3. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FORUM

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The Community Engagement Forum was held on 12 May 2007 to collect views and ideas from the general public, relevant stakeholders and concern groups, and members of the relevant public and advisory bodies on the Study.

3.1.2 Invitations were sent to the various stakeholders, professional and academic institutions, concern groups, the then LegCo Panel on Planning, Lands and Works, TPB, HEC, relevant district councils, and other relevant public and advisory bodies to invite their members to attend the CEF. Newspaper advertisements were posted to inform the general public of the CEF. Members of the TPB, HEC and professional institutions were invited as facilitators and Chairman. A list of the chairman and facilitators for the CEF is at Appendix 1. A total of 30 relevant professional groups, academic institutions, concern groups, district councils and other relevant stakeholders joined the forum. Members of the relevant government departments were also invited and the consultancy team was present to exchange views and to provide relevant information to facilitate discussion. The CEF was well attended by a total of 150 participants, including 70 participants as set out below, 4 government representatives, 12 members of the consultancy team and 64 members of the general public. Members of the following professional and academic institutions, concern groups, relevant district councils and other stakeholders had attended the forum:

- **Professional Groups (29 participants)**
  - The Hong Kong Institute of Architects
  - The Hong Kong Institute of Planners
  - The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors
  - The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers
  - Hong Kong Urban Design Alliance
  - Association of Engineering Professionals in Society
  - Professional Green Building Council

- **Academic Institutions (6 participants)**
  - Hong Kong Baptist University
  - Centre for Environmental Policy and Resource Management, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

- **Concern Groups (24 participants)**
  - Action Group on Protection of the Harbour
  - Society for Protection of the Harbour
  - Central and Western Concern Group
  - Civic Party
  - Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong
  - Designing Hong Kong
  - Green Sense
  - Heritage Hong Kong
- Heritage Watch
- Hong Kong Institute of Contemporary Culture
- Local Action
- The Conservancy Association

- District Councils (5 participants)
  - Central and Western District Council
  - Wanchai District Council
  - Eastern District Council

- Other Stakeholders (6 participants)
  - Citybus Ltd.
  - Hong Kong and Kowloon Ferry Ltd.
  - Hong Kong Tramways Ltd.
  - Kowloon Motor Bus Co. Ltd.
  - Mass Transit Railway Corporation
  - Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong

Figure 3.0: Distribution of Participants’ Representation in the Community Engagement Forum

3.1.3 The participants were divided into eight groups for group discussion. The flow of the forum was the same as that of FGW. It was noted that some groups did not answer the response forms fully. To facilitate analysis, score ‘0’ was assigned if a group did not answer the response forms accordingly (under the following circumstances as generally opined by the group members), hence, readers would need to interpret these figures with care.

- Certain items should not be included in the questions of the response form;
- The meaning of the questions was unclear;
- Some parts of the questions were duplicating; or
- No consensus on the questions as a group.
3.1.4 The methodology of analysis adopted was the same as that for the FGW.

3.2 Summary of Major Findings

Urban Design Objectives

3.2.1 Amongst the seven proposed urban design objectives, the following two receiving the two highest scores were considered the most important by the participants in the group discussions (Figure 3.1):

- To respect the cultural and historical context of Central
- To create a sustainable design that contributes to economic vitality, commensurates with traffic, environmental and infrastructural capacity, and preserves local character and heritage

![Figure 3.1: Summary of Findings on the Urban Design Objectives (CEF)](image)

[19/56 (34%) was assigned score ‘0’]

3.2.2 Besides, other suggestions on urban design objectives were raised in the forum, including:

- The design should be compatible with the environment and people-oriented
- Private development was not supported
- Commercial use should be confined to serve recreational use
- Only pollution free and environmental friendly transport should be allowed
- Tourism should be the focus
- Economic development should not be the first priority
- The image of Central as the heart of Hong Kong should be promoted
- Though culture and history were important, transport issues should also be addressed
Urban Design Issues

3.2.3 Amongst the seven proposed urban design issues, the following three receiving the two highest scores were considered the most important by the participants in the group discussions (Figure 3.2):

- Conservation of the cultural heritage of Central
- Environmental friendly building design, landscape strategy and greening to enhance the environmental quality
- Harbourfront enhancements, nodal attractions and anchoring public spaces to achieve vibrancy and sense of place

![Figure 3.2: Summary of Findings on the Urban Design Issues (CEF)]

[14/56 (25%) was assigned score “0”]

Urban Design Considerations for the Eight Key Sites

3.2.4 The following were considered important urban design considerations for the eight key sites in the study area (see Appendix 3 for the locations of the eight key sites):

