

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

Minutes of Thirteenth Meeting

Date : 31 August 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
Dr. Chan Wai-kwan	
Dr. Alvin Kwok	Representing The Conservancy Association
Mr. Patrick Lau	
Mr. Hardy Lok	Representing Society for Protection of the Harbour
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. Philip Yung	Deputy Secretary (Transport) 1, 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. Bosco Chan	Secretary

In Attendance

Ms. Sharon Ho	Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport) 5, Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
Ms. Lydia Lam	Assistant Secretary (Planning) 3, Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau
Mr. Raymond Fung	Senior Architect, Architectural Services Department
Ms. Castle Wong	Project Manager, Architectural Services Department
Ms. Carrie Chan	Architect, Architectural Services Department
Mr. Derek Sun	Representing City Planning Consultants Ltd
Miss Flora Lai	Representing City Planning Consultants Ltd
Dr. Sujata S Govada	Representing City Planning Consultants Ltd
Dr. Winnie Law	Representing City Planning Consultants Ltd
Ms. Betty Ho	Representing City Planning Consultants Ltd
Mr. Dickson Lo	Representing Maunsell Consultants Asia Ltd
Mr. Peter Cheek	Representing Maunsell Consultants Asia Ltd

Absent with Apologies

Mr. Charles Nicholas Brooke	
Mr. Stephen Chan	
Mr. Steve Chan	
Dr. Greg Wong	Representing Hong Kong Institution of Engineers
Mr. Donald Wong	Assistant District Officer (Wan Chai), Home Affairs Department

Action

Welcome message

1. The Chairman welcomed Mr. Philip Yung who replaced Mr. Thomas Chow as the representative of the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau at the Sub-committee. The Chairman also welcomed Mr. Derek Sun from City Planning Consultants Ltd who replaced Ms. Iris Tam.

Item 1 Confirmation of minutes of last meeting

- 1.1 The draft minutes of the last (12th) meeting that were

circulated on 7 July 2006 were confirmed with no amendment.

Item 2 Matters Arising

2.1 There were no matters arising from the last meeting.

Item 3 Quick-win Project at ex-Public Cargo Working Area – Design of Temporary Promenade at Wan Chai

3.1 **Ms. Castle Wong** of Architectural Services Department (Arch SD) briefed Members of the project. She pointed out that as the completed quick-win project would last for about two years, till the commencement of the construction works for the Wan Chai Development Phase II project, due consideration has been given to cost effectiveness in the design and for that reason, part of the existing heavy-duty fence along Hung Hing Road would be retained. She anticipated that the works would be completed in January 2007. The main theme of the project was to show care towards animals and a pet's garden was proposed. The idea of a pet's garden was supported by the Wan Chai District Council.

3.2 **Mr. Raymond Fung** of ArchSD highlighted the following features of the design for the project with the aid of powerpoint.

- Remove the upper part of the existing heavy-duty fence along Hung Hing Road and retain the lower part with the introduction of features like silhouette of pets on the fence to indicate the idea of freeing pets from cages.
- Introduce a strip of boardwalk along the seaward side of the site leaving the rest of the area for landscaping and hard pavement.
- Materials of the removed fence would be re-used for the canopy above part of the paved area.
- Sitting benches with special design would be provided at the paved areas and bamboos would be planted behind the

fence at some locations.

- Accesses to the project area would be provided from both the eastern and western end. Intermediate access could not be provided as at-grade pedestrian crossing at Hung Hing Road was not possible due to the heavy traffic flow.

3.3 **Members** provided the following comments.

Dr. Chan Wai-kwan

- The project should be implemented as early as possible.
- The overall design was of good quality and the proposed features were acceptable.
- It would be even more desirable if a strip of land with 2 to 3 metres wide along the seawall of the existing temporary helipad could be open up for use by the public.
- Provision of kiosk for selling snacks and drinks could be considered.

Mr. Patrick Lau

- The design was generally acceptable but planting of trees with bigger crown should be considered in order to provide a better shade for the comfort of the public using the facility especially during the summer days.

Dr. Ng Mee-kam

- As the pet's garden would last for about 2 years, the planning of the future harbour-front might take into account the continuation of such facility.
- The proposed silhouette on the fence along Hung Hing Road should include people interacting with the pets so that the message of protection and care towards animals could be more outstanding.
- Further thoughts should be given to the provision of intermediate access crossing Hung Hing Road.

Dr. Alvin Kwok

- The overall design concept of the project, especially on the idea of protection and compassion towards animals was supported.
- Access for the disabled should be provided as far as

possible.

