

Translation

Kowloon City District Urban Renewal Forum

For discussion
on 2 May 2012

Paper No.: DURF KC/05/2012

Draft Preliminary Urban Renewal Proposals for Kowloon City

Purpose

This paper seeks Members' views on the draft Preliminary Urban Renewal Proposals for Kowloon City ("the draft PURP"), and invites Members to consider and endorse the proposals.

Background

2. The major task of the Kowloon City District Urban Renewal Forum ("DURF"), upon its establishment, is to advise the Government through the Secretary for Development on the urban renewal plans within the Kowloon City area, including advice on redevelopment and rehabilitation areas, plus preservation and revitalization initiatives contributing to a quality city environment. To this end, the DURF decided to commence the Study on Urban Renewal Plan for Kowloon City ("the Planning Study") and the Social Impact Assessment ("SIA"), and to conduct broad-based public engagement activities throughout the process, so as to formulate the Urban Renewal Plan for the Kowloon City District from a holistic and integrated perspective. To facilitate the commencement of the forthcoming public engagement activities and studies, the Secretariat, after taking into account Members' views, local views and making reference to other relevant information, has prepared the draft PURP for Members' consideration. The endorsed proposals will serve as the basis for conducting the Stage 1 Public Engagement, the Planning Study and the SIA.

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3. The Secretariat consulted Members on the approach in preparing the draft PURP at the DURF meeting held on 28 February 2012. The meeting agreed on the approach and the proposal to designate different urban renewal areas. The meeting also agreed to include annotations in the relevant consultation documents, study reports and plans. It is to specify that the purpose of delineation of different urban renewal areas in the draft PURP is to serve as the basis for conducting the Stage 1 Public Engagement, the Planning Study and the SIA so as to formulate the Urban Renewal Plan for Kowloon City. Upon submission, implementation of the plan will be decided by the Government having regard to the situation at the time. The annotation can avoid unnecessary misinterpretations of the draft PURP by the public.

4. The Secretariat has prepared the draft PURP in accordance with the approach agreed by Members. On 16 April 2012, the Secretariat briefed Members on the draft PURP, organised a site visit for Members to the core areas covered by the draft PURP, and invited Members' comment. A Member proposed to incorporate the eastern end of Kowloon City (i.e. the area near Prince Edward East and Kai Tak Development Area) into the "Redevelopment Priority Area" to expedite the redevelopment process of the concerned area through commercial and other activities in Kai Tak Development Area. Redevelopment of the area also helps provide community and other facilities for the district. Another Member proposed to extend the "Redevelopment Priority Area" covering the eight "Wan" Street to Chi Kiang Street, and to incorporate the area of Bailey Street/Chun Tin Street/Sung On Street to the south of the eight "Wan" Street into the "Mixed Redevelopment and Rehabilitation Area". Comments from Members have been suitably incorporated in the draft PURP. Details can be referred to paragraphs 7 (c), 9 (a), 10 (a) and (b) below.

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Vision

5. As mentioned in paragraph 2, DURF will formulate the Urban Renewal Plan for Kowloon City for Government's consideration. The Secretariat proposes the following vision for the Urban Renewal Plan:

“Through urban renewal, to inject new vitality into the Kowloon City District which has rich historic and cultural resources, to achieve a synergy effect with the Kai Tak Development Area, and to release land for housing, leisure and community facilities, thus creating a quality living environment for residents within and outside the District.”

On the basis of the proposed vision above, the Secretariat has prepared the following draft proposals:

Draft Proposals

6. The Secretariat, in preparing the draft proposals, has examined privately-owned buildings within the district, including the conditions of residential, buildings within areas designated for business use and industrial buildings. To implement the “People First, District-Based and Public Participatory” approach in carrying out urban renewal, the Secretariat has consolidated local views collected through the District Aspirations Study on Urban Renewal for Kowloon City completed in 2010, the comments from Members after the various site visits, and making reference to the criteria of the building age (**Plan 1**) and the building conditions (**Plan 2**) (based on the results of the Building Conditions Survey for the Kowloon City District completed by the Urban Renewal Authority (“URA”) in 2010) in delineating

different urban renewal areas. Other major factors for consideration include the living environment of the residents, the development opportunity brought by the development of mass transportation systems in the vicinity, the local characters and historical and cultural background of the District, etc. The draft proposals include the above different urban renewal areas and other revitalization and enhancement proposals (**Plan 3**). The details of the proposals are in paragraphs 7 to 15 below.

