

CHAPTER 8: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1 This Chapter integrates the findings from both the qualitative and quantitative data and triangulates them to outline the main contours of public opinions obtained during the Stage 2 PE. The data include the following:
- (a) quantitative data derived from the responses to close-ended questions of the comment cards, face-to-face interviews, and telephone polls;
 - (b) quantitative data recorded in the FGW and CEF; and
 - (c) qualitative data transcribed and coded into a total of 10,203 text units (i.e. a sentence or a group of sentences expressing a particular view) as derived from the written comments provided in comment cards, face-to-face interviews, FGW and CEF, public submissions, and records of briefings to the relevant public and advisory bodies.
- 8.1.2 Overall speaking, the results from the responses to the close-ended questions of the comment cards, face-to-face interviews and telephone polls generally corroborated with each other for most of the issues. The number of positive comments, in terms of the number of text units in the qualitative analysis, on the various themes, also supported the results from the quantitative data in most of the issues. The summary of findings is set out in sections 8.2 to 8.6 below.
- 8.1.3 This Consultancy seeks to assess, summarize, and compare the views of (1) interest parties, (2) interested members of the public and (3) relevant statutory and advisory bodies, and (4) members of the general public regarding the design of the New Central Harbourfront. It would be inappropriate to have a priority system for these groups.

Opinions collected via Comment Cards, face-to-face interviews, submissions, and forums/meetings, in general, represent the opinions of the first three groups, while the Telephone Polls target the fourth group.

Since the evidence from Telephone Polls was collected in an unbiased manner, and can be demonstrated to be statistically reliable and valid, it is often argued that greater weight should be assigned to them. Moreover, from a public policy perspective, the opinions of the general public must deserve the utmost attention. On the other hand, members of the public are often not well informed about the issue. They did not have the benefit of viewing the graphical presentation of the proposals before answering. Hence, their opinions must also be viewed in that light. Furthermore, there are limitations as to what can be asked in a telephone interview.

The opinions of interested individuals and organizations, who took the time and effort to gain understanding on the issue and the trouble to submit their views, deserve special attention. The evidence from Comment Cards, face-to-face interviews, submissions, and records of public forums captured the opinions of this group. It must, however, be pointed out that, unlike the Telephone Polls in which a large number of the respondents were selected in a randomised manner, frequency counts and percentages from Comment Cards,

written submissions, and meeting/forum records must be interpreted with great caution, as no statistical inferences can be made with this evidence. A high percentage of opinion in favour or against a certain proposal from these sources does not necessarily suggest that a similar high percentage exists in the general population. To claim that a similar percentage exists in the general population on the basis of this evidence would normally require the convergence of other pieces of such evidence.

Relevant professional bodies, concern groups, the District Councils, and relevant statutory and advisory bodies are often the most well-informed. Many such parties are likely to be affected by the design, and hence should be listened to. The opinions of these groups are often insightful and supported by facts and figures. Submissions from these organizations and individuals must therefore be given due consideration as well, even though the number of such submissions are relatively small.

In short, each type of evidence has its strengths and weaknesses, and it would not be appropriate to assign simplistic weights to a particular type of evidence.

This Report highlights views with high frequency count from the quantitative data, and high frequency count and high percentage in terms of number of mentions from the qualitative data. It has also given more prominence to well-thought-through views as well as those supported by facts, figures, irrespective of their frequency count.

8.2 Overall Design Vision

8.2.1 There was an overwhelming support for the overall design vision of creating a vibrant, green and accessible new Central harbourfront. Based on the quantitative findings, the respondents/participants of the following agreed or strongly agreed to the overall design vision:

Comment cards	84%
Face-to-face interviews	90%
Telephone polls	81%
FGW	100%
CEF	90%

8.2.2 About 59% of the relevant views recorded in the qualitative analysis, in terms of the number of text units, were considered positive. The major views were that the overall design vision of creating a vibrant, green and accessible new Central harbourfront was generally supported and the reduced development intensity proposed in the refined urban design framework was generally appreciated. On the other hand, some members of the public considered that the design vision lacked a distinctive identity and mix of uses. The major suggestions relating to the overall design vision were that the proposals should be people-oriented and be able to cater for all including both locals and tourists; and that there was further scope for improvements to better achieve the design vision, especially in terms of enhancing vibrancy, creating a harmonious building design, and projecting a distinctive identity of the Central harbourfront.