- Visual access of the harbour along Hung Hing Road should be unobstructed as far as possible.
- Ways to promote the use of the facility should be considered.

Dr. Andrew Thomson

- The design was supported, but the idea of “pets in cage” would have a negative effect. Silhouettes of free running pets were preferred.
- Intermediate access by means of a temporary footbridge crossing over Hung Hing Road should be considered.
- Vending machines could be considered instead if a kiosk could not be provided.
- Visual access of the harbour was important. Fence along the landward side of the site should allow high visibility of the harbour.
- Access for disabled people should be considered.

3.4 In response to the comment from Dr. Ng Mee-kam on the continual provision of a pet’s garden in future, **Mr. L T Ma** said that the area for the project would be required in end 2008 for the construction works of the WDII project and works were expected to complete in 2015. There should be sufficient time to review the suitability of such facilities at the harbour-front.

3.5 Regarding access for the disabled, **the Chairman** said that there were public parking meters near the Police Officers’ Club. **Mr. L T Ma** added that there was access ramp for wheelchair on the footbridge near the existing Wan Chai bus terminus

3.6 Regarding the access adjacent the salt water pumping station, **Mr. L T Ma** said that WSD had agreed to allow access to the site from the west through a pathway at the seaward side of their salt water pumping station which would be closed for maintenance on a weekday.

3.7 Regarding the intermediate access crossing Hung Hing Road,

Mr. L T Ma pointed out that Transport Department had considered it carefully but concluded that provision of a signalized pedestrian crossing at the junction of Hung Hing Road and Marsh Road was not practical due to the existing heavy traffic flow along Hung Hing Road.

3.8 In response to the comment from Dr. Chan Wai-kwan on whether a strip of land along the seawall of the existing temporary helipad could be included in the project, **Mr. L T Ma** said that this was not originally included in the scope of the project and he envisaged that it would be difficult due to safety reasons.

3.9 **Mr. L T Ma** said that Leisure and Cultural Services Department has agreed to take up the future management of the complete project. He also advised that the funding of the quick-win project and the WDII project were under different project vote.

3.10 **Mr. Raymond Fung** responded to the comments on the design issues related to the project.

- Although trees would provide a better shed than bamboo, it would be difficult and expensive to move them at the end of the project.
- The concept of “pets in cage” was to deliver a message of pets trying to run away from a confined environment into a free world to interact with the people.
- The idea of putting up silhouette of pets on the fence along Hung Hing Road was to draw the attention of people passing by about the availability of a special facility at that area.
- Design of the project would be reviewed to ensure easy access for the disabled person.

3.11 In response to the reply of Mr. Raymond Fung regarding the problem with planting of trees, **Mr. Patrick Lau** said that planters might be used to facilitate future moving of trees. **Dr. Andrew Thomson** pointed out that there were products in the form of freestanding panels providing shading effect.

- 3.12 **The Chairman** said that the concept of a designer should be respected unless they posed a concern to public safety. He suggested and **the meeting** agreed that Arch SD to take account of the comments from members and finalize the design with a view to commence the works as soon as possible and there was no need to consult the Sub-committee further on the design. Arch SD

(Post meeting note: Arch SD issued a Works Order to their contractor on 5 October 2006 to start the works for the project.)

Item 4 Wan Chai Development Phase II (WDII) – Concept Plan

- 4.1 **Mr. Hardy Lok** pointed out that the draft Concept Plan should have been discussed by the Sub-committee before presented to the Town Planning Board (TPB) on 25 August 2006. He indicated that one of the main purposes of HEC Sub-committee was to provide an open forum for discussion. He hoped that similar incidence would not happen again. **The Chairman** said that the incidence was also brought up by Dr. Ng Mee-kam in her email of 26 August 2006. He said that he had replied to that email in the capacity as the Chairman of the Sub-committee and as a member of the TPB who attended the TPB meeting on 25 August 2006 providing factual information for reference by members.
- 4.2 **Mr. Alvin Kwok** said that a possible arrangement was to brief the Sub-committee at a Task Force meeting, which is closed door, if the reveal of the Concept Plan to the public is premature. **The Chairman** responded that it could not be arranged as the Expanded Task Force meeting in April 2006 set that discussions related to the WDII project should be in Sub-committee meetings.
- 4.3 **Mr. Robin Ip** said that the Sub-committee had served as a useful platform to offer valuable suggestions in the past two years to government in preserving and protecting the harbour

including guiding the Consultants to proceed with the preparation of the Concept Plan based on Tunnel Option Variation 1. He assured the Sub-committee that before proceeding to the Realization Stage of the HER project, the Sub-committee would have opportunities to comment on the draft Concept Plan and the draft work plan of the public engagement activities. He added that there was a general aspiration from the public for completing the Trunk Road and the harbour-front enhancements as early as possible.

