2. BASELINE REVIEW, OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

2.1. Planning and Land Use

2.1.1. Strategic Context

1998-1999 Policy Addresses

2.1.2. In 1998 Policy Address the Chief Executive detailed a new vision for heritage tourism. A Heritage Tourism Task Force was set up within the Hong Kong Tourist Association (HKTA). The vision was reiterated in the 1999 Policy Address, which noted that “it is important to rehabilitate and preserve unique buildings as this not only accords with our objective of sustainable development but also facilitates the retention of the inherent characteristics of different districts, and helps promote tourism.”

Territorial Development Strategy Review (TDSR) 1998

2.1.3. Tourism development is a medium term focus in the TDSR. The TDSR proposes the HKTA to focus its efforts on the promotion of new Metro and New Territories-based tourist attractions, “… involving private sector participation as much as possible.”

Visitor & Tourism Study for Hong Kong (VISITOUR) 1995

2.1.4. VISITOUR recommends the HKTA in association with other bodies, to protect, develop and enhance existing tourism facilities, attractions, services, events and infrastructure. Specifically it recommends HKTA to encourage the Government and property owners to retain, refurbish and find new tourism uses for remaining colonial and traditional Chinese buildings. The Site is one of the colonial heritage sites highlighted.

Cultural Facilities, A Study on Their Requirements and the Formulation of New Planning Standards and Guidelines 1999

2.1.5. This study reveals that cultural facilities in Hong Kong are used by only a limited proportion of the population. The Cultural Centre and City Hall are identified as having the highest cultural usage and participation levels. Music and theatrical arts are the most frequently featured art forms. Rehearsal rooms and dance studios are the best utilised ancillary facilities.

2.1.6. The study recognises the need to increase private sector participation in cultural facility development. Specifically, it recommends that all feasibility studies for territorial level cultural facilities consider private participation through mixed commercial/cultural developments.

2.1.7. Metroplan 1991 identifies the Site and its surrounding as an area for “selective improvement renewal and redevelopment”. According to the findings of the Study on Review of Metroplan Stage 1 (1998), the area to the east and north-east of the Site is identified in need of redevelopment / rehabilitation.

West Kowloon Development Statement 1992, Study on the Feasibility of a New Performance Venue for Hong Kong 1999 and Recent Planning Intentions

2.1.8. The West Kowloon Development Statement (WKDS) was prepared to translate the Metroplan concepts into district planning objectives. According to the Statement, the Site is identified as an “urban renewal action area.” The WKDS noted that the historical buildings should be respected. The Site is also identified as having particular sensitivity, and is designated as a “special design area.”

2.1.9. In the Study on the Feasibility of a New Performance Venue for Hong Kong 1999, the southern front of the West Kowloon Reclamation is identified to be an Arts, Cultural & Entertainment District. The district will accommodate an international performance venue and a significant critical mass of venues and facilities for arts, culture and entertainment related events, supported by mixed commercial, hotel and residential development. More recently, the Government has announced that around 40 hectares on the West Kowloon Reclamation will be put into open competition for a cultural district.

2.1.10. District and Local Context

Site

2.1.10.1. The Site is zoned “Comprehensive Development Area” (“CDA”) on the draft Tsim Sha Tsui Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) No. S/K1/12 (Figure 2.1) and the draft Tsim Sha Tsui Outline Development Plan (ODP) No. D/K1/1C. According to the Notes of the OZP, any development on the Site requires the submission of a Master Layout Plan for the approval of the Town Planning Board.

2.1.10.2. A major portion of the Site sits on an elevated platform at a level of approximately 14mPD, and is bounded by steep cut slopes/retaining walls on four sides. Trees rim the platform, except for its eastern side. The platform is accessible by a ramp along its western side and by stairs at its south-eastern corner (Figure 2.2).

