

**Minutes of 882nd Meeting of the
Town Planning Board held on 3.4.2007**

Present

Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands
(Planning and Lands)
Mrs. Rita Lau

Chairperson

Dr. K.K. Wong

Vice-Chairman

Dr. Greg C.Y. Wong

Mr. Nelson W.Y. Chan

Professor Peter R. Hills

Mr. Tony C.N. Kan

Mr. Edmund K.H. Leung

Professor N.K. Leung

Professor Bernard V.W.F. Lim

Dr. Daniel B.M. To

Ms. Sylvia S.F. Yau

Mr. B.W. Chan

Mr. Walter K.L. Chan

Mr. Y.K. Cheng

Ms. Anna S.Y. Kwong

Dr. James C.W. Lau

Mr. K.Y. Leung

Director of Planning
Mrs. Ava S. Y. Ng

Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport),
Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
Ms. Ava Chiu

Assistant Director(2), Home Affairs Department
Ms. Margaret Hsia

Deputy Director of Environmental Protection
Dr. Michael Chiu

Director of Lands
Mr. Patrick L.C. Lau

Deputy Director of Planning/District
Miss Ophelia Y.S. Wong

Secretary

Absent with Apologies

Mr. Michael K.C. Lai

Ms. Carmen K.M. Chan

Professor Nora F.Y. Tam

Mr. David W.M. Chan

Professor Leslie H.C. Chen

Dr. Lily Chiang

Prof. David Dudgeon

Dr. C.N. Ng

Mr. Stanley Y.F. Wong

Mr. Alfred Donald Yap

Ms. Maggie M.K. Chan

Mr. Raymond Y.M. Chan

Mr. Felix W. Fong

Professor Paul K.S. Lam

Ms. Starry W.K. Lee

In Attendance

Assistant Director of Planning/Board

Mr. Lau Sing

Chief Town Planner/Town Planning Board

Ms. Brenda K.Y. Au

Town Planner/Town Planning Board

Mr. Tony Y.C. Wu

Agenda Item 1

Matters Arising

[Open Meeting. The meeting was conducted in Cantonese.]

1. There were no matters arising from the last meeting.

Agenda Item 2

Progress Update on Wan Chai Development Phase II –

Recommended Outline Development Plan

(TPB Paper No. 7799)

[Open Meeting. The meeting was conducted in Cantonese.]

2. The Chairperson said that the purpose of this item was to brief Members on the outcome of public consultation on the Concept Plan of the Wan Chai Development Phase II (WDII) project, and to seek the Board's endorsement of the Recommended Outline Development Plan (RODP) to form the basis for preparing amendments to the relevant Outline Zoning Plans (OZPs).

3. Professor N.K. Leung declared an interest for being the Chairman of the Council of the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA) which would be involved in one of the land use proposals under the RODP. Professor Bernard V.W.F. Lim also declared an interest for being involved in the beautification works of the Golden Bauhinia Square (GBS) commissioned by the Architectural Services Department and living in the Wan Chai North area. The Board considered that the interests of Professors Leung and Lim were indirect and agreed that both of them should be allowed to stay at the meeting and participate in the discussion of the item.

4. A Member asked whether members of the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee (HEC) should declare interests in this item. The Chairperson said that the memberships of the HEC and its sub-committee were public information and there were no direct interests

involved.

5. The following representatives from the Government and study consultants were invited to the meeting at this point:

Mr. L.T. Ma - Project Manager (Hong Kong Island & Islands), Civil Engineering & Development Department

Mr. Wan Man-leung - Deputy Project Manager/Major Works 2, Highways Department (HyD)

Mr. Anthony Loo - Assistant Commissioner for Transport/Urban, Transport Department

Ms. Phyllis Li - Chief Town Planner/Special Duties, Planning Department (PlanD)

Mr. Eric Ma)
Mr. Peter Cheek) Maunsell Consultants Asia Limited

[Mr. K.Y. Leung, being the Chairman of the Sub-committee on WDII Review of the HEC joined the delegation at this point.]

