Mong Kok

Area Improvement Plan for the Shopping Areas of Mong Kok

Executive Summary
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1 Introduction

1.1 Study Background

As a popular destination for both locals and tourists, Mong Kok has gained its reputation over the years from its unique urban vibrancy created by a high concentration of retail shops, a variety of attractions and activities, good accessibility and diverse consumer products at affordable prices. To many, it is not just an ordinary shopping area but a destination where many interesting activities take place. These diversities make each trip a distinctively memorable experience.

The strong urban grid and scale of urban fabric have led to the ‘organic development’ of cluster zones and themed streets that have developed with little guidance from the Government and appeal to different groups in the community. They are still thriving nodes that play an important role in the urban and economic development of Mong Kok.

Notwithstanding its dynamic and energetic district culture, Mong Kok is faced with many urban issues such as a crowded environment, lack of open space and greening, heavy traffic, infrastructure degradation, poor integration and an unfriendly pedestrian environment. All these hamper the smooth flow of pedestrians and the pleasant shopping and walking experience in Mong Kok.

In February 2006, Planning Department commissioned Maunsell-EDAW Joint Venture to conduct the Area Improvement Plan for the Shopping Areas of Mong Kok – Feasibility Study (the Study), with the aim to formulate an Area Improvement Plan (AIP) which could help enhance the overall attractiveness of the shopping areas and pedestrian experience in Mong Kok.
1.2 Study Objectives

1.2.1 Objectives

The specific objectives of this Study are to:

(a) Formulate a robust urban framework that contributes to improvements of the area without losing its urban identity;

(b) Strengthen district identity, pedestrian orientation and public penetration of the shopping area;

(c) Identify strategies for greening and optimize greening opportunities for the area;

(d) Provide solutions to reduce traffic and pedestrian conflict, and improve the pedestrian environment and facilities;

(e) Create cost-effective and practical solutions to improve the quality of the environment; and

(f) Obtain public support on improvements that benefit both locals and visitors.

1.2.2 The Study Area

The Study Area, with a total land area of about 58 hectares, covers the key shopping areas and tourist attractions in Mong Kok. It is bounded by MTR Mong Kok East Station and its railway track to the east, Dundas Street and Waterloo Road to the south, Shanghai Street to the west and Prince Edward Road West and Flower Market Road to the north.

研究範圍的土地總面積約為58公頃，覆蓋了旺角的主要購物區和旅遊點，東至港鐵旺角東站及鐵路線，南及登打士街及窩打老道，西至上海街，北達太子道西和花墟道。
Mong Kok is characterized by its vibrancy and diverse activities. Nonetheless, it also faces a number of challenging urban issues. A SWOT analysis of Mong Kok has been carried out to form the basis for analysis of key issues of the Study Area. The SWOT analysis covers the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of Mong Kok and a review on forces driving its current positioning and role.

### Strengths
- A central location in Kowloon Peninsula
- Historic street pattern and buildings
- Urban vibrancy and program diversity
- Good transport connections
- An urban magnet to draw a large amount of visitors

### Weaknesses
- Old urban fabric and buildings
- Weak physical association between entertainment, dining and shopping facilities
- Lack of sense of arrival and cohesive district identity

### Opportunities
- Repositioning Mong Kok as a destination of hip and chic with a critical mix of shopping, entertainment and dining
- Rationalize circulation and space design
- Enhance the physical identity of the district and shopping areas
- Improve options and environment for pedestrian movement

### Threats
- Competition from other shopping districts
- Fragile nature of thematic shopping clusters
- Insufficient resources for proper management of public realm

### Key Issues

1. **Planning and Urban Design**
   - **Incompatible Land Uses**
     - Some land uses in Mong Kok are incompatible with each other, such as the petrol filling station (PFS) and the refuse collection point (RCP) at Nullah Road which are in close proximity to the shops. Nevertheless, due to the dense development in Mong Kok, it is difficult to identify suitable sites to relocate these incompatible uses.
   - **Under-utilized Spaces**
     - There are a few under-utilized Government sites in Mong Kok, including the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) Depot and Water Supplies Department (WSD) Mong Kok Office at Sai Yeung, a temporary car park at Luen Wan Street, the site formerly occupied by the Soy Street Temporary Cooked Food Market and a nursery site at Flower Market Road. There is potential to optimize the use of these sites to help improve the area.
   - **Need for a Stronger District Identity**
     - There is a lack of landmark features to define the boundary of the shopping areas of Mong Kok. It is considered necessary to strengthen its identity by establishing gateway features, adopting streetscape design to bring out the theme of the shopping streets and identifying icons within the shopping areas.