2.1.10.3. The northern half of the platform is occupied by the two to three storey Main Building of the former Marine Police Headquarters. A small block of two storeys, a former stable, is located at the north-western corner of the Site. The southern half of the platform is mostly covered by nine
Study on Development Opportunities of the Former Marine Police Headquarters Site in Tsim Sha Tsui

Site Plan
one-storey high temporary structures, which previously were the barracks for the Marine Police. A flag post stands amidst these temporary structures and a two-storey Signal Tower (also called the Round House) is also located at the south-western corner of the Site.

2.1.10.4. The south-eastern corner of the Site sits at grade at 4mPD. There the two-storey Quarters and Main Building of the Former Fire Station and a one-storey masonry building are located. The latter two are used as the activity/exhibition centre of the Yau Ma Tei and Tsim Sha Tsui Culture and Arts Association and as a Welfare Handicraft Shop respectively. The rest of the Site is currently vacant.

Character of Adjacent Areas

2.1.10.5. The Site is within a tourism district. To the east, west and north of the Site is a commercial area where hotels, shopping malls and retail outlets dominate (Figure 1.1 and 2.1). The long-standing airport height restriction has resulted in most of the buildings in Tsim Sha Tsui being in the order of 15 storeys. There has been a relaxation of the restriction in recent years, which has seen the construction of a number of taller buildings. By the waterfront a complex of cultural facilities is located to the south of the Site, including the Hong Kong Cultural Centre and the Hong Kong Museum of Arts. A number of piers are located along the waterfront, including the Star Ferry Pier to the south-west of the Site.

Planned and Committed Uses

2.1.10.6. The Site abuts a commercial site to its north, where a 30-storey office tower is under construction. To the west of the construction site across Canton Road, the building plans of a high-rise of approximately 400mPD (the New Gateway III Tower) have been approved. To the east of the Site in front of Peninsula Hotel, beneath the open space to the south of Salisbury Road, is an underground shopping arcade that was approved by Town Planning Board. The lower levels of this arcade are to be used for car parking, while the upper two levels are to be used for shops.

2.2. Lands

2.2.1. The Site is on government land and is subject to two licences. These licences are in respect of the two existing structures (one for the Welfare Handicrafts Shop and the other for the Yau Ma Tei and Tsim Sha Tsui Culture and Arts Association) lying outside the boundary of the declared monument on the south-eastern corner of the Site. The entire Site is also the subject of a proposed government land allocation no. GLA-TK SVY/600.
2.3. Cultural Heritage

2.3.1. The Site was in the past situated at a strategic military location. Pre 1841 a fort had been constructed on the Site, but was later abandoned.

2.3.2. In 1884, the headquarters of the Marine Police (called Water Police before 1948) was built to the north of the abandoned fort. The main building of the headquarters was two storeys in height with three-storey towers on the south-east and south-west corners. The headquarters was planned to a modern standard. Self-sufficient water supply and drainage arrangements were designed to avoid any possible contamination. There was a sunken water tank under the central courtyard, which had a “force-pump” to get water to the bathrooms and utility tanks. In 1920 an extra storey of barrack accommodation was added to the building between the two towers.

2.3.3. The main building has a basement also, which has a corridor linking the kitchen on the ground floor for convenient transportation of food. There is also a saying that the basement was used for the regular inspection of the building foundation, which sits on wooden frames.

2.3.4. There was also a stable at the side of the main building, which was shared by the Marine Police and the Tsim Sha Tsui Police Force. This stable accommodated the first flushing toilet in Kowloon, where water used to flush continuously from above.

2.3.5. A two-storey high signal tower (called the Round House) located at the south-western corner of the Site was built in 1884. A 6m mast was mounted on its domed roof, where a hollow copper ball (called the time ball) was raised manually every day and dropped at 1 p.m., except Sundays and public holidays. The time ball was first dropped on 1.1.1885 but was moved to Blackhead’s Hill in 1907. The building has since been used by the Marine Police for various uses such as workshop, museum and reading room.

2.3.6. During the Japanese occupation, the headquarters were used by the Japanese Navy who tunnelled the area extensively for air-raid shelters. After the war, these tunnels were filled in for safety reasons.