Redevelopment Priority Area

7. The Area includes the sub-areas where the majority of buildings are either varied or poor and are generally aged 50 years old or above. Besides, although some buildings do not fully meet the above criteria on building conditions and age for redevelopment, the occupants in those buildings are facing serious environmental hygiene and air/noise pollution problems. Hence, consideration would also be given to incorporate these buildings and areas in the “Redevelopment Priority Area” on a case-by-case basis. Redevolutions within the Area, regardless of comprehensive or piece-meal ones, can be undertaken by the Urban Renewal Authority (“URA”) by ways of their redevelopment project, the “demand-led” model under which building owners would jointly initiate redevelopment to URA or the “facilitator” model under which URA would assist building owners in amalgamating their property interests; and private developers (including owner-initiated groups). The proposed Area delineated in the draft PURP is only conceptual in planning term and would not hinder privately-led redevelopment projects. As there are numerous buildings within the Area, it may take a long time to redevelop all of them. In case of public safety concerns, property owners should carry out building rehabilitation works without delay.

- (a) **“5 Streets” and “13 Streets” (To Kwa Wan)**: The buildings in the area generally meet the criteria on building conditions and age for

redevelopment. Besides, there are over 200 vehicle repair workshops forming a cluster of the vehicle repair industry in Kowloon City. The noise and air nuisances generated by the workshops in the course of their operation cause adverse impacts to the nearby residents. The sites within the area are zoned for various “Comprehensive Development Area” (“CDA”) on the statutory town plan, which are intended for comprehensive development/redevelopment of the areas for residential and/or commercial uses with the provision of open space and other supporting facilities. Given the slow progress of redevelopment, consideration can be given to split those larger “CDA” zones to help expedite the redevelopment process;

- (b) **Kowloon City Road/Lok Shan Road (To Kwa Wan):** Although the buildings in the area may not fully meet the criteria on building conditions and age for redevelopment, the residential buildings on both sides of Kowloon City Road are adversely affected by noise and emissions generated by traffic on the nearby East Kowloon Corridor, resulting in a poor living environment. Taking advantage of the nearby open space, community and other facilities together with the opportunities provided by the proximity to the existing and committed mass transit developments (such as the Ma Tau Wai Station of the Shatin to Central Link), redevelopment for urban restructuring can be undertaken to release potential housing sites and to improve leisure and community facilities in the district. As there are numerous elders and ethnic minorities in the district, the facilities required by them and the provision of such facilities at suitable locations can be further investigated ; and

- (c) **Eight “Wan” Streets/Ngan Hon Street/Sung On Street (To Kwa Wan):** The buildings in the area meet the criteria on building conditions and age for redevelopment. Apart from this, most streets within the Eight “Wan” Streets are privately owned and lack proper management, thus creating problems such as inadequate street maintenance, improper sewage disposal and poor hygiene and living environment, etc. Redevelopment, particularly comprehensive redevelopment of a larger scale would be able to improve the living environment of the area and to resolve problems caused by private streets.

8. For the non-private housing in Kowloon City District, such as Chun Seen Mei Chuen and Lok Man Sun Chuen of Hong Kong Housing Society (“HKHS”), although the building age of these estates are less than 50 years and the building conditions are generally not poor, these estates have great potential to increase the development intensity to utilize land resources more efficiently, so as to provide more housing units and community facilities for the needy. Although the redevelopment of the said estates has not been explored in the draft PURP, Members can discuss the issue having regard to the local situations.

Rehabilitation and Revitalisation Priority Area

9. For those areas with local character and revitalisation potential, or those which do not meet the redevelopment criteria but in need of improvement, we propose to include these areas in the “Rehabilitation and Revitalisation Priority Area” for bringing new vitality to the district through various revitalisation programmes. Nevertheless, we will not preclude individual private redevelopment projects. Regarding rehabilitation, the owners can be encouraged to make use of various building maintenance schemes implemented by the Government, such as the

“Integrated Building Maintenance Assistance Scheme” jointly coordinated by URA and HKHS to improve building conditions. Besides, Buildings Department can also consider selecting targeted buildings within the Area for the “Mandatory Building Inspection Scheme” and “Mandatory Window Inspection Scheme”. As for revitalisation, street beautification and greening programmes, improvement of street facilities; and display of art pieces relating to the local character of the district, etc. can be implemented. Discussions with the relevant Government Departments, District Councils and other local organizations could be conducted with regard to the implementation of the proposals. Details of the proposals and the implementation approach would require further study.

