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Kowloon City District Urban Renewal Forum

For discussion on
12 December 2012

Paper No.: DURF KC/13/2012

Urban Renewal Plan for Kowloon City Progress Report on Planning Study

Purpose

1. This paper serves to report to Members on the work progress of the Planning Study and to provide a brief on the key findings with a view to seeking for Members' views on the progress.

Work Progress

2. Based on the preliminary results of the Stage 1 Public Engagement activities and Social Impact Assessment (SIA), the Planning Study Consultants reported on the identified key issues in the DURF meeting held on 10 October 2012. Subsequently, the Consultants have been discussing with relevant government departments and organisations on the possible measures to address the concerned issues. The findings from the meetings are recorded in the Draft Working Papers 2 and 3, and were discussed by the Working Group and Steering Group of the Study in their respective meetings held on 19 and 27 of November.

3. Taking account of the comments from the Working Group and Steering Group, the findings on the analysis of public views in the Stage 1 Public Engagement Report and the preliminary results of the focus group meetings conducted by the SIA Consultants in late November, the Planning Study Consultants will, in consultation with concerned government departments and organisations, continue to further review and refine the identified issues and the respective responses. The Planning Study Consultants will explain in this meeting the planning strategy with respect to the key issues and elaborate on the proposals that could be implemented in the near future for Members' consideration.

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Key Issues, Specific Requests and Concerns, and Planning Strategy

4. Through the Stage 1 Public Engagement activities and the SIA, the key issues of the district have been concluded and the specific requests and concerns of the public have been highlighted. In response, the Consultants propose a planning strategy from the urban renewal perspective. The key issues, specific requests and concerns, as well as the planning strategy are summarised in the table below.

Key Issues	Specific Requests and Concerns	Planning Strategy
(1) Expedite the Urban Renewal Process and Enhancement of Overall Spatial Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Boundary of preliminary proposals• Capitalise the opportunity brought by the railway development• Maintenance of social network (such as local rehousing)• Fragmented ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of boundary• Investigation on redevelopment potential of under-developed land resources• Exploration of land resources in Kai Tak Development Area• Examination of planned use and development potential of opportunity sites
(2) Enhancement of Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connection with Kai Tak Development Area, MTR stations and waterfront• Orientation and sense of place• Enhancement of	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthening of connections between activity nodes• Improvement in pedestrian crossing facilities and environment• Strengthening of spatial orientation and identification through street furniture,

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Key Issues	Specific Requests and Concerns	Planning Strategy
	accessibility of key public space	paving, signages and sculptures
(3) Improvement of Public Facilities Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provision of additional open space, community facilities and public parking facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Integrate additional public open space and facilities into redevelopment project• Utilise space under flyover• Utilise underused sites of public facilities
(4) Preservation and Enhancement of Local Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preservation of heritage• Maintenance of vibrant street level commercial activities and atmosphere• Creation of continuous waterfront	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishment of themed walking trail• Formulation of urban design guideline for character area• Enhancement of activities along the waterfront• With the ultimate objective of a continuous waterfront, identification of alternative route to link up the disconnected waterfront sections
(5) Review of Incompatible Land Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vehicle repairing workshop• Funeral and related businesses• Air and noise pollution from East Kowloon Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suggestion of mitigation measures for affected residents• Investigation of the operational needs of the businesses and the possibility and requirements for adjustment of practices

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Key Issues	Specific Requests and Concerns	Planning Strategy
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore the appropriateness of rezoning the areas adjacent to the East Kowloon Corridor to non-residential uses
(6) Improvement on Quality of Public Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Streetscape greening• Improvement of area under flyover and pedestrian subways• Improvement of the hygienic condition of private streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhancement of landscape amenity of key distributors and pedestrian linkage• Improvement of the area under flyover, through enhancement of lighting condition and addition of artistic elements• Enhancement of existing public open space and facilities• Provision of assistance to owners for better management and maintenance of private streets

5. Under the above-mentioned planning strategy, different measures are proposed to address the key issues raised by the public. Through discussion with relevant government departments, many of these measures would require further study and consideration before implementation. Below are those that can be implemented in the near future.

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Proposals that could be Implemented in the Near Future

6. The Planning Study Consultants have initially drafted a set of renewal proposals with measures of different complexity, difficulty and time requirement in implementation. The Consultants now put forward the proposals that are considered less complicated, less controversial, easier to implement and already equipped with basic conditions for implementation. Further liaison with relevant government departments on the details of these proposals will be undertaken. These proposals are elaborated below.