2.3.7. In 1920 the Tsim Sha Tsui Fire Station was built at the south-eastern corner of the Site. It was a two-storey building, and was used for dormitory on the second floor and as a fire appliance garage on the ground floor. In 1922 another building was built at the rear. It was also two-storey high and was used as the firemen’s dormitory. The fire station was relocated in the 1970s and the buildings have since been put to various uses.

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1 Information gathered from Sui Geng: The Hong Kong Marine Police 1841-1950 (Hong Kong University Press, 1991), Yau Tsim Mong District Scenery Inventory (Yau Tsim Mong District Board, 1999), and interviews within Marine Police, Hong Kong Observatory and Fire Services Department.
2.3.8. The Marine Police Headquarters (including most of the platform) together with the back building (i.e. the quarters) of the former Fire Station was declared as monument under the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance in 1994. The front building (i.e. the main building) of the Fire Station at the south-eastern corner of the Site has also been declared a Grade-III building. The Grade III classification, while short of a monument classification, does aim to facilitate subsequent selection for declaration.

2.4. Landscape

2.4.1. A tree survey was undertaken on the Site in accordance with Works Branch Technical Circular No. 24/94. Of the 134 trees recorded within the Site, 10 trees were classified as being in good condition. 93 trees were classified as being in fair condition. 30 trees classified as being in poor condition and 1 tree was dead. All trees on the Site are common and unprotected species with the exception of Pyrenaria championi, which was protected under the Forests and Countryside Ordinance (Cap.96). One Pyrenaria championi is located at the southern slope of the Site near the existing Welfare Handicrafts Shop (Tree no. 50 on Figure 2.3 and Photo no. 41 in Appendix I).

2.4.2. The amenity value of existing trees within the Site is primarily attributed to the abundance of tree clusters especially along the western edge of the Site. Efforts should be made to maximise the preservation of tree clusters that are in good and fair condition as outlined in Appendix I to ensure a sense of dense vegetation as the existing condition can be achieved.

2.5. Traffic and Transportation

Vehicular Traffic

2.5.1. The main road corridors and junctions in the area are all heavily trafficked during the peak periods. The junctions at Canton Road/ Salisbury Road and Kowloon Park Drive/Salisbury Road are currently operating near capacity (Figure 2.4).

Public Transport Facilities

2.5.2. The Site is well served by road-based public transport with an ample choice of franchised bus, mini bus and taxi services. A public transport interchange is located at the ferry pier at the ground level. The Site is also within walking distance of the Tsim Sha Tsui MTR station.

Parking and Loading and Unloading

2.5.3. A large supply of parking spaces is available in the commercial complex along Canton Road. On-site observations show that the maximum demand for car parking spaces occur during weekends and Sunday periods. On-site observations also reveal that the demand for
Key Traffic Features and Issues of the Area
loading/unloading spaces are high especially on weekends and public holidays.

Access to the Site

2.5.4. The Site can only be accessed by a substandard vehicular ramp branching off the Salisbury Road eastbound carriageway. Traffic coming from Salisbury Road in a westbound direction has to make use of the turnaround facility at the public transport interchange at the ferry pier in order to gain access to the Site via the eastbound carriageway.

Provisions for Pedestrians

2.5.5. An existing subway across Kowloon Park Drive provides a linkage between Nathan Road to the east and the public transport interchange at ferry pier to the west. There are also signalised and zebra crossing located along Canton Road, Peking Road and Salisbury Road. Other on-street pedestrian facilities such as footpaths and street corner are heavily utilised (Figure 2.5).

2.6. Environment

Air

2.6.1. There is limited air pollution data available for the study area. Data up until August 1993 was obtained from the EPD’s Tsim Sha Tsui Air Quality Monitoring Station. There was no specific trend in the Respirable Suspended Particulates levels during these years. Given there is no data for annual average nitrogen dioxide concentration at Tsim Sha Tsui, the background nitrogen dioxide concentration of 60 µgm⁻³ that was stipulated in the final EIA report of “Salisbury Road Underpass and Associated Road Improvement Works including Middle Road Circulation System” has been adopted.

