

Harbour-front Enhancement Committee
Sub-committee on Wan Chai Development Phase II Review

Minutes of Twelfth Meeting

Date : 13 June 2006
Time : 9:30 a.m.
Venue : Conference Room,
15/F, North Point Government Offices,
333 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong

Present

Mr. Leung Kong-yui	Chairman Representing Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in Hong Kong
Mr. Charles Nicholas Brooke	
Dr. Chan Wai-kwan	
Dr. W K Lo	Representing Hong Kong Institution of Engineers
Mr. Hardy Lok	Representing Society for Protection of the Harbour Limited
Dr. Ng Mee-kam	Representing Citizen Envisioning@Harbour
Dr. Andrew Thomson	Representing Business Environment Council
Mr. Robin Ip	Deputy Secretary (Planning and Lands) 1, Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau
Mr. George Tsoi	Acting Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport) 5, Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
Mr. L T Ma	Project Manager/Hong Kong Island and Islands, Civil Engineering and Development Department
Mr. Wan Man-leung	Deputy Project Manager (Major Works) 2, Highways Department
Mr. Lawrence Kwan	Chief Engineer/Traffic Engineering (Hong Kong), Transport Department
Ms. Phyllis Li	Chief Town Planner/Special Duties (1), Planning Department
Mr. Donald Wong	Assistant District Officer (Wan Chai), Home Affairs Department
Mr. Bosco Chan	Secretary

In Attendance

Ms. Lydia Lam	Assistant Secretary (Planning) 3, Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau
Mr. S K Lam	Chief Engineer/Hong Kong (2), Civil Engineering and Development Department
Ms. Iris Tam	Representing City Planning Consultants Ltd
Miss Flora Lai	Representing City Planning Consultants Ltd
Dr. Sujata S Govada	Representing City Planning Consultants Ltd
Mr. Dickson Lo	Representing Maunsell Consultants Asia Ltd

Absent with Apologies

Mr. Stephen Chan	
Mr. Steve Chan	
Dr. Alvin Kwok	Representing The Conservancy Association
Mr. Patrick Lau	

Action

Welcome message

1. The Chairman welcomed Dr. W K Lo to attend the meeting.

Item 1 Confirmation of minutes of last meeting

- 1.1 The revised draft minutes of the 11th meeting held on 20 April 2006 and the Special Meeting held on 8 May 2006, both of which were circulated on 9 June 2006, were confirmed with no amendment.

Item 2 Matters Arising

- 2.1 Regarding the billboard that was erected near the Cross Harbour Tunnel approach at the corner of Wan Shing Street, **Mr. Robin Ip** reported that the tenancy of the billboard was managed by Lands Department (LandsD) and would be renewed after the expiry of the current lease. He said that LandsD had the responsibilities to ensure that government revenue was maintained through renewal of existing

short-term tenancies. When considering new short-term tenancies involving erection of billboard along the harbour-front, LandsD would consult Harbour-front Enhancement Committee (HEC) beforehand.

- 2.2 **Mr. Charles Nicholas Brooke** indicated that while LandsD had the responsibility to maximize government's revenue, the Sub-committee had the responsibility to enhance the waterfront. He supported the idea of LandsD approaching HEC for short-term tenancies involving erection of billboard along the harbour-front. He opined that LandsD should make reference to the Harbour Planning Principles when considering new applications for short-term tenancies. In response, **Mr. Robin Ip** said that representatives from LandsD had already briefed members of the HEC regarding the processing of applications for short-term tenancies. He remarked that LandsD was aware of the concern of members from HEC and would consult them on new applications along the harbour-front and which would have visual impact to the harbour.

Item 3 Outcome of Further Engagement and Concept Plan Preparation Work

- 3.1 **The Chairman** reported that the paper for discussion under the item summarized the outcome of the further engagement with Town Planning Board (TPB), relevant District Councils (DCs), Legislative Council (LegCo) and professional institutions. These further engagements were attended by the Chairman and/or the Secretariat of the Sub-committee together with relevant government officials.
- 3.2 **Mr. Robin Ip** supplemented that the Sub-committee had already discussed in details the report "Trunk Road Alignments & Harbour-front Enhancement" that was prepared by the consultants and endorsed the approach for proceeding with the Realization Stage of the Harbour-front Enhancement Review – Wan Chai, Causeway Bay and Adjoining Areas (HER) project to further engage TPB,

relevant DCs, LegCo and professional institutions. He highlighted the following points on the outcome of the further engagement.