6. The Chairperson extended a welcome and invited the representatives to present the Paper.

[Mr. Tony C.N. Kan arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

7. Mr. L.T. Ma started the presentation and made the following points:

- (a) following the briefing to the Board on the Concept Plan on 25.8.2006, the four District Councils (DCs) of Hong Kong Island and the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Planning, Lands and Works (PLW Panel) were

consulted and public engagement activities including a series of exhibitions, a collaborators' working session, two harbour walks, two community workshops and a consensus building town hall meeting were held. The public in general was in support of the Concept Plan which reflected the community's aspiration to reserve the new harbour-front for public enjoyment. Most of the comments received in the public engagement exercise were related to the detailed design of the waterfront as well as the implementation arrangements, which could be addressed in the detailed design and implementation stages. On 28.3.2007, the Report of the Realization Stage of the "Harbour-front Enhancement Review – Wan Chai, Causeway Bay and Adjoining Areas" (HER) project was endorsed by the Sub-committee on WDII of the HEC;

- (b) under the Concept Plan for WDII, the area of reclamation required for the construction of the Trunk Road was about 15 ha. After further study, it was confirmed that the extent of reclamation could be reduced to 12.7 ha with an additional water area of 0.4 ha affected by new flyover structures; and
- (c) in accordance with the Court of Final Appeal (CFA)'s judgment, "cogent and convincing materials" (CCM) to justify the overriding public need for rebutting the presumption against reclamation under the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance were provided in the CCM Report at Annex B of the Paper.

8. With the aid of a powerpoint presentation, Mr. Eric Ma went on to make the following points:

Public Views on the Concept Plan

- (a) there was unanimous support from the four DCs of Hong Kong Island to reserve the new harbour-front for public enjoyment. The Concept Plan was generally supported by the DCs and the LegCo PLW Panel;

- (b) most of the public views received were supportive of the Concept Plan. Other public submissions included proposals and suggestions for further improvements and short e-mail messages mainly stating stance against reclamation or expressing reservation on the position of the ventilation building and eastern tunnel portal of the Trunk Road;

The Trunk Road and Extent of Reclamation

- (c) according to the adopted road scheme, the Trunk Road tunnel to be constructed under the Central Reclamation Phase III would be extended eastwards to pass beneath the existing rock anchors of the Cross Harbour Tunnel portal structure, continue to the east of the Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter (CBTS) and connect to the existing Island Eastern Corridor (IEC). Reclamation would be confined to the locations where the Trunk Road crossed over the Mass Transit Railway Tsuen Wan Line, led to the proposed slip roads in Wan Chai and connected to the IEC;

[Mrs. Ava S.Y. Ng arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

- (d) the area of reclamation required was about 12.7 ha, which was smaller than that estimated under the Concept Plan. The reduction in the extent of reclamation was attributed mainly to adjustments after further technical study and the deletion of the proposed openable causeway at the Marine Basin to the west of the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) and the associated reclamation;
- (e) the proposed extent of reclamation was justified by “cogent and convincing materials” as detailed in the CCM Report at Annex B of the Paper;

Overall Planning and Urban Design Concept

- (f) the overall planning and urban design concept for the WDII area was presented as detailed in paragraphs 5.2 to 5.6 of the Paper, including the five

Character Precincts, the proposed building height profile and the integration of the proposed open space with major view corridors;

[Dr. Daniel B.M. To arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

The RODP

- (j) the major land uses proposed in the RODP as detailed in paragraph 6 of the Paper, which included:
- a waterfront public open space of 8.5 ha to fulfil the Government's pledge that the land formed for the construction of the Trunk Road would be devoted to harbour-front enhancement and public use;
 - three small sites for low-rise development of ancillary retail, catering and leisure services to add vibrancy to the waterfront;
 - water sports and recreation uses at the former public cargo working area (PCWA) basin;
 - extension of the HKAPA on the site of the existing Wan Chai West Sewage Screening Plant after decommissioning of the plant;
 - a Visual Arts Education Centre to the east of the HKAPA Extension;
 - expansion of the GBS onto the site of the existing bus terminus at ExPo Drive East after relocation of the bus terminus. The existing coach parking spaces at GBS to be affected would be reprovisioned at Wan Shing Street. In addition, a coach park with about 26 spaces would be provided at a site to the west of the HKCEC Atrium Link Extension;
 - provision of a helipad at Expo Drive East to the north-eastern corner of the HKCEC Extension for shared-use by the Government and

commercial operators;