Noise

2.6.2. Traffic noise arising from busy roads constitutes the major existing noise sources. Construction activities are also a source of noise and the construction of a commercial office immediately behind the Site, will be on-going and is expected to be completed in two to three years.

Ecology

2.6.3. The baseline ecology of the study area was investigated by literature review and field survey. The on-site survey was conducted on 19 November 1999. Based on these findings, there is no natural habitats found within the Site. Some butterfly and bird species, and one dragonfly species were found in the Site. However, they were all common and widespread (Tables 2.1 and 2.2). No rare or endangered flora and fauna species were recorded, except for a protected tree species as described in section 2.4 above.
Table 2.1  Birds Recorded in the Site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Copsychus saularis</td>
<td>Magpie Robin</td>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pycnonotus jocosus</td>
<td>Crested bulbul</td>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>&gt;30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pycnonotus sinensis</td>
<td>Chinese bulbul</td>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passer montanus (saturatus)</td>
<td>Tree sparrow</td>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>&gt;50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garrulax perspicillatus</td>
<td>Black faced</td>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>laughing thrush</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columba livia</td>
<td>Feral pigeon</td>
<td>Introduced</td>
<td>&gt;20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acridotheres cristatellus</td>
<td>Crested myna</td>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corvus macrorhynchos</td>
<td>Jungle crow</td>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streptopelia chienis</td>
<td>Spotted dove</td>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.2  Butterfly and Dragonfly Recorded in and around the Site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delias aglaja</td>
<td>Red-based Jezebel</td>
<td>&gt; 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eurema hecabe</td>
<td>Common Glass Yellow</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catopsillia pyranthe</td>
<td>Mottled Eigrant</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everes Lacturnus</td>
<td>Tailed Cupid</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parathyma sulphita</td>
<td>Five-dot Sergeant</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piers Canidia</td>
<td>Indian Cabbage White</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papilio polytes</td>
<td>Common Mormon</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euploea midamus</td>
<td>Blue Spotted Crow</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.7.  Geotechnical Engineering

2.7.1.  The Site is located on an elevated platform of approximately +14mPD and is surrounded by steep cut slopes/retaining walls. The surrounding slopes and retaining wall have been registered by the Geotechnical Engineering Office of the Civil Engineering Department (register numbers shown on Figure 2.6). There is limited ground investigation data for the Site. However, based on available geotechnical information, the Site is underlain by one to three-metre-thick fill and then completely to highly decomposed granite and with a shallow rockhead level near the southern site boundary.

2.7.2.  The Site is also underlain by a network of disused tunnels. A land gravity survey was conducted as part of the Study on the southern part of the site platform. The results indicate six potential zones of low density underneath the platform, including a significant void at the south-western corner of the platform, a potential tunnel section running...
from the south western corner of the main building toward the south-west and another from the northernmost barrack buildings to the south-east (Figure 2.6).

2.7.3. The preliminary study by Geotechnical Engineering Office (GEO) in 1990 recommended that the extent and quality of the backfilling of the tunnel network beneath the platform should be determined and the conditions of any accessible lengths of tunnels examined.

2.7.4. Two portals along Canton Road were inspected (Figure 2.6). The southern portal (Portal A) is located below the Signal Tower and the northern portal (Portal B) is situated at about 40m north of the southern portal. Both portals have been brick-blocked, rendering the disused tunnels inaccessible for inspection. The portals are about 2m in diameter and are possibly entrances to 2 disused tunnels running east-westerly separated at 40m apart. As the rockhead level across the Site is, in general, below street level, the disused tunnels, with their portals at street level, were probably excavated in decomposed rock stratum.