**Site 1: Comprehensive development area at Central Piers No. 4-6**
- Improve public accessibility
- Building height limit to be imposed
- Piers to be redesigned
- Continuous cycling track connecting Sites 1, 6, 7 and 8
- Improve connectivity with MTR
- More greening areas

**Site 2: Commercial site adjacent to IFC II**
- Integrate and connect with the CDA site
- Low to medium rise development (height restriction of 28-storey)
- Improve linkage and connectivity from the CBD to the waterfront
- Integrate with the building design of Site 1
Site 3: CDA with landscape pedestrian deck and commercial complex
- Street level linkages with plants for natural shading
- Low-density and low-rise development
- Pedestrian accessibility and connectivity
- Unobstructed view to the harbour
- Breaking up the development into development parcels of acceptable size

Site 4: Waterfront related commercial and leisure uses site north of City Hall
- Visual corridor between the City Hall and the harbour
- Accommodate City Hall’s extended facilities to enhance activities of art and culture
- Improve accessibility

Site 5: Site to the north of CITIC Tower
- Oppose any commercial development
- Design should be integrated with the new government building and developed as low-rise development
- Building height limit to be imposed

Site 6: Waterfront related commercial and leisure uses site north of CITIC Tower
- More greening area
- Integrate with maritime and water-related themes
- Building height limit to be imposed

Site 7: Promenade along waterfront of CR III
- Develop for recreational use only
- Open space for arts and cultural activities
- The PLA military pier should be relocated elsewhere and/or it should be open for public use
- Building height limit to be imposed
- Continuous waterfront promenade

Site 8: Waterfront related commercial and leisure uses site adjacent to the piers
- Develop for recreational use
- Provide street markets

Sustainable Design Principles

3.2.5 Amongst the six proposed sustainable design principles, the following three receiving the three highest scores were strongly emphasized by the participants in the group discussions (Figure 3.3):
- Promoting harbourfront enhancement
- Respecting cultural heritage
- Promoting environmental friendly building design and greening
Sustainability Criteria

3.2.6 The proposed sustainability criteria comprised three aspects, namely social, environmental and economic aspects.

Social Aspects

3.2.7 Amongst the ten proposed social sustainability criteria, the following three receiving the two highest scores were considered the most important by the participants in the group discussions (Figure 3.3a)

- Conserving natural heritage of the city
- Public enjoyment and appreciation of the harbour
- Conserving cultural heritage of the harbourfront
Environmental Aspects

3.2.8 Amongst the eleven proposed environmental sustainability criteria, the following six receiving the two highest scores were considered the most important by the participants in the group discussions (Figure 3.3b)

- Enhancing the setting for sites of cultural heritage value and interest
- Maintaining breezeways, view corridors and air ventilation corridors
- Improving connectivity to public transport to reduce vehicular traffic
- Better pedestrian environment
- Minimizing environmental pollution
- Improving urban climate, visual amenity and compatibility with natural setting

Figure 3.3b: Summary of Findings on the Environmental Sustainability Criteria (CEF)

[26/88 (30%) was assigned score “0”]

Economic Aspects

3.2.9 As noted from the scores, the economic aspects were considered less important in the sustainable design assessment framework as compared to the social and environmental sustainable criteria. Nevertheless, amongst the ten proposed economic sustainability criteria, the following two receiving the two highest scores were considered relatively more important by the participants in the group discussions (Figure 3.3c)

- Enhancing image and functions of Victoria Harbour
- Enhancing identity of the city
Alternative Concepts for Reconstructing Old Star Ferry Clock Tower and Reassembling Queen’s Pier

3.2.10 The performance of the four proposed design concepts (Appendix 4) for reconstructing the old Star Ferry Clock Tower and reassembling Queen’s Pier based on the returned response forms of the small group discussions were summarized as follows:

**Concept A: Queen’s Pier with City Hall**

- **Concept A1: Reassembling Queen’s Pier at the Original Location**
  - Some (2 out of 8 groups) considered that this concept performed well against the performance criteria relating to the spatial context, historical context, identity, accessibility, visual prominence of the two structures.
  - Few (1 out of 8 groups) considered that this concept could fulfill the performance criterion relating to functionality.

- **Concept A2: Reassembling Queen’s Pier close to the Original Location**
  - One group considered that this concept could satisfy the performance criteria relating to accessibility and flexibility for planning.

**Concept B: Queen’s Pier by the Harbour**

- **Concept B1: Axial Approach**
  - One group considered that this concept performed well against the performance criteria relating to functionality, accessibility, visual prominence and flexibility for planning.
Concept B2: Function Approach with Marine Frontage

- One group considered that this concept could achieve the performance criteria relating to functionality, accessibility, visual prominence and flexibility for planning.