- For the alignment of the Trunk Road, there was a general support for Variation 1 of the Tunnel Option.
- The Sub-committee had accepted the recommendation of the Expert Panel on Sustainable Transport Planning and Central – Wan Chai Bypass that there was a compelling and present need to build the Trunk Road.
- All possible alignments for the Trunk Road would require some reclamation at the eastern and western ends.
- The government would ensure that any proposed reclamation could meet the overriding public need (OPN) test and comply with the requirements under the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance (PHO).
- The government would also take into account the economic, environmental and social factors and any reclamation should be the minimum required to satisfy the OPN test.
- Variation 1 of the Tunnel Option was considered superior to Variation 2 and 3 in respect of compliance with the requirements under the OPN test, time for construction, construction cost and impact on existing traffic during construction.
- For the Flyover Option, apart from the actual land that would be formed by reclamation, the affected area of the Victoria Harbour would have to be considered under the principle of protecting and preserving the Harbour. In addition, the visual impact to the Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter and ex-Public Cargo Working Area would need to be considered for the Flyover Option.

Based on the above considerations, **Mr. Robin Ip** hoped that members would agree to instruct the consultants to adopt Variation 1 of the Tunnel Option as the basis for preparing Concept Plan for public engagement at the Realization Stage.

- 3.3 **Mr. George Tsoi** remarked that from transport point of view, the performance of the Flyover Option and the three variations of the Tunnel Option were comparable in that all of them were able to provide the planned slip roads for

enhancing the performance of the Trunk Road. He highlighted the importance of considering the impact to the existing traffic during the construction period of the Trunk Road. He indicated that the impact would be the least under Variation 1 of the Tunnel Option while Variation 2 of the Tunnel Option would require major temporary traffic diversion at the Cross Harbour Tunnel approach which might not be acceptable by the public. The Flyover Option would also have major impact to the existing traffic at the connection with the Island Eastern Corridor. Based on the anticipated impact to the existing traffic, he supported the proposal of adopting Variation 1 of the Tunnel Option to serve as the basis for preparing the Concept Plan.

3.4 **Mr. L T Ma** briefed members on the outcome of the further engagement with TPB, relevant DCs, LegCo and professional institutions. In addition, the Government had also consulted the Transport Advisory Committee (TAC).

(i) TPB -

In the briefing on 21 April 2006, there was view from TPB members that the Flyover Option would unlikely be acceptable to the general public and that Variation 1 of the Tunnel Option would be the most viable option. Government and the consultants were advised to clearly explain the merits of Variation 1 to the public with a view to soliciting the widest possible community support.

(ii) DCs -

Eastern, Southern, Wan Chai and Central & Western DCs were consulted in May 2006. There were quite a number of DC members urging for the early completion of the Trunk Road. For the construction form of the Trunk Road, there was a majority support for Variation 1 of the Tunnel Option in the Southern DC and there were also supporting views for this variation from the other three DCs. There was very little support for the Flyover Option. Disruption to traffic was a main concern. Some DC members were of the view that

maximum opportunities should be provided to harbour-front enhancement but were aware that harbour-front enhancement should not be a reason for reclamation in the Harbour. DC members were also aware that the recommendations from the consultants would need to pass the OPN test and comply with the requirements under the PHO. The Central & Western DC passed a motion objecting to the conclusion of no possible “no reclamation” alignment and requesting the Administration to review the planning for Central and Wan Chai and to reduce the commercial development in Central Reclamation Phase III and Tamar Development so as to minimize the transport need.