2.7.5. Another study by GEO in 1994 recorded some ground investigation works, and horizontal coreholes were attempted through Portals A and B. However, it was found that Portal A was only a single layer of brick wall and that the coring machine could not be mounted onto it. Fill material was noted behind Portal A through direct visual inspection. Corehole was drilled through Portal B. It was found that the wall/bricked-up portal was some 2.9m thick and a layer of fill existed behind the wall. It was thus believed that the tunnel network, at least for these two tunnel sections, had been backfilled. No records of the disused tunnels with regard to the extent and construction details could be traced. There is also no record of any underground chamber or disused tunnel network underneath the Main Building in the northern part of the Site.

2.7.6. Further study by GEO in 2000 (Report No. PGA 5/2000) has identified the possible presence of maintenance accesses, sunken water tank and disused tunnels beneath the Main Building. A third tunnel portal (Portal C) was identified on the southern slope in the Site facing the former Fire Station. These portals are rather consistent to the results of the land gravity survey.

2.8. Socio-Economic Conditions

2.8.1. According to the 1996 By-census, there are approximately 14,500 residents in Tsim Sha Tsui West (T.P.U. 2.1.1, 2.1.6 and 2.1.7). The socio-economic characteristics of the population in Tsim Sha Tsui West follow the pattern of the whole territory/Kowloon. The exceptions being a higher percentage of its working population is involved in the tertiary sector (83.6%) and a lower percentage in the secondary sector (15.7%).
2.9. Constraints and Opportunities

2.9.1. Land Use

Constraints

2.9.1.1. A major constraint of the Site is its size, which restricts the physical space available for use accommodation. The space available above-platform and under-platform/ground is further restricted by design, heritage and engineering considerations.

2.9.1.2. The elevated level of the Site on a platform, the paucity of convenient access and the rimming of tall trees around the site platform affect the accessibility and visibility of the Site. These have to be improved in order to turn the Site into an attractive tourist spot.

2.9.1.3. The vacant site to the north of the Site is at present under construction for a 30-storey office tower. This committed development will pose a constraint to the design of the Site, particularly regarding the connections and façade treatment along its northern boundary.

Opportunities

2.9.1.4. The Site is located in a well-established tourist district, where hotels, shopping outlets, restaurants, open space and cultural facilities are abundant. Any tourism-related uses will be generally compatible with these surroundings.

2.9.1.5. As the Site is surrounded by various tourist attractions and facilities, there is potential to connect the Site with these uses and to optimise their complementarity. More specifically, the Site is situated at the juxtaposition of the thriving informal sector (characterised by its vibrant streetscape) to its north-east, and the modern sector on its other sides. Such a setting enhances the flexibility and potential of the Site in blending these two types of uses together.

2.9.2. Cultural Heritage

Constraints

2.9.2.1. Most of the Site has been declared a monument. Demolition or modification to existing structures should be avoided. Any additions or new structures should be carefully considered, taking into account the heritage context of the Site. Such considerations may restrict the potential space available for accommodation. The need for preservation also poses technical challenges to the design of the new development e.g. concerning building stability and fire safety.

2.9.2.2. The platform of the Site was extensively tunnelled though it was believed that most of the tunnels have been backfilled. A balance has to be sought in the future design of the development between conservation...
of the historical value of these tunnels and the use of the under-platform space for other beneficial uses.

Opportunities

2.9.2.3. The former Marine Police Headquarters is a historical treasure for the Territory. The project offers valuable opportunity to preserve the historical and cultural value of the monument, as well as to open the once restricted Site to the general public. With proper usage and design, the Site itself can become an important component of heritage tourism in Hong Kong.

2.9.3. Design and Landscape

Constraints

2.9.3.1. The narrow and steep ramp is substandard and currently the primary entry point to the Site. The ramp as a pedestrian access mode is too steep for general walking. The elevated platform also creates blank walls around the Site on street level, which depresses the pedestrian experience. Improvement to pedestrian linkages is important in the future design of the development.

2.9.3.2. The presence of monuments and historical buildings on the Site, especially the main building, do not conform to the Building and Fire Regulations. Redevelopment of these buildings may require refurbishment of both the interior and exterior to upgrade the infrastructure and other provisions to conform to government regulations.