- 4.4 **Mr. L T Ma** said that a Sub-committee meeting was originally scheduled on 24 August 2006 to discuss the draft Concept Plan. On 22 August 2006, the Secretary informed members that the meeting on 24 August 2006 would be deferred due to the additional time required by the Consultants to prepare the draft Concept Plan and the other documents for the Sub-committee. The paper for the draft Concept Plan was finally completed by the Consultants on 24 August 2006 and was distributed to members in the morning of 25 August 2006. The paper on the “Quick-win” project and the work plan for the Realization Stage were completed and distributed to members on 29 August 2006. He added that TPB had been informed at the meeting of 25 August 2006 that the Sub-committee had yet to consider the draft Concept Plan.
- 4.5 **Ms. Lydia Lam** said that, given the arrangement of TPB meeting, if the draft Concept Plan was not presented to the TPB on 25 August 2006, then the submission would have to be deferred by at least two weeks. In order to report the updated progress of the WDII project to the Sub-committee and TPB at an earliest opportunity, the original plan to present the draft Concept Plan to TPB on 25 August was adhered to. **Dr. Ng Mee-kam** opined that the presentation of the draft Concept Plan to the TPB could be deferred by two weeks to allow the Sub-committee to discuss the issue first.
- 4.6 On Dr. Ng Mee Kam’s enquiry on the working arrangement between CEDD and the Consultants and whether the Consultants’ work need to be agreed by the government

before release, **Mr. L T Ma** said that whilst CEDD was administering the Consultancy, CEDD's role was on the co-ordination of government inputs and the Consultants acted independently in submitting their recommendations.

- 4.7 **Dr. Chan Wai-kwan** said that the HER project including the preparation of the Concept Plan was under the steer of the Sub-committee. He shared the view of others and opined that the Sub-committee should discuss the Concept Plan first. He suggested that this principle should be adhered to in future in order to maintain a good working relationship amongst the members of the Sub-committee.
- 4.8 **Dr. Alvin Kwok** opined that it should not be a problem for the government departments to report and update the status of the project to TPB on a regular basis. The issue was how the mechanism and procedure should be streamlined for not impacting on the work of the Sub-committee.
- 4.9 **Mr. Robin Ip** appealed for the Sub-committee's concerted effort on proceeding with the public engagement activities of the Realization Stage of the HER project. The Consultants would submit the Concept Plan for comment by the Sub-committee and then proceed with the public engagement activities of the Realization Stage of the HER project.
- 4.10 **Dr. Ng Mee-kam** pointed out that the Concept Plan was developed from the ideas collected from the public during the Envisioning Stage of the HER project, and the Sub-committee had a strong sense of ownership to the HER project. She said effort should be devoted for ensuring that the project would proceed smoothly in the right track.
- 4.11 **Dr. Chan Wai-kwan** said that the HER Task Force meeting should be a suitable forum for considering the Concept Plan in details. **The Chairman** agreed but reminded members that as the HER Task Force meeting was closed-door meeting, relevant papers should not be disclosed to media.
- 4.12 **Mr. Hardy Lok** opined that compliance with the overriding

public need test for the Concept Plan should be demonstrated before presenting it to the public. He pointed out that all possible solutions in solving traffic problem should be exhausted before considering reclamation. He also pointed out that government should ensure that there would be no further reclamation other than that proposed based on Tunnel Option Variation 1.

- 4.13 In response to Mr. Hardy Lok, **Mr. Robin Ip** agreed that the overriding public need test was a very important element in the HER project. He said that measures had been taken to establish the need for reclamation, such as addressing the transport issue by the Expert Panel on Sustainable Transport Planning and Central – Wan Chai Bypass (CWB) which concluded that the CWB was required. Regarding the alignment for the CWB, he pointed out that there had been thorough discussions and the Sub-committee concluded to adopt Tunnel Option Variation 1, which should have the minimum reclamation extent among other viable options, as the basis to prepare the Concept Plan.
- 4.14 **Dr. Ng Mee-kam** agreed that the Sub-committee had been adopting an approach of consensus building with the public in addressing the matter. **Mr. L T Ma** added that information on compliance with the overriding public need test had already been collated. He pointed out that the need for the CWB was considered in depth by the Expert Panel that consisted of local and overseas experts on transportation and electronic road pricing. A public forum was also convened in September 2005 to receive public views on the issue. The Expert Panel concluded in their report that the CWB was required to meet the need of a sustainable transport planning and the report would form an important document with respect to the overriding public need test.
- 4.15 **Dr. Chan Wai-kwan** opined that the government should be the proponent for demonstrating compliance with the overriding public need test. He agreed that the Concept Plan should be presented to the public for discussion as soon as possible.