(iii) LegCo Panel on Planning, Lands and Works (PLW) -

There was no discussion after the Consultants’ presentation due to insufficient time at the meeting on 23 May 2006. A special meeting was held on 9 June 2006 at which the consultants explained that in view of the connections of the Trunk Road with the existing road network and the planned slip roads; and the constraints imposed by the Tsuen Wan Line of the Mass Transit Railway, certain amount of reclamation would be required for the construction of the Trunk Road. There was supporting view for Variation 1 of the Tunnel Option. There was also view that a water theme on the formed land could reduce the impact brought about by reclamation. A second special meeting would be held on 26 June 2006 to receive deputations’ views.

(iv) Professional Institutions -

In the Joint Institute Seminar on 20 May 2006 organized by Hong Kong Institute of Architects, Hong Kong Institution of Engineers, Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects, Hong Kong Institute of Planners and Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors, there was a general support for Variation 1 of the Tunnel Option as the most feasible solution taking note of the requirements of the PHO.

(v) TAC -

TAC reiterated their full support for the construction of the Trunk Road together with the planned slip roads in Wan Chai and Causeway Bay. TAC hoped that this last piece of infrastructure of the strategic road link along the northern shore of Hong Kong Island could be completed as early as possible. It was emphasized that traffic disruption during the construction of the Trunk Road should be kept to the minimum. TAC members realized that the consultants had recommended the option for the Trunk Road that required the minimum amount of reclamation while allowing the maximum opportunity for harbour-front enhancement on the land formed for the Trunk Road.

He stressed that the requirements under the PHO were very stringent and that the Government would be subject to legal challenge under the law if an option with similar performance but required less reclamation is not proposed. Since Variation 1 of the Tunnel Option would require the least amount of reclamation and that it had received general support from the community, he hoped that the Sub-committee could agree adopting Variation 1 of the Tunnel Option for the Concept Plan preparation in the Realization Stage. Based on the amount of land formed under this variation, the consultants would devise different themes of land use proposals and harbour-front enhancement ideas, including the water theme proposed by a LegCo member at the LegCo PLW Panel meeting held on 9 June 2006. He further pointed out that an environmental assessment in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO) would be carried out at the same time with the preparation of Concept Plan. Hence, submission of project profile for EIA study brief would have to be published in newspapers. He finally said that physical models, photomontages and computer animations would be prepared to assist the public in visualizing the planning concepts and be presented in the public engagement activities for the Realization Stage.

- 3.5 **Ms. Phyllis Li** stated that the Tunnel Option would have less visual and environmental impact to the harbour-front and would affect less area of the harbour compared with the Flyover Option. In addition, she opined from a planning perspective that the Tunnel Option would perform better in providing connectivity and accessibility to the harbour-front. She said that Planning Department supported adopting Variation 1 of the Tunnel Option as a basis for preparing the Concept Plan.
- 3.6 **Dr. W K Lo** supplemented that the Joint Institute Seminar held on 20 May 2006 had a general consensus on the need of the Trunk Road and the planned slip roads at Wan Chai and Causeway Bay and that Variation 1 of the Tunnel Option was considered to be the most feasible solution. He remarked that the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers had reflected to the LegCo 2 years ago that the Trunk Road was required to alleviate the traffic problems. He added that the water theme on the formed land would be a good idea.
- 3.7 **Mr. Hardy Lok** opined that the LegCo members should have been highlighted about issues listed in the Appendix of the Public Engagement Report. In response, **Mr. Robin Ip** explained that the paper submitted to the LegCo Panel members was very comprehensive, the Expert Panel Report and the Public Engagement Report were both attached to the panel paper. In fact, the LegCo members did raise questions on specific parts of the reports. **Mr. L T Ma** supplemented that the paper submitted to the LegCo Panel for the meeting on 23 May 2006 contained four appendices which included the Expert Panel Report, the Public Engagement Report of Envisioning Stage of HER together with its Annex Volume in a CD ROM, the Consultants' Report on "Trunk Road Alignments & Harbour-front Enhancement" and a Summary to the Consultants' Report. The paper for the special LegCo PLW Panel meeting on 9 June 2006 was prepared to provide the following additional information requested by LegCo.
- Further details on the comparison among the various alignment and construction options for the Trunk Road.
 - Details and analysis of the views from different parties on

the alignment and construction options for the Trunk Road.