Opportunities

2.9.3.3. The colonial architecture and the overall historic character of the Site can be utilised to recreate a segment of the Hong Kong local history. The exterior of the monument structures is in fairly good condition. The Site has a number of mature trees which offer a setting to be developed into a major open space node. Similar to Kowloon Park, this Site is located on a plateau above the surroundings. The tree groups primarily located along the site periphery also lend a sense of mystery to the Site screening off direct views to it and creating a perception of an urban forest.

2.9.3.4. Major flows of pedestrians evolve from the busy sections of Nathan Road via Peking Road. It is imperative for the new development of the Site to capture this influx to generate activities on Site.
2.9.4. Traffic and Transportation

Constraints

2.9.4.1. The high demand for pick-up/set down activities at the lay-bys on both sides of Canton Road fronting the Site causes conflict with through traffic movements and sometimes lead to traffic congestion. This is particularly obvious at weekends and holidays when tourist buses accumulated at the particular location.

2.9.4.2. The existing road system of the area is mainly of one-way direction and therefore access to the Site is restricted only via Salisbury Road and the turnaround facility at ferry pier.

2.9.4.3. The junctions at Canton Road/Salisbury Road and at the junction of Kowloon Park Drive/Salisbury Road are experiencing queuing and congested problems. Traffic turning from Canton Road into Salisbury Road is affected by on-street stopping vehicles.

2.9.4.4. Pedestrian crossing demands are heavy at the junction of Canton Road and Peking Road.

2.9.4.5. Pedestrians are attracted to the area during the weekday peak-hour and Sunday peak-hour by the shopping/leisure complex. The footpaths to the western side of the Site are not adequate to cope with the demand. The footpath along the eastern side of the Site is too narrow to provide a safe passageway for pedestrians. Improvements to these pedestrian linkages are important.

2.9.4.6. The existing ramp to the Site provides access for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Segregated means of access for pedestrians and vehicles is necessary for safety reasons. Moreover the geometry of the existing ramp does not enable emergency vehicles to gain direct access to the Site. On the whole, improvement of accessibility to the Site is required.

2.9.4.7. The requirement to maintain the existing structures of the Marine Headquarters severely constraints the space for the provisions of parking and loading/unloading facilities. While the demand for parking facilities might be met by the spare capacity available in the neighbouring developments, on-site loading/unloading facilities for goods vehicles and lay-bys for coaches and taxis will be required to satisfy operational requirements.

2.9.4.8. There is an existing bus/coach lay-by along the eastern kerbside of Canton Road, i.e. underneath and adjacent to the existing access ramp to the Site. Reprovisioning of the existing facilities is required if in any case the facilities are affected by the development.
Opportunities

2.9.4.9. A study was commissioned by Highway Department in 1997 to review the layout of the proposed Salisbury Road Underpass and associated road improvement works including the Middle Road Circulation System which is anticipated to be implemented in 2001. Figure 2.7 shows the proposed road layout in the area.

2.9.4.10. With implementation of the road improvement scheme, the junctions within the Study Area at the following locations will operate with spare capacity in year 2002 and, with additional improvement measures, up to 2011:

- Salisbury Road/Canton Road
- Salisbury Road/Kowloon Park Drive
- Salisbury Road/Nathan Road
- Peking Road/Canton Road
- Peking Road/Kowloon Park Drive
- Middle Road/Kowloon Park Drive

2.9.4.11. Plans for subways are proposed under various projects, viz. the Middle Road Circulation Scheme, the KCR East Rail Extension and other public and private projects. The plan showing the committed and proposed pedestrian subways is shown in Figure 2.8. Direct links between the Site and developments adjacent to the Site would also be highly desirable, namely:

- Linkage to Hong Kong Hotel/Star House to the west
- Linkage to the commercial site to the north and to the committed subway across Kowloon Park Drive and Peking Road
- Linkage across Kowloon Park Drive to the east
- Linkage to the existing/committed subways across Kowloon Park Drive and Salisbury Road to the south-east
- Linkage across Salisbury Road to the south, which could be further linked to the promenade and/or the existing Star Ferry Concourse