- on-site reprovisioning of the Wan Chai public transport interchange (PTI) and the Wan Chai Indoor Games Hall (IGH)/Training Pool (TP) which would be affected by the proposed Exhibition Station of the Shatin to Central Link (SCL)/North Hong Kong Island Line (NIL). The locations of the PTI and IGH/TP would be swapped;
- reprovisioning of the Wan Chai Ferry Pier;
- reprovisioning of the existing salt water pumping station near the Wan Chai Ferry Pier to a site at Wan Shing Street and expansion of the Wan Chai East Sewage Screening Plant at Wan Shing Street;
- reprovisioning of the floating Tin Hau Temple on shore, if required, at the south-eastern corner of CBTS. If it was eventually decided that the floating temple should remain in the typhoon shelter, the site would be developed into a public open space;

The Eastern Tunnel Portal, Ventilation Building and Administration Building

- (k) the eastern tunnel portal, ventilation building (VB) and administration building (AB) of the Trunk Road would be located at the new waterfront in North Point. To alleviate possible environmental and visual impacts on the surrounding areas, a landscaped deck would be provided over the tunnel portal and the AB would be located under the existing IEC. Local residents had raised a concern on possible adverse environmental impact of the VB and suggested that the VB should be relocated to the car park of the Police Officers' Club in Causeway Bay. The suggestion was considered unacceptable as the environmental impacts would be more severe. To address the residents' concern, consideration was being given to separating the exhausted air discharge vent from the main VB and locating it at the tip of the breakwater to the east of the CBTS. Further study would be

undertaken and the residents would be consulted accordingly;

[Mrs. Anna S.Y. Kwong arrived to join the meeting at this point.]

Pedestrian Links and East-west Connectivity

- (l) accessibility to the waterfront would be enhanced by nine new pedestrian links, including five at-grade crossings, three landscaped decks and one footbridge;
- (m) the continuous promenade extending from Central to North Point would provide an uninterrupted east-west pedestrian movement;
- (n) the existing narrow footpath along the southwest corner of the CBTS would be widened with the closure of two sets of landing steps. Along the southeast shore of the CBTS, a cantilever would be provided to widen the existing promenade;

Amendments to OZPs

- (o) the project area of WDII fell within three OZPs, namely, the Wan Chai North OZP, the North Point OZP and the Central District (Extension) OZP. Amendments to these OZPs would be required to incorporate the land use proposals under the RODP;
- (p) it was proposed that amendments to the Wan Chai North OZP and North Point OZP should proceed together with the statutory process of gazetting the reclamation scheme and the road scheme under the Foreshore and Seabed (Reclamations) Ordinance and the Roads (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance respectively. Amendment to the Central District (Extension) OZP should be undertaken at a later stage pending the completion of the Central Reclamation Urban Design Study commissioned

by the PlanD; and

- (q) upon the Board's endorsement of the RODP, separate submissions would be made by the PlanD to the Board in respect of the amendments to the OZPs.

9. Mr. K.Y. Leung said that the Sub-committee on WDII Review of the HEC considered that the RODP had largely reflected the public's aspiration on the WDII project. In respect of public engagement at the forthcoming stage, the Sub-committee considered that more efforts should be put on the issues relating to the details of the proposals for the new waterfront in North Point, in particular, the location of the VB and the exhausted air discharge vent and details of the waterfront enhancement proposals. Since these proposals were made at a later stage of the study, more time was required to address all concerns raised by the local residents. Mr. L.T. Ma added that the public would continue to be engaged in the detailed design and implementation of the proposals under the RODP.

10. The Chairperson said that the public would also be consulted in the process of amendment of the relevant OZPs. Moreover, any person might make objections/representations to the Board according to the provisions under the Town Planning Ordinance.

[Mr. K.Y. Leung resumed his role as a Member of the Board at this point.]