2. **Landscape**
   - Landscaping and greening
   - Enhance green spaces

3. **Traffic and Transport**
   - Pedestrian streets
   - Public transport

4. **Pedestrian**
   - Enhance accessibility
   - Improve pedestrian movement

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**SWOT Analysis**

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<th>STRENGTHS</th>
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<th>OPPORTUNITIES</th>
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<td>Improve options and environment for pedestrian movement</td>
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Key issues which are relevant to the Study Area are identified under four specific categories, namely planning and urban design, landscape, traffic and transport, and pedestrian.

This research identifies four key research questions in the study: the planning and design of pedestrian movement, urban design, landscape, and transport. It explores the opportunities and challenges in implementing a design strategy for Mong Kok. The study aims to enhance the identity of Mong Kok by establishing gateway features and adopting streetscape design to bring out the theme of the shopping streets and identifying icons within the shopping areas.
Although loading/unloading (L/UL) facilities are provided in most streets in Mong Kok, some of these facilities are occupied by illegally parked vehicles. Off-street L/UL facilities are insufficient to meet the demand. Due to operational needs, most of the L/UL activities are carried out on-street.

(v) Lack of Streetside Planting and Greening

The presence of underground utilities, street furniture, overhead signboards, canopies and other existing features leave very little space for trees and greening in an already-congested environment. While it is important to reserve the physical space for landscape works, it must not cause obstruction to pedestrian flow.

(vi) Heavily-used Carriageway

Mong Kok is characterized by the hustle and bustle of commercial activities with services such as banking, telecom, medical, travel information and maintenance services. Together with the shopping, dining and entertainment facilities, the substantial traffic and pedestrian demands generated contribute to the traffic/transport and pedestrian issues in the Study Area.

(vii) Insufficient Loading/Unloading Facilities

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(viii) Illegal/Dual Parking

Illegal/dual parking is common in Mong Kok, which occupies the L/UL bays and road space causing disruption to traffic. Illegal parking also increases vehicular/pedestrian conflicts and worsens the pedestrian environment.

(ix) Inadequate Pedestrian Linkages

The heavy traffic on major roads such as Nathan Road, Argyle Street, Mong Kok Road, etc. creates physical barriers to pedestrian flow, and affects pedestrian connectivity in Mong Kok and access to railway stations.

1.3.3 Traffic and Transport

(iv) Heavily-used Carriageway

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1.3.4 Pedestrian

(ii) Inadequate Pedestrian Linkages

The heavy traffic on major roads such as Nathan Road, Argyle Street, Mong Kok Road, etc. creates physical barriers to pedestrian flow, and affects pedestrian connectivity in Mong Kok and access to railway stations.
Proposed Area Improvement Plan
建議的地區改善計劃

As a long term goal, Mong Kok should maintain its image as a dynamic district with choices beyond shopping. As such, it should encompass a wide range of street activities to provide visitors with a pleasant, exciting and memorable experience. To further enhance its image, Mong Kok should also strive to establish itself as a green destination in the heart of the city.

To highlight Mong Kok as a major shopping area in Hong Kong, the overall identity of the district and the themed shopping streets should be enhanced. Key strategies are:

- Introduce vertical greening and themed streetscape treatments
- Identify suitable gateway marker and entry node treatments
- Ensure consistent paving design

District Identity

The major shopping areas are spread throughout Mong Kok without any landmark features or icons to guide visitors' sense of orientation. Key strategies are:

- Turn Mong Kok Footbridge into a key landmark
- Improve pedestrian connectivity across Nathan Road
- Improve orientation by adopting cost-effective and highly visible design solutions

Overall Area Experience

Improvement to the open space system is proposed to complement the vibrant street life. Key strategies are:

- Introduce publicly accessible open spaces and greening at key points
- Carry out pavement widening to improve the walking environment of pedestrians
- Connect the pedestrian system with open space nodes
2.2 Four Streams of Improvement Initiatives 四個改善方針