- (a) **Nga Tsin Wai Road (Lung Tong):** The area has many restaurants serving different cuisines and various types of retail stores with local characteristics. Members generally consider that these characteristics should be preserved. However, the age and conditions of the buildings in the area generally meet the redevelopment criteria and there are a considerable number of privately-led piece-meal redevelopments. On the condition of not precluding individual private redevelopment projects, it is proposed to include such area in the “Rehabilitation and Revitalisation Priority Area”. Apart from encouraging and assisting property owners to carry out building rehabilitation works, pedestrian area can be designated at suitable locations; pedestrian facilities and loading/unloading facilities can be improved; greenery and street beautification can be implemented; street markings and signages at distinctive buildings and tourist attractions can be erected; art pieces relating to the local character of the district can be displayed at suitable locations; the existing pedestrian subways linking to Olympic Garden can be improved; and connectivity with the To

Kwa Wan Station of the SCL and Kai Tak Development Area for bringing new vibrancy to the district can be enhanced. In addition, the Kowloon City Municipal Services Building and the nearby government facilities have potential to be released for various uses, including government and community facilities, in the long run. Public carpark can also be provided within the future development to meet district need. It is believed that the future development can help enhance the environment and bring vitality to the area. As for the area at the eastern end near the Kai Tak Development Area, through the development opportunity of the future Kai Tak business centre, the area has the potential for more comprehensive redevelopments in the long run. It is proposed that this suggestion be further explored in the Planning Study; and

- (b) **Winslow Street/Gillies Avenue South (Hung Hom):** The age and conditions of the majority of buildings in the area do not meet the criteria for redevelopment, but the residents in the area are affected by the operation of funeral and related businesses. It is proposed to provide greenery and street beautification to improve the visual amenity of the area. It is also hoped that the public could provide their views on the planning of the area during the public engagement, in particular on whether funeral and related uses in the area should be centralised to avoid proliferation, and the ways to minimise the impact of the industry on local residents.

Mixed Redevelopment and Rehabilitation Area

10. In the Area, some buildings are in need of redevelopment while some are rather newly-built, resulting in a mixture of old and new buildings. It is proposed to

incorporate areas with such buildings into the “Mixed Redevelopment and Rehabilitation Area” so that redevelopment and rehabilitation works can be carried out at suitable locations.

- (a) **Ngan Hon Street/Sheung Heung Road/Kwei Chow Street/Yuk Yat Street (To Kwa Wan):** A mixture of new and old buildings is found in the area, with buildings along Lok Shan Road generally older and in poor conditions. Industrial buildings along Sheung Heung Road and Yuk Yat Street are also included in the area and designated as “Residential (Group E)” zone on the statutory town plan, which is intended for phasing out existing industrial use through redevelopment (or conversion) for residential use. However, the redevelopment pace of these industrial buildings is slow;
- (b) **Bailey Street/Chun Tin Street/Sung On Street (Hung Hom):** In this area, the buildings near the URA Ma Tau Wai Road/Chun Tin Street Project are generally older and in poor conditions, while buildings along Sung Chi Street are younger in age and with a considerable number undergoing building rehabilitation works;
- (c) **Whampoa Street/Bulkeley Street/Wuhu Street (Hung Hom):** In this area, the buildings along Whampoa Street and Gillies Avenue South are generally older and the conditions of most buildings are varied and poor, while some residential buildings and commercial buildings along Wuhu Street and Bulkeley Street are younger in age and in better conditions.