11. The comments and questions raised by Members were summarized as follows:

Pedestrian Links

- (a) the provision of pedestrian links, particularly in Causeway Bay in the vicinity of the CBTS, as proposed on the RODP might not be adequate to enhance public access to the waterfront;
- (b) pedestrian links in form of wider decks would be more effective than footbridges to meet the expected increase in pedestrian flow between the hinterland and the waterfront;

- (c) apart from the provision of new links, the existing links between the hinterland and the WDII area should also be improved to ensure that the existing and future pedestrian facilities could be effectively linked up and better integrated;
- (d) possibility of improving the existing link between the waterfront and Causeway Bay, which was currently via an informal subway across Gloucester Road, should be looked into;

The VB, Exhausted Air Discharge Vent and AB of the Trunk Road

- (e) whether the proposed exhausted air discharge vent would cause any adverse environmental and visual impacts on the users of the waterfront;
- (f) whether the proposed VB and AB would be compatible with the setting of the waterfront;
- (g) consideration should be given to beautifying the exhausted air discharge vent with high quality landscaping and architectural design;

Cogent and Convincing Materials

- (h) in addition to the public need for road infrastructure, the need for an enhanced waterfront to meet urban planning and tourism objectives should also be included in establishing the “cogent and convincing materials” for justifying the reclamation;

Other Matters

- (i) some proposals under the RODP, such as the Visual Arts Education Centre and water recreation centre, were mainly for the interest of specific user groups. To ensure that the public at large could enjoy the new waterfront,

more land should be reserved for more general recreation uses and holding of ad hoc events such as street performances;

- (j) the proposals of developing water recreation related uses at Site No. WDII/19 and waterfront related commercial and leisure uses at Sites No. WDII/12, 13 & 14 were supported. In view of the prominent location of these sites, consideration should be given to undertaking an urban design study to provide guidance for the detailed design of the developments;
- (k) the GBS should be further expanded to enhance its attractiveness to tourists. To cater for the expected increase in transport demand and pedestrian flow, the proposed coach park at Wan Shing Street should be completed as soon as possible and the existing linkages between the GBS and the Wan Chai Mass Transit Railway Station should be improved;
- (l) whether there would be any interface problems between the Trunk Road and the SCL/NIL projects, and how such problems would be resolved to ensure timely implementation of both projects and to avoid significant disturbances to the public;
- (m) whether the proposed helipad near the HKCEC Extension would cause any disturbance to the activities and events at the GBS;
- (n) where would the existing salt water pumping station next to the Wan Chai Ferry Pier and the sewage screening plant next to the HKAPA be relocated to; and
- (k) sufficient depth of soil should be allowed for tree planting on the waterfront to provide shade particularly in summer.

12. In response, Mr. L.T. Ma made the following points:

Pedestrian Links

- (a) enhancement of public access to the waterfront was a major objective under the RODP. The new pedestrian links were proposed having regard to the existing pedestrian network in the hinterland and the location of major attractions on the waterfront. According to study on pedestrian traffic conducted, the nine new pedestrian links proposed under the RODP would be adequate to cater for the expected increase in pedestrian flow to the waterfront;
- (b) further enhancement to pedestrian linkage along the waterfront might require reclamation in the CBTS. However, such additional reclamation might not satisfy the “overriding public need” test;
- (c) three of the nine new pedestrian links would be in form of landscaped decks which would be conducive to pedestrian movements. The other links were mainly at-grade crossings, which would be very convenient to pedestrians;
- (d) improvements to the existing links between the hinterland and the WDII area as well as the connections between the new and existing pedestrian facilities could be the subject of separate study by relevant Government departments;
- (e) the need for improvement of the existing linkage between the waterfront and the Causeway Bay area could be further explored. However, if any improvement proposal involved further reclamation, the “overriding public need” test had to be met;

The VB, Exhausted Air Discharge Vent and AB of the Trunk Road

- (f) the proposed exhausted air discharge vent would be located at the edge of a breakwater and at the top of a tower structure. It was expected that no significant environmental impact would be caused to the users of the

waterfront. The facility would need to satisfy the standards and requirements under Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Ordinance. The relevant EIA study was in process, and the local residents would be consulted in due course;