8.3 Sustainable and Balanced Approach

8.3.1 There was general support for adopting a sustainable and balanced approach in designing the new Central harbourfront. The quantitative data show that the majority of the respondents/participants agreed or strongly agreed to the sustainable and balanced approach:

Comment cards	79%
Face-to-face interviews	85%
Telephone polls	74%
FGW	100%
CEF	81%

8.3.2 About 59% the relevant views recorded in the qualitative analysis were considered positive. The public were generally in agreement with the sustainable and balanced approach in designing the new Central harbourfront, and some considered that the design was multi-functional and fit well with the surrounding environment. It is worth mentioning that the DCs consulted generally considered that the proposals should cater for the development of the CBD while giving consideration to lowering the development intensity, promoting greening, and providing abundant quality open space and facilities for the public. On the other hand, some members of the public considered it more appropriate to concentrate commercial development in the CBD while others preferred more open space and recreational facilities. The major suggestions relating to this aspect were that there was a need to review the potential office development sites within the close proximity of the CBD in conjunction with the Study, and that due consideration should be given to balancing heritage conservation, economic needs and other public aspirations.

8.4 The Refined Urban Design Framework

8.4.1 The following data present the percentages of the respondents/participants who agreed or strongly agreed that the refined urban design framework has satisfied the following sustainable design principles:

Sustainable design principles	Comment cards	Face-to-face interviews	FGW	CEF
(i) Diverse uses and activities	63%	77%	80%	59%
(ii) Respecting natural setting	73%	72%	73%	60%
(iii) Respecting existing urban fabric	60%	64%	58%	43% ¹
(iv) Promoting harbourfront enhancement	74%	85%	81%	81%
(v) Respecting cultural heritage	56%	55%	44% ²	36% ³
(vi) Ease of pedestrian access to harbourfront	71%	78%	45% ⁴	52%
(vii) Promoting Greening and Environmentally Friendly	77%	79%	47% ⁵	58%

Sustainable design principles	Comment cards	Face-to-face interviews	FGW	CEF
Building Design				

- ¹ For the CEF, about 29% of the participants disagreed or strongly disagreed, and about 28% adopted a neutral stance in respect of the principle on “respecting existing urban fabric”.
- ² For the FGW, about 12% of the participants disagreed or strongly disagreed, and about 43% adopted a neutral stance in respect of the principle on “respecting cultural heritage”.
- ³ For the CEF, about 31% of the participants disagreed or strongly disagreed, and about 33% adopted a neutral stance in respect of the principle on “respecting cultural heritage”.
- ⁴ For the FGW, about 24% of the participants disagreed or strongly disagreed, and about 31% adopted a neutral stance in respect of the principle on “ease of pedestrian access to harbourfront”.
- ⁵ For the FGW, about 47% of the participants disagreed or strongly disagreed, and about 7% adopted a neutral stance in respect of the principle on “promoting greening and environmentally friendly building design”.

8.4.2 The quantitative data sets show that the majority agreed that the refined urban design framework has generally satisfied the sustainable design principles. Nevertheless, there was no clear agreement in the FGW that the refined urban design framework has satisfied the principle of “promoting greening and environmentally friendly building design”, and the participants opined that there should be adequate mechanism to ensure the achievement of the design concepts, greening and environmentally-friendly building design at the implementation stage. There was a relatively lower level of agreement that the principle of “respecting cultural heritage” has been satisfied.

8.4.3 The majority of the respondents/participants agreed or strongly agreed that the refined urban design framework has met the public aspirations for a vibrant, green and accessible new Central harbourfront:

Comment cards	54%
Face-to-face interviews	57%
FGW	81%
CEF	51%

8.4.4 About 35% of the relevant views recorded in the qualitative analysis were considered positive, 25% negative, and 40% with other suggestions (such as further scope of improvement in terms of enhancing vibrancy and the need for place-making).