- 4.16 **Ms. Lydia Lam** said that compliance with the overriding public need test was required for the reclamation related to the CWB, but not the Concept Plan or harbour-front enhancement proposals on the land formed consequential to the building of the CWB.
- 4.17 **Mr. Robin Ip** said that the government would ensure that the proposed reclamation could meet all necessary legal and statutory requirements, especially in meeting the overriding public need test.
- 4.18 **The Chairman** said that the government was responsible for defending any challenge to the proposed reclamation whereas the Sub-committee should focus on the HER project on a rational basis.
- 4.19 **Mr. Hardy Lok** agreed that the burden of proof for complying with the overriding public need test rested with the government.
- 4.20 **Mr. Peter Cheek** then presented the draft Concept Plan with the aid of powerpoint. He highlighted the following points.
- Tunnel Option Variation 1 was adopted as the basis in preparing the Concept Plan according to the decision of the Sub-committee meeting on 13 June 2006.
 - Apart from meeting special infrastructure needs, land formed from reclamation for the Trunk Road would be used for harbour-front enhancements.
 - The new harbour-front would be accessible and vibrant for public enjoyment.
 - The five principal proposals received from the public engagement activities in the Envisioning Stage were incorporated.
 - Different themes were applied to develop the five principal proposals into five character precincts taking into account the existing land uses.
 - Additional and improved pedestrian accesses to the new waterfront would be provided.

4.21 **Dr. Chan Wai-kwan** provided the following comments on the draft Concept Plan.

- Will the same zoning be adopted for all the new land formed from reclamation?
- Could a main theme be developed to link up the five proposed character precincts?
- Will further considerations be made to merge the new harbour-front with the existing hinterland areas?
- Internal traffic arrangement within the new harbour-front area would need to be considered in details.
- Any proposed commercial developments should be shown.
- Relevant fishermen's association would need to be consulted on the proposal of reprovisioning the floating Tin Hau Temple on-shore.
- The Consultants' recommendation of not including the proposal of the Hong Kong Regional Heliport Working Group (RHWG) differed from the recommendation in the report for the Envisioning Stage.
- Implementation programme for the proposed harbour-front enhancement should be indicated with a view that the completed works could be delivered in stages for public enjoyment as early as possible.

4.22 **Mr. L T Ma** provided the following responses to Dr. Chan Wai-kwan's comments.

- All land formed incidental to the construction of the CWB, after meeting specific infrastructural needs, would be dedicated for harbour-front enhancements that were mainly for public enjoyment. The zoning should reflect that point.
- There would be continuity from one character precinct to another. It would be good in having a Brand name for the whole harbour-front and ideas from Members would be most appreciated.
- Connectivity between the new harbour-front and the hinterland areas had been given due considerations and linkages in the form of at-grade crossing, landscaped deck or footbridges were proposed.
- Traffic implication in connection with any proposed

commercial development would be a prime consideration. It has been mentioned in the paper that the Trade Development Council was contemplating further expansion of the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre and such matter has to be addressed.

- Reprovisioning the floating Tin Hau Temple on-shore was a request expressed by the concerned fishermen's association and some Eastern District Councillors.
- The proposed helipad was basically for government use but it was agreed that it would be shared for commercial uses. The RHWG's proposal involved an extended area that would have an impact on the Golden Bauhinia Square and visual access to the harbour.
- Funding application for the CWB might include the harbour-front enhancement works at the same time. This would enable the phased completion of the harbour-front enhancement works in conjunction with the works for the CWB. Detailed arrangement would be considered during the detailed design stage of the works.

4.23 **Ms Phyllis Li** indicated that zonings for the relevant OZP would reflect the proposed character precincts along the new waterfront. She said that the zonings would be mainly "O" for open space and "OU" for some specific uses.

4.24 **Mr. Lawrence Kwan** said that measures had been implemented to improve the traffic in the hinterland areas. Further measures would be considered taking into account the traffic situation after the completion of the CWB.

4.25 **Dr. Andrew Thomson** provided the following comments on the draft Concept Plan.

- The plan had incorporated most of the ideas received in the Envisioning Stage.
- Enhancement to the access to the Noon Day Gun would have to be indicated.
- A unified brand name for the new waterfront would be useful for promoting the completed works worldwide.
- Further details could be discussed in a Task Force meeting.

