

HEC Sub-committee on South East Kowloon Development Review

Minutes of 4th Meeting

Time: 2:30 pm

Date: 13 December 2004

Venue: Conference Room, 15/F, North Point Government Offices,
333 Java Road, North Point

Present

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| Dr Chan Wai-kwan | Chairman |
| Mr Paul Zimmerman | Representing Business Environment Council |
| Mr Joseph Wong | Representing Citizen Envisioning @ Harbour |
| Dr Billy Hau | Representing Conservancy Association |
| Mr Andy Leung | Representing Hong Kong Institute of Architects |
| Mr Kim Chan | Representing Hong Kong Institute of Planners |
| Mr Mason Hung | Representing Hong Kong Tourism Board |
| Mr Hardy Lok | Representing Society for Protection of Harbour Limited |
| Professor Jim Chi-yung | |
| Mr Thomas TSO | Deputy Secretary (Planning & Lands)1, Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau |
| Mr Raymond Ho | Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport)7, Environment, Transport & Works Bureau |
| Mr Raymond Lee | District Planning Officer/Kowloon |
| Mr Talis Wong | Chief Engineer/Kowloon, Civil Engineering and Development Department |
| Mr K B To | Chief Engineer/Transport Planning, Transport Department |
| Mr Kelvin Chan | Secretary |

In Attendance

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| Ms Portia Yiu | Assistant Secretary (Planning)4, Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau |
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Consultants

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| Ms Iris Tam |] |
| Mr Derek Sun |] City Planning – Maunsell Joint Venture |
| Mr Eric Ma |] |

Absent with Apologies

Mr Charles Nicholas Brooke

Professor Lam Kin-che

Ms Lee Wai-king, Starry

Mr Wu Man-keung, John

Mr Kevin Yeung

District Officer (Kowloon City), Home Affairs
Department

Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed Dr Billy Hau, as alternate member of Conservancy Association, for attending the meeting for the first time.

Item 1 Confirmation of Minutes of 3rd Meeting

Action

- 1.1 **The Chairman** said that the draft minutes of the third meeting were circulated to Members for comments on 17.11.2004. As there were no further comments, the meeting confirmed the minutes of the third meeting.

All to note

Item 2 Matters Arising

- 2.1 **The Chairman** noted that actions had been taken by Planning Department and the Consultants after the last meeting, including the holding of public forums and workshop, and these matters would be reported under item 3 of the agenda. No other matters arising from the last meeting were raised by Members.

Item 3 Stage 1 Public Participation Report – Overview of Public Comments [SEKD SC Paper No. 4/04]

- 3.1 At the invitation of **the Chairman, Mr Raymond Lee** said that the Stage 1 Public Participation was undertaken between mid-September and mid-November 2004. The Study team had been consolidating the comments and proposals received. An overview of public comments had been

prepared for discussion by this Sub-Committee. **Ms Iris Tam** said that during the Stage 1 Public Participation, three Public Forums and one Community Workshop were conducted, and over 500 participants were recorded in these events. Also, 19 briefing sessions/consultation meetings were held with various statutory and advisory bodies, professional institutions, and other interested organizations to facilitate more focused discussion. So far, 230 written submissions had been received.

- 3.2 **Ms Iris Tam** said that in terms of vision, there was general consensus in the community to create a new image for Hong Kong when developing Kai Tak, to bring the sensation of the harbour back to the people, and to enhance the quality of living. Some envisaged Kai Tak as a hub of sports and recreational, tourism and entertainment and quality housing developments in the East Kowloon area. Many considered Kai Tak as one of the collective memories of Hong Kong in view of its aviation history as well as the unique shape of the ex-runway that the relevant heritage elements should be reckoned in the new planning framework. Others also suggested to develop a sustainable green city that nurtures new urban living experience.
- 3.3 **Ms Iris Tam** said that the exercise had updated the community's vision for Kai Tak, which was generally consistent with the development theme adopted in previous studies. Also, the vision statement incorporated in the Public Consultation Digest, i.e. to create a vibrant and elegant city life through the provision of high quality development in this unique harbourfront site, was well received.
- 3.4 **Ms Iris Tam** said that on planning principles, there was general consensus was that planning should be people-oriented, comprehensively integrated (land use, environment & transport planning), bringing harbour to the people, sustainable, protecting views to ridgeline, maintaining a gradation of building heights, and retaining local culture and historical past. **Ms Iris Tam** said that inputs from the community would help fine-tune the planning principles to guide the Kai Tak development.