8.5 Design Concepts for Key Sites

Sites 1 and 2 (CDA Site adjoining Central Piers No. 4 to 6 and Commercial Site north of IFC II)

- 8.5.1 The proposed design concepts for Sites 1 and 2 were generally supported, particularly as shown in the quantitative findings of the comment cards and face-to-face interviews. However, about half of the participants in the FGW disliked both Concept A (Hotel & Office) and Concept B (Office & Office). For those who had chosen between Concepts A and B, there was a clear preference for Concept A as compared to Concept B:

	Like both concepts	Prefer Concept A	Prefer Concept B	No preference	Dislike both concepts
Comment cards	9%	54%	13%	6%	14%
Face-to-face interviews	4%	59%	9%	11%	16%
Telephone polls	6%	31%	10%	29%	20%
FGW	14%	31%	2%	0%	53%
CEF	2%	37%	10%	18%	33%

- 8.5.2 About 84% of the relevant positive views recorded in the qualitative analysis were related to Concept A, while about 16% were related to Concept B. The supportive views generally showed that commercial development at the site was needed, the development intensity was acceptable, and the design was attractive. The negative views were related to the hotel and office buildings at the sites, in particular Site 1, for blocking views, obstructing air flow and pedestrian circulation, or not giving recognition to the adjacent iconic building, i.e. IFC II. Major suggestions included, inter alia, reviewing the building design and disposition of the proposed development; setting back the development at Site 1 from the shore; reviewing the need for commercial development at the sites; redistributing the gross floor area of the sites elsewhere; reviewing the need for the proposed at-grade bus terminus at Site 2; improving the accessibility and connectivity of the sites to the adjacent areas such as providing wider landscaped decks connecting IFC, the piers and the hinterland; providing more green space; integrating all Central Piers to achieve better design; and stipulating design restrictions in the lease to guide future development. In addition, alternative proposals such as replacing office/hotel development with multi-level café bars and terraces abutting IFC and a ‘Waterfront Esplanade’ with a series of elevated walkways and connectors; using the land for green spaces and public spaces; developing low-rise service apartment in front of IFC; developing the area as ‘Convenience for Commuters’ recognizing that this area is Hong Kong’s largest inter-modal transport interchange; and developing flea market in the area, etc have been put forward.

Site 3 (CDA site north of Statue Square)

- 8.5.3 The proposed design concepts for Site 3 were generally supported. There was more support for Concept B (Larger Landscaped Deck) as compared to Concept A (Reduced Landscaped Deck), though the preference was not clear in the face-to-face interviews and FGW:

	Like both concepts	Prefer Concept A	Prefer Concept B	No preference	Dislike both concepts
Comment cards	8%	22%	57%	4%	5%
Face-to-face interviews	2%	42%	42%	11%	3%
FGW	0%	49% ⁶	49%	3%	0%
CEF	4%	33%	53%	6%	5%

⁶ For the FGW, about 49% of the participants (i.e. 19 participants) preferred Concept A. Among them, 12 showed a clear preference for Concept A while 7 qualified that they preferred Concept A subject to further improvement to the at-grade pedestrian connection.

- 8.5.4 About 53% of the relevant positive views recorded in the qualitative analysis were related to Concept B, while about 47% were related to Concept A. The proposed reduction in building density, the breaking up of the site into smaller footprints, the provision of multi-level links for pedestrian choice, the provision of landscaped decks and open spaces, and the provision of retail facilities at the site were generally supported. The negative views were generally related to the design of the landscaped deck and the lack of street-level activities. Major suggestions included, inter alia, simplifying the configuration of the landscaped decks; improving the building disposition to ensure visual permeability from inland to the waterfront as well as at street level; improving at-grade pedestrian connections; incorporating different types of pedestrian linkages (e.g. providing all-weather travellers connecting Central Pier No. 7 with the site and Central MTR Station as well as underground passageways); providing more shaded areas and artistic elements; and ensuring public access to the landscaped decks and rooftops. In addition, alternative proposals such as a ‘Statue Square Esplanade’ area with low-rise buildings; a ‘Green Break’ with a park environment; an office hub; and a ‘Central Sports Ground’, etc have been put forward.

Site 4 (Site north of City Hall)

- 8.5.5 The design concepts had received general support. Most responses in the comment cards, face-to-face interviews, and CEF were in favour of Concept A (More Separate Blocks with Star Ferry Clock Tower) as compared to Concept B (Fewer Separate Blocks without Star Ferry Clock Tower). On the other hand, Concept B was preferred in the FGW.