(A) Themed Walking Trail

7. A Themed Walking Trail is proposed in response to the public views on the Preservation and Enhancement of Local Character, Connectivity Enhancement and Improvement on Quality of Public Space. The proposal Trail will effectively consolidate the existing local resources such as the Cattle Depot and Kowloon Walled City Park; strengthen the historical and cultural character of the district; and contribute to the establishment of a unique district identity in the long term (**Figure 1**).

8. The Trail with themed sections is proposed to connect the existing and planned key historical and cultural buildings and facilities, public activity space and transit nodes in the district. This will improve the pedestrian connection and walking environment between the key activity nodes. Also, the sense of orientation within the district as well as the quality and character of the public space will be enhanced. The proposed Trail will be composed of 4 sections, namely the Waterfront Leisure Walk, the Artistic Community Walk, the Local Historical Walk and the Walled City Historical Walk.

9. An attractive trail takes time to cultivate and requires to be complemented by the function and maintenance of the activity nodes along the route. It is recommended that priority should be given to the improvement of the pedestrian

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linkage and walking environment by connecting the key activity nodes in the district first. This can be followed by strengthening the function of the respective nodes and community integration progressively. The possibility for further expansion of the Trail can be further explored. Besides the above, installation of appropriate pedestrian facilities, such as signages, greening and street furniture, shall be required to improve the sense of direction of the Trail. With the enhanced pedestrian environment, a pleasant walking experience could be provided.

10. Below are the enhancement proposals that are considered appropriate to be implemented earlier along the Themed Walking Trail.

- a) Since the Nga Tsin Wai Road Area of Lung Tong Sub-District is formed by 10 parallel local streets with similar character, the sense of orientation within the area is quite weak. In order to effectively connect the Walled City Park with other activity nodes in the district, it is suggested to enhance the street environment, starting with those frequently visited sections, such as Hau Wong Road (which will also form part of the Trail), and Nam Kok Road, where the future MTR Station exits are located. Signages are proposed to be installed at the main entrance of these streets for orientation enhancement. Also, feature fencing and iconic paving are proposed to be installed where appropriate to emphasize the character of the concerned streets.

- b) Currently, the Nga Tsin Wai Road Area of Lung Tong Sub-District is separated from the Ma Tau Wai and To Kwa Wan areas by the Prince Edward Road East. The only pedestrian connection between the areas relies on the pedestrian subways of the Olympic Garden. However, the subways are only equipped with basic facilities including staircases in an unattractive environment with dim lighting. In connection with the construction of the Shatin-Central Link of MTR, the Olympic Garden will be acquired to be the works site. The MTR and Highways Department will improve the subways after the construction period. While the proposal shall align with the planned improvement works undertaken by the

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respective organisations, it is suggested that improvement of the subways, such as the addition of passenger lifts, enhancement of paving, lighting facilities and design, as well as exhibition of the historical information and photos of the old areas of Kowloon City, Kowloon Walled City and former Kai Tak Airport on the walls of the subways, could highlight the character and history of the district. These could enhance the sense of security and interest of the subways, and facilitate visitors to appreciate more about the community and its history, which will align with the theme of the Trail in this section.

- c) The Cattle Depot is one of the key historic buildings in the district and is one of the key nodes of the Trail. The Depot, currently used as an Artist Village, has attracted a number of artists to gather. As noted from the results of the public engagement activities and site visits, the backyard of the Depot is not open to public due to substandard facilities. The connections with the surrounding community still need improvement. The Development Bureau, being the management authority of the Depot, is exploring ways to revitalize the Depot. While the proposal shall align with the revitalization plan of the Development Bureau, it is suggested that the Depot, with its historical and cultural significance, could be further enhanced and transformed into an integrated space of arts and community through strengthening the social connection between the Depot and the community (**Figure 2**).
- Enhancement of pedestrian connection between Kowloon City Road and the Depot, including themed pavement and streetscape greening, is proposed to improve the connectivity and sense of direction to the Depot, as well as the walking experience.
 - Provision of sitting-out facilities in the Depot, complemented by the public oriented artist programme, is proposed to facilitate the bonding between the Depot and the local community.
 - In the long term, it is recommended to increase the connection points of the Depot, such as providing direct connection between the

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footbridge along San Shan Road and the Depot so as to allow a direct connection from the south of the Depot. Further discussion with relevant government departments on the proposal is required. On the other hand, in view of the future Ma Tau Wai MTR Station exits will be connected to Kowloon City Road, it is suggested to enhance the space under the East Kowloon Corridor, including the existing sitting-out area and lighting condition. With the proposed enhancement, a pleasant pedestrian corridor can be created. Connecting the Depot directly with the future MTR Station will also enhance its attractiveness.