2.9.5. Environment

Air

2.9.5.1. The air sensitive receivers (ASRs) include the immediately surrounding buildings. With the limited scale of the proposed development and implementation of appropriate dust suppression measures, dust impact of any development on the Site is expected to fall within the EPD standards and guidelines. There are other construction activities proposed to take place in the area viz. KCR East Rail Extension,
Salisbury Road Underpass and Middle Road Circulation System. The construction activities and programme of these proposed developments should be assessed to determine any potential cumulative dust impact.

2.9.5.2. After construction any development within the Site would be subject to air quality impact from traffic emissions from the surrounding roads and should be carefully assessed. Any on-site emissions will be in compliance with the Guide to the Air Pollution Control (Furnaces, Ovens and Chimneys) (Installation and Alteration) Regulations.

Noise

2.9.5.3. Any noise effects of the future development on the Site during the construction phase should be limited by the limited scale of construction work and other appropriate mitigation measures during construction. Construction noise generated from other sites should be assessed to determine the cumulative construction noise impacts if adjacent construction works are concurrent with the proposed development. The surrounding sensitive uses of the proposed Site are hotels, commercial buildings and mixed commercial/residential buildings. All the hotels and commercial buildings should be provided with central air conditionings and do not rely on openable windows for ventilation. The only affected noise sensitive receivers are the residential blocks, which are located at the north-east and east of the Site.

2.9.5.4. Since the facilities proposed in the various options are considered to be a noise tolerant use in terms of the ELAO – TM, traffic noise impacts from the existing roads including Peking Road, Kowloon Park Drive, Salisbury Road, and Canton Road on the future development of the Site would not be an issue.

Ecology

2.9.5.5. The baseline ecological field visit in conjunction with the literature review concludes that the Site consists of all man-made habitats. Subsequently any effects on the site ecology are likely to be minor and able to be mitigated by standard site management practices. In order to minimise any potential ecological impacts arising from the construction of the proposed project, trees should be preserved as far as possible and any loss of trees which is unavoidable should be compensated by replanting.

Water Quality

2.9.5.6. The utilisation of appropriate on-site mitigation measures should ensure any effects resulting from site run-off, drainage and sewage discharges are appropriately mitigated during the construction phase. During operational phase, no adverse impact on water quality is expected with the provision of appropriate sewage facilities.
Waste

2.9.5.7. With the implementation of good site practices and appropriate solid and chemical waste collection, transportation and disposal arrangements, adverse waste management impacts during construction are not anticipated. Having considered the nature and scale of the development, the quantity of waste to be handled and disposed of during the operational phase is expected to be small.

2.9.6. Geotechnical Engineering

2.9.6.1. The Site is much constrained in geotechnical engineering terms. Wherever it is the intention to preserve the historical buildings on-site, their structural integrity must be maintained. Vibration from the construction process could damage structures, hence light weight and silent plants should be considered. Geotechnical assessment on the influence of the structures should be undertaken.

2.9.6.2. A railway extension running from the existing Hung Hom KCRC Station through Tsim Sha Tsui East (underneath Salisbury Road) to a proposed railway station under the Middle Road Children's Playground and Wing On Plaza Garden has been authorised. A further extension (called the Kowloon Southern Link) is planned. Major assumptions of the railway reserve will be explained in Section 2.10 below. Special attention should be paid in designing the development foundation at the Site to avoid intruding into the possible railway alignment and inducing additional loading to the railway loop.

2.9.6.3. Any development on-site should consider the additional surcharges imposed by new structures on the existing slopes and their stability. Slope stability should be assessed or upgraded to current geotechnical standards if necessary.

2.9.6.4. The Site is also underlain by a network of disused tunnels. Any new geotechnical works should assess the effects on and created by the presence of the tunnels. It should be noted that to restore the tunnels to a safely useable level, substantial engineering works may be required, which may affect the historical appearance of the tunnels.