3.2.11 Apart from the above four proposed design concepts, three other design alternatives were proposed:

**Concept A0**
- Queen’s Pier was proposed to be retained and preserved at its original location while the old Star Ferry Clock Tower could either be integrated into the pier or located at the new waterfront.

**Concept A0 (modified)**
- Queen’s Pier and the old Star Ferry Clock Tower were proposed to be reassembled and reconstructed at their original locations respectively.

**Concept C**
- Queen’s Pier should be retained at the original location with an artificial lagoon built in front of the pier connected by a drainage culvert or an open canal to the sea to remind people of its connection with water. In order for this lagoon to be built, Road P2 should be deleted.
- The old Star Ferry Clock Tower should be reconstructed at a position with wide access road to the Clock Tower to increase pedestrian flow, and the Clock Tower should be restored to remind people of the memorable chimes. The reconstructed Star Ferry Clock Tower would become a focal point between IFC and City Hall.

3.2.12 Summarizing the views, most participants preferred Queen’s Pier at its original location, if it was technically viable. Out of the four design concepts proposed by the study consultant, Concept A1 was considered being able to satisfy most of the performance criteria such as spatial context, historical context, identity, accessibility and visual prominence.

3.2.13 Regarding the proposed location for reconstructing the old Star Ferry Clock Tower, some considered that the location should be integrated with City Hall and Queen’s Pier, while a few considered the old Star Ferry Clock Tower should be reconstructed at the original location. The remaining did not give any explicit opinion.

3.2.14 Other suggestions raised in the CEF were summarized as follows:

**Queen’s Pier**
- Queen’s Pier should be preserved at the original site with welcoming new design and should be symbolized with the historical meaning of the pier.
- Queen’s Pier should be preserved at the original site because of its connection and relationship with City Hall.
- The original pier function of Queen’s Pier should be maintained.
Old Star Ferry Clock Tower

- The old Star Ferry Clock Tower should be integrated with the pier, or located at the new waterfront.
- The old Star Ferry Clock Tower should be reconstructed on an axis extending northward from Statue Square so that people standing at the Clock Tower would be able to see the new Star Ferry Pier.
- The original site of the old Star Ferry Clock Tower could be turned into public open space with a museum for the old Star Ferry Clock Tower.

3.3 Chairman’s Remarks and Conclusion

3.3.1 The following conclusions were drawn from the group presentations and the Chairman’s concluding remarks:

Urban Design Objectives, Urban Design Issues and Sustainable Design Assessment Framework

3.3.2 The participants considered that to respect the cultural and historical context of Central and to create a sustainable design were the most important urban design objectives for the new Central harbourfront.

3.3.3 Similar to urban design objectives, cultural heritage of Central and environmental friendly building design, landscape strategy and greening were considered the most important urban design issues for the new Central harbourfront.

3.3.4 The participants considered that for the sustainable design assessment framework, a focus should be put on the principles relating to harbourfront enhancement and preservation of cultural heritage.

3.3.5 On the sustainability criteria, the participants placed relatively less concerns on the economic sustainability criteria. Among the criteria listed, the main concerns of participants were enhancing the image and functions of Victoria Harbour as well as the identity of the city, same as the FGW. For the environmental aspects, the most important criterion was to enhance the setting for sites of cultural heritage value and interest. As regards the social aspects, most participants were concerned about the conservation of natural and cultural heritage of the city and provision for public enjoyment of the harbour.

3.3.6 The discussion in CEF had generated the following key urban design considerations for the eight key sites:

(a) Improving pedestrian accessibility and connectivity
(b) Proposed developments should be low-rise and low-density without obstructing views to the ridgeline and harbour
(c) More greening and open space
(d) More space for arts and cultural activities
(e) Maintaining visual corridor
Alternative Design Concepts for Reconstructing the Old Star Ferry Clock Tower and Reassembling Queen’s Pier

3.3.7 For the proposed design concepts for reassembling Queen’s Pier, most of the participants indicated that Queen’s Pier should be preserved or reconstructed at its original site with enhancement or modified designs. This would maintain the original relationship and spatial context with City Hall and the surrounding buildings. Some participants also considered it important to maintain the original function of Queen’s Pier. Out of the four design concepts proposed for the Stage 1 Public Engagement, Concept A1 was considered as the one which could satisfy most of the performance criteria relating to spatial context, historical context, identity, accessibility and visual prominence.

3.3.8 There were alternative suggestions made by some groups in the CEF, e.g. Queen’s Pier should be located close to a water element while the old Star Ferry Clock Tower should be restored and continue to chime. The participants generally agreed that collective memory should be respected.