- The use of physical models to illustrate to the public the planning ideas for the Wan Chai Development Phase II Review.
- In respect of the Tunnel Option for the Trunk Road, to consider covering the reclaimed land above the tunnel with water so as to visually increase the area of the sea surface.

Mr. L T Ma opined that the 2 papers together had provided a comprehensive report of the discussions of the Sub-committee and the findings of the Consultants so far.

3.8 **The Chairman** reiterated that the four appendices attached to the paper submitted to the LegCo PLW Panel were also circulated to TPB and the relevant DCs as appendices to the discussion papers.

3.9 For the next step forward, **the Chairman** said that the consultants had to complete the Concept Plan with different harbour-front enhancement themes before the public engagement activities for the Realization Stage. When preparing the Concept Plan, the alignment and form of construction of the Trunk Road should have to be fixed for planning of harbour-front enhancement elements. He said that, in view of the consultants' findings, the Flyover Option should not be accepted as a possible form of construction of the Trunk Road. He also remarked that the requirements under the PHO should be strictly complied with. He requested members to give their views on the proposal of adopting Variation 1 of the Tunnel Option as the basis for preparing the Concept Plan.

3.10 **Dr. Ng Mee-kam** recollected that the majority of the participants in the charrettes of the Envisioning Stage preferred tunnel as an option for the Trunk Road. She pointed out that a set of sustainability principles and indicators had been established during the Envisioning Stage and suggested that information on comparison of the options using those sustainability principles and indicators should be

provided.

- 3.11 **Dr. Chan Wai-kwan** opined that as the alignment and form of construction for the Trunk Road had been settled, the focus should then be on harbour-front enhancement. Suitable proposals should be prepared for the public to choose. **The Chairman** said that based on the recent public engagement, there should already be two different themes, the traditional landscaping one and water theme one.
- 3.12 **Mr. Charles Nicholas Brooke** indicated that there was a general consensus to drop the Flyover Option. On the other hand, he opined that the Sub-committee should take sustainable development, which would be for the benefits of the future generations, instead of minimum reclamation as the key consideration in preparing the Concept Plan. He suggested preparing Concept Plan based on all three variations of the Tunnel Option for public input. In response, **Mr. Robin Ip** emphasized that the Government had to comply with the requirements under the PHO and the OPN test. For this reason, Variation 1 of the Tunnel Option that would require the least amount of reclamation when compared with the other options should be adopted in preparing the Concept Plan.
- 3.13 **Dr. Chan Wai-kwan** pointed out that the Trunk Road would affect the draft Wan Chai North Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) and the North Point OZP. He anticipated that residents of the North Point district would be concerned about harbour-front enhancement along the North Point shoreline and relevant materials should be prepared for response. He further indicated that a clear definition of reclamation, especially for cases like openable bridge, flyover, pile caps and floating pontoon, should be established before presenting the Concept Plan to the public.
- 3.14 **Mr. L T Ma** reported that there were views from the DC members for extending the harbour-front enhancement both in the east and west directions, which would have to be prioritized for implementation. On the definition of

reclamation, he indicated that further advice was being sought from DoJ with case-specific details provided to DoJ for their consideration.

- 3.15 **Dr. Andrew Thomson** opined that it might not be appropriate to seek legal advice from DoJ on what constituted an overriding public need. He considered that public inputs were required instead, with appropriate stakeholders consulted. He opined that besides the suggested water theme, some form of reclamation compensation measures such as restoring part of the Harbour area might worth considering.
- 3.16 In response to **Dr. Andrew Thomson**, **Mr. Robin Ip** said that the purpose of the Envisioning Stage of HER was to identify the need of the public. The compelling and present public need for building the Trunk Road to alleviate the traffic problems along the Connaught Road/Harcourt Road/Gloucester Road Corridor had been firmly established through the Expert Panel Forum organized by the Sub-committee. He added that the suggestion received was that the harbour-front enhancement could include some form of a water feature.
- 3.17 **Mr. L T Ma** added that the public had already expressed their wishes and desires during the public forums and charrettes of the Envisioning Stage of HER. The issue to be considered was whether their needs could pass the OPN test and comply with the requirements under the PHO. That was in such respect that further advice from DoJ would be needed. Regarding further public engagement, **Mr. L T Ma** said that workshops and town hall meeting would be convened at the Realization Stage. He said that the venue for these public engagement activities ought to be carefully selected for the convenience of the public to attend, in particular for those who would be directly affected by the project.
- 3.18 **The Chairman** agreed that the need of the public had already been established through the public engagement process. He said that proposals and views like openable bridge and