	Like both concepts	Prefer Concept A	Prefer Concept B	No preference	Dislike both concepts
Comment cards	7%	43%	33%	7%	6%
Face-to-face interviews	1%	53%	31%	9%	6%
FGW	26%	13%	39%	3%	21%
CEF	1%	32%	15%	33%	20%

8.5.6 About 63% of the relevant positive views recorded in the qualitative analysis were related to Concept A, and 37% were related to Concept B. The small and separate blocks with open vista in the design concepts were generally supported. The negative views were mainly related to whether the proposed building would match with City Hall and whether the small blocks would likely to attract tenants. Major suggestions included, inter alia, preserving the visual corridor between City Hall and the waterfront; avoiding reconstructing the Clock Tower as an isolated structure; providing viewing platforms; providing a large esplanade for street performance and temporary exhibitions; and ensuring the provision of a critical mass for the waterfront-related commercial uses so as to make the place vibrant and attractive. In addition, alternative proposals such as developing the site as an ‘Inner Harbour’ area with Queen’s Pier and the old Star Ferry Clock Tower reinstated at their respective original locations; a ‘Waterfront Lan Kwai Fong’; a ‘New Central Praya’ characterized by 19th century buildings of 1 to 3 storeys for waterfront-related commercial and leisure uses (together with Site 6); developing Sites 4, 7 and 8 as a ‘Must Go Leisure Destination’ with a wide variety of facilities; and developing a group of small-scale and low-rise buildings in random settings amidst open parkland, etc have been put forward.

Sites 5 and 6 (Site north of CITIC Tower and near the HKCEC Extension)

8.5.7 For Sites 5 and 6, the majority of the respondents/participants liked the design concepts for the sites:

Site 5

Comment cards	66%
Face-to-face interviews	73%
FGW	82%
CEF	76%

Site 6

Comment cards	79%
Face-to-face interviews	66%
FGW	86%
CEF	73%

8.5.8 For Sites 5 and 6, about 55% and 58% of the relevant views recorded respectively in the qualitative analysis were positive. The proposed arts and cultural facilities at the sites were generally supported. There were concerns on the possible duplication of such facilities with those in West Kowloon, and the need for further improvement to the accessibility and vibrancy of the area

(e.g. provision of retail bridges or wider landscaped walkways, and provision of areas for street performance). Some considered that the proposed design was too bulky and not suitable for arts and cultural related uses. Major suggestions included, inter alia, the provision of commercial elements (e.g. hotel and flea market) to balance with the arts and cultural development; the provision of open courtyards for displaying sculptures; the provision of water-based activities such as Maritime Museum or water-based hydro theatre; and integrating the design of the sites with the surrounding roads, open spaces and the waterfront. Major alternative proposals that have been put forward included hotel complex with service apartments, commercial and retail uses with restaurants and outdoor dining facilities at Site 5; developing a ‘Marine Basin’ with a pedestrian causeway, ‘Marine Walk’ and a floating hotel as well as an ‘Arts and Culture Corner’ around Site 6; developing the area for ‘Fringe Arts and Culture Campus’ with a focus on arts and culture education and development; developing the sites for APA extension or Arts Centre II; developing the area as a Civic Centre for NGOs; developing a ‘New Fenwick Pier Thematic Tourist Area’ with exhibition gallery, bars, restaurants, and tourist shopping areas; developing the site together with Site 4 as ‘The New Central Praya’; and accommodating the Court of Final Appeal and the Department of Justice at Site 5.

Site 7 (Waterfront Promenade)

8.5.9 The proposed design concepts were generally supported. The majority of the responses in the comment cards, face-to-face interviews, and telephone polls were in favour of Concept B (Urban Green), while more participants in the FGW and CEF were in favour of Concept A (Urban Park).

	Like both concepts	Prefer Concept A	Prefer Concept B	No preference	Dislike both concepts
Comment cards	15%	26%	47%	5%	3%
Face-to-face interviews	4%	28%	60%	4%	4%
Telephone polls	16%	21%	45%	14%	2%
FGW	21%	31%	5%	33%	10%
CEF	8%	47%	31%	3%	12%

8.5.10 The majority (i.e. about 68%) of the relevant positive views in the qualitative analysis were related to Concept B, while about 32% were related to Concept A. There were positive views on the design concepts, which were considered to be commendable and having their own special characters. The negative views were mainly relating to the design and themes of the proposed promenade. Major suggestions and proposals included, inter alia, enhancing the vibrancy of the promenade by adding more nodal attractions; incorporating the design merits in both Concepts A and B; enhancing pedestrian connectivity; providing cycling tracks or other forms of environmentally friendly transport; providing tramline, jogging trails and better land-sea interface; ensuring clear implementation mechanisms and good management; providing the PLA berth offshore or ensuring an integrated design of the PLA berth with the waterfront promenade and turning it into an attraction; extending the waterfront promenade; integrating the design of the future Central Government Complex

(CGC) with the waterfront promenade; and developing the area with Sites 4 and 8 as a ‘Must Go Leisure Destination’ with a beach or wetland, etc.