2.9.6.5. Within the Site, there is limited ground investigation data. Additional ground investigation works should be undertaken. This can include borehole drilling, trial pit excavation or slope surface stripping. However, based on available geotechnical information it appears that the shallow rockhead level near the southern site boundary may make for difficult excavation, with resulting impacts on noise levels and pollution. To avoid unnecessary excavation on site, attempt should be made to make use of in-situ material (in particular if rock content is high) and avoid the need for excavation of hard material and replacing it with man-made structures. Where possible, attempts should be made to integrate building and retaining structures to avoid the need for additional foundations.
2.10. Development Potential Review

Strategic Considerations

2.10.1. Tsim Sha Tsui is a tourist district and there are a range of tourist-related uses in close proximity to the Site. Four tourism-related use groups were considered to have particular potential on the Site. These were:

- hotel and retail, including food & beverage
- museums
- arts and cultural uses, and
- tourism promotion uses.

2.10.1.1. An analysis in table form of these uses is attached at Appendix II.

Design Potential

2.10.1.2. A number of design considerations are considered important for any development on the Site:

- Linkages – To vitalise the compound for any development, it is crucial to improve its linkages, both vehicular and pedestrian, to its surrounding. To preserve the historical setting of the Site, it will be desirable not to bring regular vehicular traffic up on to the platform. With a 10m high platform, serving traffic can easily be accommodated in under-platform space.

- Edges – It should be one of the urban design objectives to create specific edges for the future development as the existing edges are for circulation only. In particular it is proposed to provide the main entrance to the Site on the Salisbury Road side and commercial activities on the sides of Canton Road and Salisbury Road to capture the existing pedestrian flow.

- Streetscape – The development of the Site offers an opportunity to widen the existing narrow pavements and to improve street front design.

- Activity Nodes – An activity node incorporated into the main entrance can be located along Salisbury Road to connect the existing activities along the road and to bring people up to the platform by means of activity flow. Opportunities can also be explored to convert the existing pier concourse and the adjacent public transport interchange into a major civic and commercial activity node and to link it the Site.

- Views – The only major view to the Victoria Harbour from the Site is from the Signal Tower. It is also able to capture a glimpse of the Hong Kong Island from the top floors of the Main Buildings. These views should be maintained in the future.
development. Conversely, the main façade of the Main Building is a valuable asset in terms of design and efforts should be made in the future design to enhance appreciation of the façade.

- Open Space - With all the mature trees and the historical buildings, the Site provides opportunity for an urban open space. Provided with convenient linkages, this activity node/open space can tie up the harbour front promenade and Kowloon Park as well as future open space system in the Kowloon Point area to form a much needed open space network in Tsim Sha Tsui. To give way to development on the Site, some of the existing trees may inevitably be sacrificed. Yet, more and even better landscaping must be planned to enhance this open space node.

- Physical Expression and Preservation of Historical Monument – The new development should not compromise the integrity of the monument. It is recommended to restore the colonial architecture setting of the Site, including the open lawn area in front of the Main Building. Since the Main Building is situated on the platform away from street level, it is desirable either to keep the platform free of additional structures or to keep the height of all new structures lower than the Main Buildings.

- Basement Development – The railway tunnel is planned to be around 15m wide, running from the south-east corner of the Site to the north-west corner (Figure 2.9). The top of the railway tunnel runs from about −2 mPD to −5 mPD underneath the Site. Hence it is the assumption that for Zone A (Figure 2.9) basement level could get down to as low as −0.6 mPD for a limited area big enough for pedestrian passage to connect the pedestrian underpass crossing Kowloon Park Drive and Peking Road. For Zone B, any basement will be limited to the surrounding street level, which is around +4mPD.

Case Studies

2.10.2. This study has carried out a case studies exercise to analyse how preservation and reuse of historical structures has been undertaken in other countries. Illustration of some of these cases is included in Figure 2.10 for reference.