- 3.5 In response to **Professor Jim Chi-yung's** enquiry on the term "sustainable green city", **Ms Iris Tam** said that it was intended to refer to both landscaping Kai Tak with public park and open space, and the principle of sustainable development.
- 3.6 In response to **Mr Paul Zimmerman's** enquiry, **Ms Iris Tam** said that "local culture" raised by the community referred to the cultural heritage of the interface areas that should be reflected in the development of Kai Tak. **Mr Raymond Lee** added that the previous studies had already identified these cultural heritage items, e.g., Fishtail Rock, Sung Wong Toi Inscription Rock, features of the run-way, etc.
- 3.7 In terms of vision, **the Chairman** noted that the public's views for Kai Tak were mainly leisure, recreation and tourism oriented. He said that whilst the Study had yet to take its course before decisions were made, these should be regarded more as the public's aspirations than the public's vision statement. **Mr Paul Zimmerman** said that given the congested urban environment and the open question posed in the exercise, it would be natural for the public to aspire more to the leisure and recreation aspects, rather than a business node. **Ms Iris Tam** said that in the public participation process, the public was specifically asked whether Kai Tak should be developed into a secondary business node. The feedback was that office development should instead be achieved via redevelopment/regeneration of the hinterland area.
- 3.8 **Professor Jim Chi-yung** said that the element for good urban design should be explicitly stated in the vision and principles for Kai Tak. **Ms Iris Tam** said that these would be fine-tuned in the Study process.
- 3.9 **Mr Thomas Tso** asked whether quality housing, as part of the public's vision, would rule out public housing for Kai Tak. **Mr Raymond Lee** said that there was general expectation in the community for improvement of housing quality in Kai Tak, in terms of density and building height, irrespective of whether they were public or private housing.

Regarding the committed public housing projects in Site 1A and 1B, the public feedback was to seek general improvement to these developments.

- 3.10 **Ms Iris Tam** said that regarding reclamation, the general consensus of the public was that further reclamation in the Harbour area should not be pursued, particularly for housing or office developments. However, very limited reclamation for enlivening the existing waterfront, e.g. to create promenade, to build submerged roads, or to find a cost-effective way to address pollution problems of the Approach Channel, was acceptable to a good part of the public. On this, the government was mindful that should any reclamation be proposed, it needed to be well justified and to satisfy the “over-riding public need” test.
- 3.11 Regarding the Kai Tak Approach Channel (KTAC), **Ms Iris Tam** reported that the majority supported retention of KTAC and opined that appropriate mitigation measures should be identified. Some indicated that reclaiming KTAC was an acceptable solution to resolve the pollution problems. Many, however, suggested that the channel be turned into a water sports area. **Ms Iris Tam** said that the Baseline Review of the Study had revealed that the main sources of KTAC’s water quality problems were from the discharge of Tolo Harbour Effluent Export Scheme and from expedient connections in the area. Ways to improve water quality could include improvement at pollution sources, improvement of water circulation at KTAC, and treatment of contaminated sediment. All these were currently under investigation.
- 3.12 **Ms Iris Tam** continued to say that residents in the surrounding areas perceived the redevelopment of the ex-airport site an opportunity to address the current problems in their district, e.g. provision of GIC and transport facilities. They also considered Kai Tak as a solution space to assist the redevelopment of obsolete housing estates in the surrounding districts, and the transformation of Kwun Tong, Kowloon Bay and San Po Kong into business areas.
- 3.13 For interface with other studies, **Ms Iris Tam** said that some commenters opined that the various strategic initiatives