retaining the Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter were initiated by the public. He indicated that these proposals and views had been fully considered by the Sub-committee with due regards to the requirements under the PHO. He pointed out that the “shallow water” idea that was originally raised by one of the Sub-committee members was further developed into an idea of covering the reclaimed land above the tunnel with water so as to visually increase the area of the sea surface. The latter idea could be further pursued. With regard to compliance with the OPN test, he opined that legal input would be required. **Mr. Charles Nicholas Brooke** remarked against relying wholly on legal advice.

3.19 **Dr. Ng Mee-kam** said that during the public engagement activities in the Envisioning Stage, there was a strong desire from the public for water activities or close contact with water. According to the discussion so far, the provision of such water activities would require implementation of some works along the harbour and there might be cases where such works would contravene the requirements under the PHO. She opined that the PHO might have to be slightly amended to accommodate the implementation of such works for the provision of water activities that were strongly desired by the public. She added that the public also had a strong wish for a continuous easily accessible harbour-front promenade and would like to retain the heritage of the area. She suggested that the consultants should take those into account when preparing the Concept Plan. For sustainability assessment, she opined that the assessment should start for supporting the Concept Plan preparation work.

3.20 **Mr. L T Ma** opined that, according to the assessment of the consultants, extent of reclamation under the three variations of the Tunnel Option were different, and under the requirements of the PHO, the option that would involve the least amount of reclamation would have to be adopted. He reiterated that the Government had to ensure that the adopted proposal would comply with the PHO. For those harbour-front enhancement ideas with doubt on compliance with the PHO, the approach adopted was to provide further

details to DoJ for a well-informed advice. In some cases, for example the floating pontoon, decommissioning plan was submitted hoping that a clear, and hopefully a positive response would be provided by DoJ.

- 3.21 In response to Dr. Ng Mee-kam's point regarding amendment of the PHO, **Mr. Robin Ip** said that the Government had no intention to amend the PHO. He mentioned that the Government would proceed with the project in accordance with the PHO and the OPN test. All ideas for harbour-front enhancement would be considered in consultation with DoJ to ensure that they would comply with the PHO.
- 3.22 **Dr. W K Lo** pointed out that apart from requiring the least area of reclamation, Variation 1 for the Tunnel Option was superior to the other 2 variations in many other respects such as construction cost, impact to existing traffic and construction time. Instead of just presenting only this variation to the public, he suggested that the other ideas/proposals that had been considered should also be presented with explanations on why they were not pursued. **The Chairman** agreed.
- 3.23 **The Chairman** noted that the Government had no current plan to propose any amendment to the PHO. However, he opined that discussions during the HER project could provide some background for consideration if the opportunity arose in the future.
- 3.24 **Mr. Robin Ip** reiterated that the Government had to ensure compliance with the requirements under the PHO. Since Variation 1 of the Tunnel Option would require the least extent of reclamation and was thus superior to the other options from the PHO perspective, he hoped that the Sub-committee could accept Variation 1 as the basis for preparing the Concept Plan.
- 3.25 **The Chairman** said that the Sub-committee, as an advisory body to the Government on the WDII Review, should also ensure that their proposal could comply with the

requirements under the PHO. When presenting the recommended proposal to the public, he agreed to the idea of explaining the drawbacks of those ideas/proposals that had been considered but decided not to be pursued. **Dr. W K Lo** shared the view of the Chairman.

