the expiry of the consultation period in April 2007, 18 written comments from individuals/organizations (excluding Government bureaux/departments) have been received.

#### **4. Comments and Responses**

- 4.1 In general, the comments received are positive and in support of the HPGs. Whilst some provided constructive comments to make the HPGs more comprehensive, some however expressed concerns on those requirements of the HPGs, which might affect their interest. Major comments received can broadly be summarized as follows:
  - (a) to ensure effective application of the HPGs, the document should be made mandatory or be incorporated into the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines;
  - (b) a set of sustainable principles and indicators should be attached to the HPGs to serve as a useful checklist;
  - (c) the current interpretation of the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance (PHO) is too rigid and would stifle many harbour-front enhancement opportunities. For example, creation of a continuous waterfront promenade to enhance public enjoyment is within the scope “to protect and preserve the harbour as a special public asset and a natural heritage”, but it may involve small-scale reclamation and may contravene the PHO. Extensive public consultations can be conducted to reveal the overriding public need for such harbour-front enhancement works;
  - (d) the 20-hectare benchmark is adopted for carrying out a comprehensive public engagement programme. Size of a project should not be the only criteria for determination;
  - (e) typhoon shelters are vital to the safety of marine crafts during

tropical storms. The Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter has the potential to be integrated with the future promenade, contributing to the public recreation and tourism-related activities;

- (f) public cargo working areas are important sites for mid-stream operations, which play an important role in Hong Kong's logistics industry. Relocation of these harbour facilities outside the Inner Harbour Core will lead to a rise in transportation cost, undermine the competitiveness of the shipping industry and affect the livelihood of cargo handling and associated workers;
- (g) both tangible and intangible cultural heritage should be covered in the HPGs;
- (h) the HPGs should encourage the adoption of key sustainable development initiatives such as use of renewable energy, energy efficiency facilities and recycled water as well as wider adoption of green building principles; and
- (i) other textual amendments such as the use of "should" to replace "could" to make the HPGs more positive.

4.2 All comments received have been carefully considered by the Task Group on HPPs at its meeting on 17 May 2007 and the HPR Sub-committee by circulation. In the light of the comments received, the HPGs have been revised. Major amendments include:

- (a) a set of sustainable principles and indicators is included in the revised HPGs (see **Annex IV of Annex A**) for reference purpose;
- (b) a new paragraph is added to the "Land Formation" section to clarify the intention that reclamation for harbour-front enhancement may be carried out provided that it can satisfy the 'overriding public need test'. The public should be engaged at an early stage;
- (c) the 20-hectare benchmark for carrying out a comprehensive public engagement programme is retained as this will cover most of the large-scale public projects along the harbour-front. In addition, a

guideline is added to the effect that projects of territorial significance should also carry out a comprehensive public engagement programme;

- (d) in view of the fact that there is only one typhoon shelter, i.e. the Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter, within the Inner Harbour Core and that under the Wan Chai Development Phase II Review the Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter is proposed to be retained with its cultural and heritage element preserved and enhanced, the HPGs are amended by deleting the guideline on relocation of typhoon shelter outside the Inner Harbour Core;
- (e) ‘public cargo working area’ is replaced by ‘cargo working area’ under the “Land Use Planning” section as there is at present only one cargo working area, i.e. the KCRC freight yard, within the Inner Harbour Core. The long term intention is to relocate the freight yard elsewhere and the future use of the site is being examined in the Hung Hom District Study;
- (f) the “Cultural Heritage” section is revised to include preservation of both tangible and intangible benefits;
- (g) more sustainable developments initiatives are included in the “Sustainable Development” section to encourage their wider adoption; and
- (h) Other amendments include revision to the wordings throughout the HPGs to better reflect their intention, inclusion of more illustrations and re-arrangement of the sequence of the guidelines to enhance easy understanding.

4.3 A summary of comments received and our responses is at **Annex B** for Members’ reference.

## **5. Next Step**

Subject to HEC’s endorsement, the revised HPGs will be widely issued to relevant stakeholders including statutory and advisory bodies, District Councils, developers, professional institutes, academics, etc. They will be

invited to apply the HPGs when considering and dealing with proposals in and around the Victoria Harbour. The HPGs will also be uploaded onto the HEC website for promulgation to the public. A Chinese version of the revised HPGs has also been prepared at **Annex C** to facilitate wider promulgation.

## **6. Advice Sought**

Members are invited to consider and endorse the revised HPGs at **Annex A** and the Chinese translation at **Annex C** as suitable for promulgation to the public.

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