In order to realize the area improvement planning framework, four streams of improvement initiatives are identified. They are:

- **Greening and Streetscape Improvement** 綠化及改善街道景觀
- **Identity Improvement** 加強地區特色
- **Linkage Improvement** 改善行人連接設施
- **Destination Improvement** 改善及美化個別地點

**Legend**

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<td>Soy Street Streetscape Improvement Project 沙田街街道景觀改善項目</td>
<td>Nathan Road Linkage Improvement Project 楊德街行人連接改善項目</td>
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**Improvement Initiatives by Others 其他人士建議的改善方針**

- Mong Kok Footbridge Extension 旺角行人天橋延伸工程
- Flower Market Road Nullah Decking 花市道渠乾工程
- MTR Subway Extension to Pioneer Centre (subject to further examination by MTR Corporation Ltd.) MTR地鐵擴展至創薈中心（有待MTR公司進一步研究）
- Junction Improvement of Nathan Road / Argyle Street (completed in April 2008) 佐敦道/阿爾 게街交界改善工程（已於2008年4月完成）
Greening and streetscape treatments are proposed to upgrade the existing pedestrian experience and greening provision as well as to reinforce the district identity and local character by improving the environment of the themed shopping streets. The needs of the disabled, elderly and families with baby trolley have been taken into account in designing the following streetscape improvement measures:

- Incorporate street-side planting and green features
- Provide new or enhanced open spaces as green nodes which are interconnected with the pedestrian circulation network
- Add streetscape treatments (e.g. paving design, pavement widening, street furniture improvement and vertical gateway markers)

Improvement projects include:

- Nathan Road Streetscape Improvement Project
- Tung Choi Street Streetscape Improvement Project
- Sai Yee Street Streetscape Improvement Project
- Nullah Road Greening Project
- Lai Chi Kok Road Greening Project
- Arran Street and Portland Street Streetscape Improvement Project
- Soy Street Streetscape Improvement Project
- Portland Street Streetscape Improvement Project
- Sai Yeung Choi Street South (near Nullah Road) Streetscape Improvement Project

Greening and Streetscape Improvement
綠化及改善街道景觀

建議的綠化及街道景觀改善措施，可提升現有的行人體驗和綠化設施，亦透過改善主題購物街的環境，加強地區和本土特色。同時在設計以下改善措施時，亦顧及各方的需要，包括殘疾人士、長者和使用嬰兒車的家庭。

- 於路旁種植樹木及其他綠化植物
- 改善或提供更多休憩空間，作為綠化樞紐，以貫通行人道路網
- 引入街道景觀設計（如路面設計、擴闊行人道、改善街道設施及設置直立式的門廊標誌）

改善項目包括：

- 彌敦道街景改善項目
- 通菜街街景改善項目
- 洗衣街街景改善項目
- 水渠道綠化項目
- 荔枝角道綠化項目
- 鴉蘭街及砵蘭街街景改善項目
- 鰂魚涌街景改善項目
- 砵蘭街街景改善項目
- 西洋菜南街(近水渠道)街景改善項目
**Identity Improvement**

Some main public corridors are heavily used and highly visible for the orientation of pedestrians. Identity improvement for these public corridors is proposed to enhance people's impression of the area and provide a stronger sense of orientation as well as strengthen the identity of the area both visually and physically. Proposed improvement measures include:

- Improve the physical appearance and surroundings of the main public corridors
- Incorporate place-making design elements (e.g. lighting details, greening canopy and graphics)

Improvement projects include:

- Mong Kok Footbridge Identity Project
- Bute Street Subway Identity Project
- Soy Street Subway Identity Project

**Linkage Improvement**

Linkage improvements are proposed to enhance pedestrian connectivity in the area. Proposed improvement measures include:

- Improve connectivity across Nathan Road and connectivity from the major shopping areas to the MTR Mong Kok East Station and the “Flower Market”
- Improve existing pedestrian crossing facilities
- Enhance the pedestrian environment of existing passageways

Improvement projects include:

- Nullah Road Linkage Improvement Project
- Yim Po Fong Street Linkage Improvement Project
- Prince Edward Road West Linkage Improvement Project
There are opportunities to amalgamate fragmented land parcels, rationalize existing land uses and introduce new publicly accessible spaces and green nodes so as to:

- Turn under-utilized Government sites into new destinations for the public
- Use these sites for re-provisioning of existing on-street public transport facilities and other incompatible land uses

Improvement projects include:

- Flower Market Road Destination Project
- Sai Yee Street Destination Project
- Soy Street Destination Project

These improvement initiatives collectively create a greener and more cohesive district identity with thematic features for the Study Area and provide a clear direction to the formulation of individual project proposals.