- 3.26 **Mr. Charles Nicholas Brooke** agreed in principle with the Chairman's suggestion but reminded that members should avoid giving the wrong perception that the Sub-committee was making a decision for the community. He suggested presenting to the public that Variation 1 of the Tunnel Option was the preferred solution after considering the disadvantages of the other options.
- 3.27 **Ms. Phyllis Li** said that the Concept Plan should be a legally sound as well as a good plan. She indicated that apart from the Trunk Road, the land uses, within the concerned areas would be covered to provide an integrated land use – transport planning framework. She said that opportunities would be taken to improve the accessibility of the harbour-front and that the Concept Plan should take into consideration the sustainability principles and indicators developed at the Envisioning Stage.
- 3.28 **The Chairman** said that the impact on the North Point OZP should be explained together with the Concept Plan. He mentioned that connectivity and accessibility in addition to the vibrancy of the harbour-front should be the main focus when considering the ideas for harbour-front enhancement.
- 3.29 **Dr. Ng Mee-kam** indicated that the Eastern DC had recently organized a waterfront design competition and suggested approaching the DC for the designs.
- 3.30 **Mr. Charles Nicholas Brooke** suggested that when the Concept Plans were available, all HEC members should be invited to attend the meeting for considering them. **The Chairman** agreed.
- 3.31 **Dr. Chan Wai-kwan** suggested that the HER Task Force

should be prepared for the likely responses from the residents of the Eastern District. He shared the view of Dr. Ng Mee-kam to approach the Eastern DC regarding the results of their waterfront design competition and to consider inviting them to present their results at the HEC briefing. He opined that the public engagement activities for the Realization Stage could reach out to areas like the ex-Public Cargo Working Area, undeveloped area adjoining the Island Eastern Corridor in North Point or the A-king slipway site. In response to the Chairman, **the meeting** agreed that the Sub-committee, instead of the Task Force, would oversee the works of the consultants in preparing the Concept Plan.

- 3.32 As members had no further comments, **the Chairman** concluded that the Consultants should proceed with preparing Concept Plan with different harbour-front enhancement themes based on Variation 1 of the Tunnel Option. Materials should also be prepared for explaining to the public why some of the proposals and options raised by the public were not adopted. A sustainability development assessment should also be conducted on the three variations of the Tunnel Option as well as the Flyover Option, based on the sustainability principles and indicators that were developed during the Envisioning Stage. **The Chairman** clarified that apart from conducting the sustainability development assessment, there was no need to further develop Variation 2 and 3 of the Tunnel Option and the Flyover Option.
- 3.33 In response to the Chairman, **Ms. Iris Tam** said that a board brush sustainability assessment for the 3 variations of the Tunnel Option and the Flyover Option could be conducted based on the information provided by the Consultants for the WDII Review with the supplement of certain assumptions. **The meeting** agreed with the approach.
- 3.34 **Mr. L T Ma** suggested that a meeting around mid July 2006 to review the consultants' work.
- 3.35 **Mr. L T Ma** further reported that results of the waterfront design competition organized by the Eastern DC had been

obtained for reference.

Item 4 Any Other Business

4.1 **Mr. L T Ma** said that the “quick win” project at the ex-PCWA was presented to the Wan Chai DC on 16 May 2006. He added that DC members supported the project and were keen to see it being completed as early as possible so as to allow them to organise some activities in that area for the Wan Chai Festival in January 2007. In a subsequent meeting regarding the detailed design of the project, members of the Wan Chai DC had the following suggestions.

- Reduce the width of the planter area to provide more space for social activities
- Provide benches along the seaward side of the area
- Use timber boardwalk instead of paving blocks as far as possible

The design for the “quick win” project would be amended and circulated to members when ready.

4.2 In response to the enquiry on the life span of the “quick win” project, **Mr. L T Ma** said that the concerned area would be required for the construction of the WDII project. Therefore, as advised earlier on, the “quick win” project would only last for about 2 years. He noted that members of the Wan Chai DC were still supportive of the project despite its limited life span. He hoped that construction works would start as soon as possible for completion before the Wan Chai Festival in January 2007. **The Chairman** hoped that the public could be informed of the implementation of the “quick win” project during the public engagement activities of the Realization Stage.

4.3 There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Secretariat, HEC Sub-committee on
Wan Chai Development Phase II Review
July 2006