Re-assembling Queen’s Pier and Site 8

8.5.11 The proposed design concepts were generally supported. The majority of the responses in the comment cards, face-to-face interviews, and CEF were in favour of Concept A (Queen’s Pier by the Harbour). There was also clear support from the DCs for Concept A in that 16 out of the 18 DCs consulted have passed motion in support of, inter alia, re-assembling Queen’s Pier at the harbourfront for public use. For the FGW, while more responses were in favour of Concept B (Queen’s Pier at Original Location), the views were diverse among those who liked both concepts, liked Concept A and had no preference. For the telephone polls, there was quite an even distribution among those who preferred Concept A, those who preferred Concept B, and those with no preference. The findings are as follows:

	Like both concepts	Prefer Concept A	Prefer Concept B	No preference	Dislike both concepts
Comment cards	7%	49%	27%	5%	7%
Face-to-face interviews	1%	58%	26%	7%	9%
Telephone polls	10%	27%	27%	27%	6%
FGW	20%	16%	39%	16%	8%
CEF	1%	55%	25%	13%	6%

8.5.12 The majority (about 61%) of the relevant positive views recorded in the qualitative analysis were related to Concept A, while about 39% were related to Concept B. There were positive views on each of the proposed design concepts: Concept A could revive the pier function of Queen’s Pier and the design looked symmetrical, while Concept B could respect the historical significance of Queen’s Pier and its spatial relationship with Edinburgh Place and City Hall. On the other hand, there were concerns about the time and resources implications for re-assembling the pier. Major suggestions included, inter alia, strengthening the memorial elements at the original site of Queen’s Pier if the in-situ re-assembling concept was not pursued; re-assembling the pier at other locations; placing Queen’s Pier at its original location after completion of the underground work for North Island Line/Airport Express Overrun Tunnel and adjustment to the alignment of Road P2; and re-assembling Queen’s Pier in-situ and using it as a shaded resting and gathering place and possible bus stop or taxi drop-off.

Reconstructing Old Star Ferry Clock Tower

8.5.13 There was a general support for the proposed design concepts. However, there was no obvious convergence of views on their preference. More responses in the comment cards and CEF liked Concept A (Clock Tower at Site 4), while more responses in the face-to-face interviews, telephone polls, and FGW liked Concept B (Clock Tower close to Original Location). The findings are summarized as follows:

	Like both concepts	Prefer Concept A	Prefer Concept B	No preference	Dislike both concepts
Comment cards	6%	49%	22%	8%	11%
Face-to-face interviews	1%	29%	42%	15%	13%
Telephone polls	7%	23%	39%	23%	4%
FGW	0%	13%	56%	26%	5%
CEF	4%	42%	16%	10%	27%

8.5.14 The relevant positive views in the qualitative analysis were quite evenly distributed between Concepts A and B. About 49% of the relevant positive views recorded in the qualitative analysis were related to Concept A, while 51% were related to Concept B. The design concept for turning the old Star Ferry Clock Tower as a focal point and maintaining an axial relationship with City Hall and the re-assembled Queen's Pier was generally supported. There were, however, other views that there was no need to reconstruct the Clock Tower and that the design did not match with the surrounding environment. Major suggestions included, inter alia, avoiding reconstructing the old Star Ferry Clock Tower in isolation; building an exhibition hall or a piazza around the reconstructed Clock Tower; and reconstructing the Clock Tower away from Central.

8.6 Other Issues

Other issues that were raised in many of the comments received included environmental concerns and provision of eco-friendly facilities, concerns of roads and pedestrian access, a broad landscape design for a tree-lined boulevard along Road P2, provision of more multi-purpose facilities, the public engagement process for the Study, harbour reclamation, proposals for cycling tracks or other environmentally friendly transport modes, and management of the harbourfront development.