- (g) both the VB and AB were relatively small in scale and would not constitute a visual intrusion on the waterfront;
- (h) measures for beautification of the exhausted air discharge vent would be formulated in the detailed design stage;

Cogent and Convincing Materials

- (i) to ensure compliance with the “overriding public need” test, a prudent approach had been adopted in the WDII Review and the “cogent and convincing materials” for justifying the extent of reclamation were focused on the need for the Trunk Road. If it was considered in the future that other public needs should also be fulfilled based on public consensus and “cogent and convincing materials” to justify further reclamation to meet such needs were established, such additional works might be implemented as “bolt-on” items so as not to affect the implementation of the Trunk Road project;

Other Matters

- (j) abundant public open space had been proposed under the RODP, which could allow for general recreation uses and holding of street performances. The detailed setting and design of the facilities could be determined in subsequent detailed design stage with further public inputs;
- (l) both the Trunk Road and the SIL/NIL would pass underneath the CBTS and sufficient clearance would be allowed for the two infrastructure work items. Both projects would be managed by the HyD which would ensure that all interface issues would be resolved;

- (k) there was an operational need to have a helipad at the Wan Chai North area since the existing one at the former PCWA would be closed upon implementation of the WDII project. Measures to alleviate the possible impacts to be caused by the helipad, including mainly noise and 'down-wash' of air current during the landing/taking-off of helicopters, would be incorporated;
- (l) the existing salt water pumping station next to Wan Chai Ferry Pier would be relocated to Wan Shing Street and the sewage screening plant (SSP) next to HKAPA would be decommissioned with the expansion of the existing SSP at Wan Shing Street; and
- (m) the underground utility installations would be duly planned to ensure that sufficient depth of soil for tree planting to provide shade for uses of the waterfront.

13. To address Members' concerns on the design of individual developments, the Chairperson asked whether a detailed urban design study would be undertaken. Mrs. Ava S.Y. Ng responded that the Urban Design Plan at Annex F of the Paper had provided an overall urban design framework for the area. Specific design measures and landscaping treatments for individual sites could be considered at the detailed design stage.

14. To conclude, the Chairperson said that the RODP provided a useful basis for the Board to consider amendments to the relevant OZPs. The public would continue to be engaged in the planning process and the feasibility of holding an open competition on the design, as suggested by the LegCo PLW Panel to involve more public participation, could be further explored.

15. The Chairperson thanked the representatives from the Government and study consultants for attending the meeting. They left the meeting at this point.

16. Having considered the materials included in the Paper and presented at the

meeting, the Board agreed that the RODP could be endorsed as the basis for preparing amendments to the relevant OZPs. In response to the Chairperson's enquiry, the Secretary said that proposed amendments to the Wan Chai North OZP and North Point OZP would be submitted to the Board for consideration scheduled for 20.4.2007, while the proposed amendments to the Central District (Extension) OZP would be undertaken later pending the completion of the Central Reclamation Urban Design Study commissioned by the PlanD. In respect of the Wan Chai North OZP, the Board was required to reconsider the objections to the OZP according to the CFA's judgment. The reconsideration process would start from preliminary consideration of the objections under section 6(3) of the pre-amended Town Planning Ordinance, which was also scheduled for 20.4.2007.

17. A Member asked whether it was a responsibility of the Board to verify the "cogent and convincing materials" presented by the Government departments and study consultants for rebutting the presumption against reclamation under the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance. In response, the Chairperson said that the Board was a public body tasked with the statutory responsibility of preparing plans under the Town Planning Ordinance. Although the Board was not responsible for preparing the "cogent and convincing materials", it had the responsibility to ensure that the information presented to it was sufficient to justify its decisions made in the plan-making process prior to submitting the relevant OZPs to the Chief Executive in Council for approval.

18. After deliberation, the Board noted the CCM Report and endorsed the RODP for WDII to form the basis for preparing amendments to the Central District (Extension) OZP, Wan Chai North OZP and North Point OZP.

Agenda Item 3

Any Other Business

[Open Meeting. The meeting was conducted in Cantonese.]

19. There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 11:45 a.m.