- d) Hoi Sum Park in To Kwa Wan, located at the waterfront area, is one of the key public open space in the district, which has been serving the local community. Most of the visitors enter the park through Chi Kiang Street. However, the existing entrance is concealed and is not quite visible to first-time visitors. While the planned Ma Tau Wai MTR Station exit will be located at Ma Tau Wai Road/To Kwa Wan Road Garden, it is recommended that Chi Kiang Street shall be transformed as a key pedestrian corridor connecting the hinterland to the waterfront with direct access to Hoi Sum Park. The proposed enhancement shall complement the expansion plan of Hoi Sum Park, strengthen the sense of direction from Chi Kiang Street to the Park and highlight the significance of the entrance to the Park. Enhancement measures, including streetscape improvement, iconic paving and signages, will facilitate visitors to find their way to the Park.

(B) Mitigation Measures for the Incompatible Uses between Funeral & Related Businesses and Residents

11. Funeral & related businesses are concentrated in the area around Winslow Street and Gillies Avenue South. Their operations create nuisance to the residents in the area. As noted from the public engagement activities, the residents expressed great concern on the interface issues with the businesses. From the further discussion

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with relevant departments and stakeholders, the current mechanism on issuing and monitoring the relevant undertaker licenses has tried to address the concerns raised by the residents. However, it will still rely on policy driven measures to resolve the interface problem in the long run. Thus, mitigation measures, aiming to minimise the interface between the residents and businesses, are proposed to be adopted earlier. The details of such proposals still require further discussion with relevant departments.

- a) In response to the suggestions from the residents and the funeral & related businesses, it is recommended to provide additional parking spaces in the area, such as On Ching Road, to minimise the psychological impact to the residents generated from the parking of funeral related vehicles in the residential area. Also, the possibility of providing designated parking area for funeral related vehicles shall be further investigated.

- b) In response to the suggestions from the residents and the funeral & related businesses, it is suggested to improve the current public incense burning services provided by Grand Peace Funeral Parlour. In order to address the need of ancestor worshipping in the area, it is also suggested to explore the possibility of establishing a centralised public incense burning facility to minimise the nuisance of worshipping activities to the residents.

(C) Suggestions on Other Enhancement Initiatives

12. In order to address the public aspirations for improvement in the quality of public space as well as the pedestrian environment and facilities, below are some enhancement proposals formulated having regard to the individual environment of different areas.

- a) Improvement of street environment of Man Yue Street in the Hung Hom Business Area through enhancement of lighting condition under the

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flyover, provision of streetscape greening, paving and sitting-out facilities **(Figure 3)**.

- b) With the commencement of the railway services of Kwun Tong Line Extension in the area soon, it is anticipated that the redevelopment and rehabilitation activities in the Hung Hom area will increase. Wuhu Street is expected to be transformed as the key activity corridor **(Figure 4)**. It is recommended to enhance the sense of direction and place as well as the streetscape of the area so as to improve its identity.
- Enhancement of the existing sitting-out areas at Lo Lung Hang Street and Walker Road with the area forming an entrance from Wuhu Street which is to facilitate visitors to enter the area from Ho Man Tin MTR Station.
 - The footbridge along Hung Ling Street connecting with the Hung Hom MTR Station is frequently used by the locals as the key pedestrian connection from the area. It is recommended to enhance the pavement design and greening elements at the cul-de-sac of Whampoa Street adjoining the footbridge for cultivating a sense of place. The provision of directional signage along Whampoa Street is also proposed to create a better sense of orientation. With the enhanced Whampoa Street connected with the footbridge and Wuhu Street, the overall pedestrian environment in the area would be improved.
- c) To improve the linkage to Ho Man Tin from Winslow Street while taking account of the pedestrian crossing facility project of the Transport Department near the junction of Winslow Street and Lo Lung Hang Street, it is recommended to improve the pedestrian safety condition of Winslow Street. The proposal is to install fences along a section of Winslow Street near Chatham Road North to safeguard the pedestrians crossing Winslow Street to Oi Sen Path at Ho Man Tin.

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Way Forward

13. With Members' comments, the Planning Study Consultants will continue to further discuss with relevant departments or organisations about the feasibility for the implementation of the above renewal proposals. Also, the Consultants will continue to work on the formulation of comprehensive proposals, including short-term, medium-term and long-term ones for the Draft Urban Renewal Plan, which will be submitted for Members' consideration.

Advice Sought

14. Members are requested to note and comment on the content and work progress of the Planning Study.

Planning Study on Urban Renewal Plan

Planning Study Consultant

December 2012