investigated under the Hong Kong 2030 Study and the Sustainable Development Study should be taken into account in the Study. Also, the implications of other studies, e.g. Study on Building Height Restrictions for Kowloon Bay and Kwun Tong Business Areas, should also be taken into account. **Ms Iris Tam** said that relevant proposals of these studies would be further investigated in this Study.

- 3.14 **The Chairman** said that some of the key concerns identified above (reclamation, pollution problem of KTAC, etc.) would need to be resolved in the course of the Study as it proceed ahead.
- 3.15 **Professor Jim Chi-yung** asked whether the public were informed of the cost implications when considering whether to reclaim the KTAC issue. **Mr Andy Leung** stressed the need to provide the public more technical information such as cost as well as the legal implication in reclaiming the KTAC. Without these information, the public would have difficulties to participate in the discussion of Kai Tak. **The Chairman** said that on whether to reclaim KTAC, the public would need to be informed that an answer to this issue would be necessary at certain point in order to allow the Study to move forward. He suggested that the legal aspect could be included in the technical information to be provided to the public.
- 3.16 **Mr Raymond Lee** said that in the Stage 1 Public Participation, technical and background information with respect to the pollution problem of KTAC had been provided to the public. As the Study progressed, further in-depth analysis would have been completed. In the next stage of the Study, when the public were involved in the discussion of development options, further information such as pollution source, mitigation method and costs, etc. should be available for their consideration. Also, the legal implications should also be analyzed for public discussion.
- 3.17 **Mr Paul Zimmerman** said that there should be an integrated approach in the planning of Kai Tak. Proponents of individual projects, such as the stadium, should provide their justifications for the facility to be located in Kai Tak.

This would help to produce a more integrated plan with wider “buy-ins” by the community, and with better certainty of meeting the “overriding public needs” test as discussed in para. 3.4.4 of the Sub-Committee paper. **The Chairman** said that the Study was indeed being conducted within a broader territorial planning framework with other strategic planning, sustainability and transport studies that had been on-going. This Sub-committee should strive for a better interface with these studies, in that the Study would not be in direct conflicts with these studies.

- 3.18 In response to an enquiry by **Dr Billy Hau**, **the Chairman** said that the question being posed to the public was two-fold, i.e., whether there could be any reclamation, and what areas could be reclaimed. He observed that the Stage 1 Public Participation had revealed a general consensus in the community that reclamation should be avoided as far as possible. **Mr Thomas Tso** noted that the community had also indicated support to limited reclamation for enlivening the existing waterfront. **Mr Paul Zimmerman** noted the same, and added that the notion of “no reclamation” as a public view should be carefully gauged, as it might be limited only to reclamation for developments. It was doubtful that the public would rule out reclamation even for purposes of essential facilities such as a pier, or resolving a pollution problem such as KTAC.
- 3.19 In referring to the concept plans produced in the Community Workshop (which were displayed at the meeting), **Mr Andy Leung** said that many groups had incorporated some reclamation for purposes wider than those reported in the Paper. He said that in order to allow the community the choice on this issue, alternative concepts with and without minimum reclamation should be presented for further public consultation. There should also be analysis on the pros and cons of all the options. **Mr Raymond Lee** advised that this could be pursued in developing the options of Outline Concept Plan for public consultation.
- 3.20 In response to **the Chairman’s** enquiry, **Ms Iris Tam** clarified that the public’s view was that there should better not be any reclamation, and if proposals to enliven the existing waterfront (e.g. to create promenade), to build

submerged roads, or to find a cost-effective way to address pollution problems of KTAC, were made, they would rather see these achieved without reclamation. If this was proven to be not possible without certain limited reclamation, they would accept that limited reclamation.