4.26 **Dr. Ng Mee-kam** provided the following comments on the draft Concept Plan.

- The sustainability principles and indicator that were developed during the Envisioning Stage should be addressed.
- Connectivity and impact on the traffic situation with the hinterland areas should be indicated.
- Signage should be provided to clearly indicate the five character precincts.
- An overall landscaping strategy should be considered.
- Visual corridor for viewing the harbour should be considered.
- Water quality within the Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter need to be considered.
- Reference could be made to the winning design of the competition organized by the Eastern District Council with respect to the area near the tunnel portal.

4.27 **Mr. Patrick Lau** provided the following comments on the draft Concept Plan.

- The plan had met most of the public's aspirations.
- Emphasis should be put to inform the public that the new harbour-front would be easily accessed.
- The Eastern District Council was very concern about the location of the eastern portal of the CWB and the proposed harbour-front enhancement works in that vicinity.

4.28 **Dr. Alvin Kwok** provided the following comments on the draft Concept Plan.

- The merging with the existing land use on the eastern and western end of the project should be considered.
- The proposed harbour-front enhancement such as water sports facilities should be designed for the use of the public in general at an affordable level.
- The pet's garden proposed for the temporary use in the "Quick-win" project should be considered as a permanent facility in the new harbour-front.

- 4.29 **Dr. Ng Mee-kam** quoted an example in Brisbane where a beach-like swimming pool was constructed along the riverbank. She said that it might be a good idea to introduce similar facilities in the new harbour-front of Wan Chai or Central.
- 4.30 **The Chairman** said that the detailed design of the harbour-front enhancements could be discussed later and even after the approval of the Outline Zoning Plans (OZPs). Comments on the details of the Concept Plan could be recorded for later discussions. He said that the current work of the Sub-committee should focus on land use planning for the Wan Chai, Causeway Bay and the adjoining areas. Regarding the choice of the location for the eastern portal of the CWB, he pointed out that this was due to the need to comply with the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance that the extent of the reclamation should be the minimum. He noted that several elevated and at-grade pedestrian access between the harbour-front and the hinterland areas were proposed. Regarding the helipad at the Expo Drive East Pier, he said that the proposal from either the government or RHWG would have an impact on the layout of the Golden Bauhinia Square. He added that the Sub-committee should maintain an impartial position when considering any proposal and the reasons for not including any proposal in the Concept Plan had to be presented to the public.
- 4.31 **Mr. L T Ma** said that the Sub-committee should consolidate the views of the public taking into account the requirements of the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance, the vision of the TPB towards the Victoria Harbour and HEC's Harbour Planning Principles (HPPs). Regarding RHWG's proposal, the Consultants had clearly indicated that it would abut upon the Golden Bauhinia Square thus its possible expansion, and obstruct the visual access to the harbour and conflict with the proposed roundabout of Expo Drive East to the south.
- 4.32 **Mr. Robin Ip** said that it was very difficult to search a suitable location for the helipad. He reminded members that to make reference to the HPPs when considering the

RHWG's proposal.

- 4.33 In response to Dr. Andrew Thomson's query on the need of providing a helipad in Wan Chai, **Mr. L T Ma** pointed out that the Sub-committee had been briefed by EDLB that the helipad was required to support emergency and security operations.
- 4.34 In response to Mr. Patrick Lau, **the Chairman** said that the original scope of the HER project had been extended eastward to cover the area required for the eastern portal of the CWB.
- 4.35 In response to the Chairman, **the meeting** agreed that the Concept Plan was agreed in principle and the HER Task Force would meet to consider the details.

Item 5 Work Plan for Realization Stage of HER

- 5.1 **Dr. Chan Wai-kwan** provided the following comments on the proposed work plan.
- Some new arrangement for the public engagement activities should be considered making them more exciting and attractive.
 - Collaborators should be invited to stimulate more thoughts and ideas. Consideration could be given for encouraging some collaborators to organize concurrent activities. The model adopted by the Council for Sustainable Development in providing funding to collaborator organizations could be used as a reference.
- 5.2 **The Chairman** proposed that the item be further discussed by the HER Task Force. **Mr. L T Ma** said that apart from the work plan, the public engagement digest for the Realization Stage would also need to be ready before launching of the Realization Stage and suggested the HER Task Force to meet as early as possible.

(Post-meeting note: the HER Task Force meeting met four times on 6, 18, 25 and 27 September 2006 respectively to

consider the Concept Plan, the work plan and the public engagement digest for the Realization Stage. Final version of the work plan and digest were agreed.)

Item 6 Any Other Business

6.1 There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

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