Major improvement initiatives in Mong Kok proposed by other parties are also included in the Area Improvement Planning Framework to allow a better interface with other improvement projects in the AIP. They include:

- Extension of Mong Kok Footbridge across Nathan Road
- Decking of Flower Market Road Nullah
- Extension of MTR subway to Pioneer Centre (subject to further examination by MTR Corporation Ltd.)
- Improvement of the road junction of Nathan Road and Argyle Street (completed in April 2008).
3.1 Criteria of Priority Projects Selection 確定優先項目的準則

It is essential that the projects proposed can reflect both the community’s desires and the vision of the Study. Four criteria have been identified for selecting priority projects for early implementation. The project should:

(a) involve a good balance of different types of improvement initiatives;

(b) be implementable in a relatively short term;

(c) complement other projects to bring out the synergy that produces visible benefits to the community and environment; and

(d) be supported by the community.

3.2 Detailed Designs of the Six Early Projects 六個優先項目的詳細設計

Based on the above criteria and the public comments received during the initial public consultation exercise, six early projects for further detailed design are proposed. They are:

- Tung Choi Street Streetscape Improvement Project
- Nullah Road Greening Project
- Lai Chi Kok Road Greening Project
- Nullah Road Linkage Improvement Project
- Prince Edward Road West Linkage Improvement Project
- Soy Street Destination Project

Six Early Projects Selected After Public Consultation 公眾諮詢後選定的六個優先項目
Greening and Streetscape Improvement
绿化及改善街道景觀

3.2.1 Early Project 1: Tung Choi Street Streetscape Improvement Project
優先項目1:通菜街街景改善項目

Main improvement proposals include providing distinctive landscape treatment at entry points, pavement widening and upgrading. While deleting some metered parking spaces and retaining one traffic lane, streetside planting/greening is introduced.
主要的改善建議包括於路口設置特色景觀擺設、擴闊及優化行人路、取消部分設有收費錶的停車位、保留一條行車線和進行路旁種植/綠化。
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3.2.2 Early Project 2: Nullah Road Greening Project

優先項目2：水渠道綠化項目

The existing PFS will be vacated to allow provision of public open space in a form of “Green Corridor” running through Nullah Road and Flower Market Road. Landscape and water features are designed to screen off the existing RCP before it is relocated in the long term.

騰空現有的加油站，透過闢設貫穿水渠道和花墟道的「綠化長廊」，以提供公共休憩空間；並在未遷移垃圾收集站之前設置美化景觀設施及特色水景作遮蔽用途。

Legend

- Existing railing 現有欄杆
- Proposed gateway feature 建議的門廊裝飾
- Proposed artificial timber deck 建議的人工木平台
- Proposed water feature 建議的特色水景
- Proposed tree in planter 建議的樹池種植
- Proposed seating with vertical green 建議的座椅連垂直植物
- Proposed preservation of existing trees 建議保留的現有樹木
- Proposed at-grade street trees 建議的地面街道樹木
- Proposed bollard 建議的防撞柱

* Design of paving/street furniture/structure is conceptual, subject to modification for compliance with relevant government departments’ standards and requirements, practicality and site situation.

* 路面/街道設施/構築物的設計乃屬概念性設計，可能須要作出修改，以符合有關政府部門的標準和要求，及配合實際和項目地盤的情況。
3.2.3 Early Project 3: Lai Chi Kok Road Greening Project

優先項目3:荔枝角道綠化項目

Extending from the Nullah Road Greening Project, the existing park at Lai Chi Kok Road will be enhanced to form part of the proposed “Green Corridor” with a gateway sculpture and shaded seating space for the nearby cross-boundary coach waiting area.