- 3.21 **Mr Paul Zimmerman** said that the public would not start off opposing reclamation even for projects such as piers and promenade, and the “no reclamation” sentiment they might have conveyed was a response to the general question of whether they would accept reclamation. **The Chairman** said that the Consultants and Members’ interpretations of the public views on this issue of reclamation might not differ. The needs and justifications for reclamation projects such as piers would need to be demonstrated and provided. These should be supported by the relevant analysis so that the public would be able to make an informed choice.
- 3.22 **Mr Hardy Lok** said that as the pollution problem at KTAC had been in existence for a very long time, the Study should identify all the pollution sources. While the cost to tackle the environmental problem was a relevant consideration, the whole problem should be tackled at source so that it would not lead to deterioration at some other parts of the Harbour. **The Chairman** proposed that this should also be included in presenting to the public ways to deal with KTAC.
- 3.23 **Mr Eric Ma** said that the sources of pollution at KTAC had largely been determined, and had been made public. Currently, data on this complex issue was being gathered and analyzed, and when ready, these data and relevant proposals would be presented for discussion. **The Chairman** concluded that the meeting agreed to provide choices to the public with respect to the issues of reclamation.
- 3.24 **Mr Mason Hung** noted from the Consultants’ presentation that some members of the public had suggested turning KTAC into a water sports area. He said that this needed to be clarified as a water sports centre and a water sports complex would have different requirements for land/sea areas and transport infrastructure, as well as different

implications on the issue of reclaiming KTAC.

- 3.25 **Mr Andy Leung** said that with respect to interface with the surrounding areas, he noted that the Study Area was separated from surrounding areas by major highways, and he asked to what extent the areas on the other side of these highways would be brought into consideration. **Ms Iris Tam** said that this was a subject that would be examined in the Study. For projects such as the depot of Shatin-to-Central Link, how connectivity with Kowloon City would be achieved with or without the depot would be investigated.
- 3.26 **Mr Paul Zimmerman** said that in terms of interfacing with the surrounding areas and studies, there could be extended research to examine how Kai Tak development could help in the transformation of Kwun Tong into a business area; the requirements on a sports stadium, an air strip and Dai Pai Dongs, before they were included or excluded from the Kai Tak development; and the need for marine facilities such as typhoon shelters and public cargo working areas.
- 3.27 **The Chairman** said that the main purpose of this discussion item was to enable members a better understanding of the public's views expressed through the Stage 1 Public Participation. **Mr Zimmerman's** views would be taken into account in the study process.
- 3.28 **The Chairman** noted that the public had a fond memory about the aviation history of Kai Tak and would like to maintain the shape and form of the ex-runway. **Ms Iris Tam** supplemented that there was also feedback requesting to keep the built form and intensity low so as not to obscure the form of the ex-runway. The public considered this could help to maintain the views to the Kowloon ridgelines from the Hong Kong side. She said that this would be taken into consideration in the preparation of the concept plans.
- 3.29 Regarding the main development components, **Ms Iris Tam** said that the majority of the public supported proposals related to tourism, sports and recreation developments, such as an international cruise terminal, a metropolitan park, and

a multi-purpose stadium. About housing developments, while some perceived Kai Tak a solution space for regenerating the old districts in the hinterland, others viewed it an opportunity to pursue quality housing and the predominant view was to lower the development intensity. There were also views that the planning for Kai Tak should be flexible to respond to future changes in planning circumstances. With respect to office developments, **Ms Iris Tam** said that some doubted the need to introduce a new office node in view of supply in the surrounding areas, while others suggested developing a premier commercial/office centre in Kai Tak.