Revitalising Business Area

11. This Area include industrial buildings in Hung Hom and in the general locality of **Hok Yuen Street/Hok Yuen Street East/Man Yue Street**. These industrial buildings are designated as “Other Specified Uses” annotated ‘Business’ on the statutory town plan, which is intended for general business uses. All these industrial buildings were built in 1970s or after and they are still in fair conditions. A considerable number of shops on the ground floor of these industrial buildings are being used for selling luxury goods including gold, jewellery and watches, and the area has become a popular shopping spot for tourists. Although the Government has implemented measures to promote the revitalisation of old industrial buildings in 2010, due to the poor appearance of some industrial buildings and the street scene of Man Yue Street under the elevated road of Fat Kwong Street, the overall environment is considered incompatible with the tourism and retail industries. To cater for the development of tourism and retail industries, it is proposed to implement beautification and revitalisation works for the streets, and to provide facilities such as pedestrian crossings and lay-bys to attract visitors.

Revitalising Heritage and Designation of a Heritage Trail

12. Kowloon City is rich in archaeological and built heritage. Based on Members’ comments, it is proposed to set up a heritage trail linking up various heritage sites in the area, with signages erected to introduce the relevant history and background information.

13. The Development Bureau is now formulating a revitalisation and conservation plan for the Ex-Ma Tau Kok Animal Quarantine Depot (“the Cattle Depot”) (listed as a Grade II Historic Building). It is proposed to designate a heritage trail linking up the Cattle Depot and the monuments, heritage, historic buildings and

places with a rich history within the district, such as Lung Tsun Stone Bridge in Kai Tak Development Area, Kowloon Walled City Park, Sung Wong Toi Inscription Rock inside the Sung Wong Toi Garden and Fishtail Rock in Hoi Sham Park. Signages which introduce the relevant history and background information can be erected at key locations. In the longer term, if connection to the waterfront promenade is viable, the proposed heritage trail can be extended to the waterfront promenade to connect with Hoi Sham Park, thus enhancing its attractiveness.

Revitalising the Waterfront and Piers

14. There are waterfront areas in the Kowloon City District. However, the existing waterfront is blocked by uses such as a privately owned pier and sewerage treatment plant, etc. Based on Members comments, it is proposed to link up those sections in which the current access to the waterfront promenade has been obstructed in the District, to create a continuous waterfront promenade connecting Tsim Sha Tsui and Kai Tak Development Area, and to carry out beautification and revitalisation works for areas along the waterfront and promenade (including exploring the ways to revitalise the piers in operation and those abandoned, the bus station and open-air carpark at San Ma Tau Street) with a view to promoting tourism industry and the local economy. The relevant proposals can be worked out with the Harbourfront Commission.

Other Revitalisation and Enhancement Initiatives

15. The Secretariat has also incorporated the following revitalisation and enhancement proposals suggested by local people in the District in the draft PURP, which could be further explored and studied:

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- (a) To strengthen the connection between Kowloon City District and Kai Tak Development Area to foster the development of and inject vitality to the District;
- (b) To provide a green decking over the sunken section of Kai Tak Tunnel to connect with the nearby Cattle Depot, San Shan Road and other centralised area, so as to improve connections within the district and to create a unique public open space; and
- (c) The existing Man Tai Street and Pak Tai Street have many restaurants serving different cuisines. Adjacent to Pak Tai Street is Tam Kung Road, where restaurants begin to move in. It is proposed to designate these streets as dining hubs, to erect street markings and signage and to undertake street beautification and greening works to attract visitors.

Follow-up Work

16. Upon endorsement of the above mentioned draft PURP, thorough and extensive public engagement would be conducted. The relevant consultants, in accordance with the endorsed PURP, will assist DURF in formulating the public engagement strategy, digest and other relevant information. It is hoped that the easy-to-understand engagement materials could facilitate the public in understanding the proposals and help solicit their views effectively and efficiently. Given that the PURP is still an initial concept, DURF needs to listen to comments from a wider sector of the community and strives to build consensus within the community. The Planning Study Consultants in collaboration with the SIA Consultants, will further develop and revise details of the proposals in accordance with the endorsed PURP and the public comments received, so as to assist DURF to formulate the Urban Renewal Plan for Kowloon City for Government's consideration. Implementation of the Urban

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Renewal Plan will be considered by the Government having regard to the actual conditions at the time.

Advice Sought

16. Members are invited to give comments on the draft PURP, and to endorse the PURP if considered appropriate.

Secretariat

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May 2012