作為水渠道綠化項目的延伸工程，現存於荔枝角道的公園將會獲改善，使其成為擬建「綠化長廊」的一部分，附近鐵路會設門廊雕塑，而在過境巴士候車區亦會提供有蓋座椅。
### Destination Improvement
改善及美化個別地點

3.2.4 Early Project 4: Soy Street Destination Project
優先項目4:豉油街地點美化項目

A community centre with multi-functional rooms is proposed to serve residents in the vicinity. With building setback and rooftop greening, it will enhance the streetscape and pedestrian environment of this area.

建議提供一個設有多用途活動室的社區中心，以服務區內居民。透過退後建築物和綠化天台，有助優化地區的街景和行人環境。

### Linkage Improvement
改善行人連接設施

3.2.5 Early Project 5: Nullah Road Linkage Improvement Project
優先項目5:水渠道行人連接設施改善項目

This project is to provide a more comfortable and safe crossing environment and regulate heavy pedestrian flow at the existing junction. It is proposed to straighten the existing pedestrian crossing at Nathan Road near Nullah Road and widen it from 7m to 10m.

該項目是要提供更舒適及更安全的行人過路環境，並管制現有過路處繁忙的人流。建議將現有靠近水渠道過彌敦道的行人過路處拉直，並由7米擴闊至10米。
As an essential component in a planning study, a public consultation exercise was carried out to obtain views from the general public and stakeholders on the proposed area improvement planning framework and the proposed Early Projects.

The Study involves a two-stage public consultation to solicit public views and suggestions on the Study's initial findings and the detailed design of the six Early Projects. A series of consultation activities were undertaken.

The public consultation activities included a roving exhibition with display panels and presentations to various statutory and advisory bodies (such as Town Planning Board, Planning Sub-Committee of the Land and Building Advisory Committee and Yau Tsim Mong District Council). Further engagement of the public through a public forum was conducted with about 150 participants, including residents' organizations, owners' committees and management offices of commercial buildings. Consultation materials, such as a Public Consultation Digest and pamphlets, were also provided to facilitate discussion. During the consultation period, a total of 31 written comments were received.

The public generally supported the planning framework and wished that more projects would be implemented with priority. After taking the public views and other relevant factors into account, the AIP and the selection of Early Projects were refined.

The second public consultation exercise on the detailed design of the six Early Projects was conducted between mid April 2008 to mid May 2008 with focus on consulting the key stakeholders including residents, owners' committees and management offices of commercial buildings which would likely be affected by these projects.

To further improve pedestrian safety, it is proposed to provide an 8m wide signal-controlled pedestrian crossing at Prince Edward Road West (eastbound). The existing crossings at Prince Edward Road West with the junctions of Fa Yuen Street and Sai Yee Street are proposed to be widened from 6m to 8m and 5.5m to 7m respectively.

For the improvement of pedestrian safety, it is recommended to provide an 8m wide signal-controlled at-grade pedestrian crossing at Prince Edward Road West (eastbound). The existing crossings at Prince Edward Road West with the junctions of Fa Yuen Street and Sai Yee Street are proposed to be widened from 6m to 8m and 5.5m to 7m respectively.
During the consultation period, no adverse comments were received from the key stakeholders, i.e. the local residents and shop operators, on the detailed design of the six Early Projects. Comments received, which were mainly concerned with design details, were incorporated into the proposals, as appropriate.

A traffic impact assessment has been conducted to ensure that no adverse traffic impact arising from the implementation of the AIP is expected in terms of junction capacity, pedestrian capacity, and car parking provision.

To ascertain the merits and sustainability of the proposals of the AIP, a sustainability assessment has also been carried out.

Under the existing institutional arrangement, relevant Government departments will play different roles in planning and design, implementation and maintenance of different projects in the AIP. The six Early Projects are identified as short-term projects. For other AIP projects, which would need time to go through the detailed design process and involve reprovisioning of the existing facilities, are identified as medium or long-term projects. The respective implementation agents will consider the views received in taking forward the projects.

With the implementation of the AIP, Mong Kok will become a better shopping area for overseas visitors and the locals. Though the exact implementation schedule and detailed technical assessments would be subject to the resource availability of the implementation agents and also the local consultation of the detailed design, through the joint efforts of Government and relevant bodies, Mong Kok will be sustained as a popular shopping district with vibrant street life.