- 3.30 In response to an enquiry by **Professor Jim Chi-yung**, **Ms Iris Tam** said that the public considered it important for open space in Kai Tak to form a connected network that permeated the new development areas, and to be accessible and connected to the waterfront. **Professor Jim Chi-yung** said that if applying the HKPSG standards in the provision of open space in Kai Tak, it might not achieve substantial green and vegetated environment. He said that a heavily-vegetated woodland should be featured in the development concepts for public discussion.
- 3.31 **The Chairman** invited Members to take into account the feedbacks regarding leisure, sports, tourism, housing or office developments from Stage 1 Public Participation to discuss the main development themes for Kai Tak.
- 3.32 **Mr Joseph Wong** said that he had cautioned in the previous Sub-committee meeting that the questions posed in the draft Consultation Digest and the background information provided therein would give pre-conceptions to the public and thus affect their opinions on the Stage 1 Public Participation. Besides, the templates used by the public in the workshop in preparing the concept plans were exclusively representative of the items already proposed in the Digest, e.g. cruise terminal, etc. This would further hinder the collection of genuine views from the general public.
- 3.33 **Mr Joseph Wong** added that the ideas and proposals received in the Stage 1 Public Participation represented a

true reflection of the public opinion on Kai Tak. He questioned why there was not much discussion on these ideas/proposals in the submitted report and why some of them were dismissed at this stage. He considered that further information on these ideas/proposals should be made available so that the public could make more “informed” decisions on whether or not to include any of these items in the OCPs for the stage 2 public participation.

- 3.34 **The Chairman** said that the Consultation Digest and the workshop were meant to assist the public to formulate their views on Kai Tak. In terms of the various ideas suggested by the public, these could be examined as specific proposals within the main development themes.
- 3.35 **Mr Paul Zimmerman** noted that the Stage 1 Public Participation had received an idea to develop a Government Village in Kai Tak. However, it was disregarded on the ground that the new government administration centre was currently planned at the Tamar site. He said that instead of deciding these ideas on an ad hoc basis, there should be a more integrated planning around the Harbour area in sorting out the appropriate distribution of land uses.
- 3.36 **The Chairman** said that at this stage of the Study, it would be more appropriate to focus on the key development themes, as many ideas and proposals could be considered further in the detailed design stage.
- 3.37 **Mr Raymond Lee** said that from the feedback collected during the Stage 1 Public Participation activities, housing was generally accepted as a key land use component to be included for Kai Tak. In this regard, he noted that there were two committed public housing sites in the northern part of the Kai Tak area with piling works completed. These sites had been featured in the Public Participation exercise and there were no strong public feedbacks against keeping these two sites for public housing.
- 3.38 With respect to other development components, **Ms Iris Tam** said that some aviation groups had advocated a new 3,500 foot airstrip in the Stage 1 Public Participation. However, reinstatement of an aerodrome in the Kai Tak area

required airport specialist that was outside the scope of the current Study. Besides, the impact to the future developments in Kai Tak as well as to the hinterland area warrant detailed investigation. They would liaise further with the concerned bureaux/departments on their idea.

- 3.39 **Ms Iris Tam** said that regarding the existing marine facilities in the Kai Tak area, whilst the operators would like to keep the public cargo working areas (PCWAs), the general public, particularly communities in the adjacent areas, supported their relocation, as these would make the waterfront inaccessible. Besides, further investigation was required as how the proposed Road T2 would affect the PCWAs in the areas. The compatibility of typhoon shelters with the future development of Kai Tak would need to be examined further through the generation of concept plans and further discussion in the community. The local community also expressed their reservation on the provision of a refuse transfer station in the Kwun Tong waterfront area.
- 3.40 Regarding transportation facilities, **Ms Iris Tam** said that the public was supportive in the introduction of environmentally friendly transport and comprehensive pedestrian systems in Kai Tak. There was also strong sentiment against the provision of elevated highway structure along waterfront area. They preferred the entire Road T2 to be submerged and more sunken roads for Kai Tak to minimize the visual and environmental impacts. There was also a suggestion to replace Kwun Tong Bypass by a less intrusive structure, but this would involve very complex technical and financial investigations and it might require reclamation at the waterfront to construct a replacement structure. The investigations were outside the scope of the current planning review.
- 3.41 With respect to public participation and strategy of the Study, **Ms Iris Tam** said that the Stage 1 Public Participation in engaging the community in the beginning of the Study was well received, and the general expectation was for a more pro-active approach to promote public participation.

- 3.42 **The Chairman** said that the next stage of the Study would be the preparation of different options of Outline Concept Plan, taking into account the baseline review and public comments received. He noted that there was a suggestion in the previous meetings that the public be also involved in the preparation of these concept plans, and he asked Members for their views on how Members would wish to proceed. In response to **the Chairman, Mr Paul Zimmerman** said that arising from the Stage 1 Public Participation, there were a number of questions such as the amount of housing, offices, hotels, sports/recreational facilities that should be accommodated in Kai Tak, the location in Hong Kong for a cruise terminal, the viability of an airstrip in Kai Tak, etc. These issues should be addressed before proceeding to second stage of the study.
- 3.43 **Mr Kim Chan** said that these should be discussed under the respective policy context so that there could be balanced view of the various development components.
- 3.44 **Mr Joseph Wong** said that the Study should encourage a participatory planning process rather than confining to public participation, in that the proponents of the various ideas could exchange views with each other to arrive at consensus in the development options.
- 3.45 In reply to **the Chairman's** enquiry, **Mr Raymond Lee** said that the process of generating options of Outline Concept Plan at this stage was to consolidate the public comments and ideas, present them graphically and facilitate further public discussions. This process would help the discussion on why some ideas could be incorporated and some could not.
- 3.46 **Ms Iris Tam** said that taking into account the level of participation, the process as well as the outputs, the community workshop held was already a process of participatory planning. Also, relevant bureaux/departments had been consulted on the ideas/proposals received, e.g., on the location of Central Government Offices. Their feedback would help to prepare responses to these comments/ideas for further discussion with the community

in Stage 2 Public Participation. She said that development options presented graphically would enable the public to focus the discussions and to make choices. For the many ideas raised by the public, such as underground shopping streets, luxury hotels, etc., they could be incorporated in broad land use zonings in the Outline Concept Plans.

- 3.47 **Mr Raymond Lee** added that the current thinking was to develop some options for the Outline Concept Plan and then to invite the public for further discussion. **Mr Paul Zimmerman** emphasized that more background information regarding the need and development timetable of the development components raised in the Stage 1 Public Participation should be provided so that the public would be more equipped in the Stage 2 discussions.
- 3.48 In reply to **the Chairman's** proposal for a working session amongst members, **Mr Thomas Tso** said that a lot of work had been done by the respective bureaux/departments on the projects under their purview. Further information on these projects could be arranged for discussion with members and it could help in appreciating the relevant background and proceeding with the Stage 2 work.
- 3.49 **The Chairman** concluded that a working session would be held amongst Members to further discuss the development components suggested by the public in the light of the further information to be provided by respective bureaux/departments. He said that Members should discuss ways to further involve the public in Stage 2 Public Participation. **Mr Raymond Lee** said that some working drawings to illustrate the public's proposals and to present the relevant implications could be prepared for in the working session. He said that representatives from relevant Government bureaux and departments would need to be invited to this working session so that they could provide the relevant background information.
- 3.50 After some discussion, the meeting agreed that a working session would include both Members and Alternate Members, and it would be open for the public to observe. Proponents of the ideas received in the Stage 1 Public Participation would not be invited, as they would be

involved in Stage 2 Public Participation.

Item 4 Any Other Business

- 4.1 There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00pm. The next meeting was scheduled to be held in the morning of 3.2.2005 (Thursday).

**HEC Sub-committee on
South East Kowloon Development Review
February 2005**