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Panel on Development

Meeting on 16 January 2012

Background brief on energizing Kowloon East

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the Administration's initiative on transforming Kowloon East into a core business district ("CBD") and a brief account of the views and concerns expressed by Members on the subject.

Background

2. In his 2011-2012 Policy Address, the Chief Executive announced that a visionary, coordinated and integrated approach would be adopted to expedite the transformation of Kowloon East, comprising the new Kai Tak Development area ("KTD"), Kwun Tong and Kowloon Bay, into an attractive, alternative CBD to support Hong Kong's economic development.

Broad strategies for energizing Kowloon East

3. The Administration has mapped out a conceptual master plan for Kowloon East by adopting the broad strategies of connectivity, branding, design and diversity --

(i) Enhancing connectivity

The Administration will consider enhancing inter- and intra-regional connectivity through the provision of an

Environmentally Friendly Linkage System ("EFLS") linking KTD, Kwun Tong and Kowloon Bay with the existing Mass Transit Railway Kwun Tong Line and the future Shatin to Central Link. Enhancement to pedestrian facilities such as footbridge networks and wider pavements will also be considered. The Administration intends to commence the public engagement exercise for EFLS in early 2012 and report the initial public views to the Panel on Development ("the Panel") in the first quarter of 2012.

(ii) Branding the place with quality urban design

The Administration will consider branding Kowloon East as a premier office node and promoting the image of this new CBD both locally and overseas. Recognizing that the street pattern, the transport system, the public facilities, etc. that were designed for the requirements of the manufacturing operation and warehouse uses may no longer be effective for business operators and office workers nowadays and the importance of quality urban design in enhancing and branding the place, the Administration will consider improvement in greening, enhancement of streetscape and public open space, provision of a continuous waterfront promenade and conservation of some buildings with special characters.

(iii) Promoting diversity

While KTD will provide tourism, sports and leisure facilities to a predominantly office and commercial use in Kowloon Bay and Kwun Tong, the Administration will consider other uses such as street level shops, cafes by the waterfront, restaurants and entertainment uses at piers, marinas and water sports facilities for development at appropriate locations to enhance the vibrancy of the district.

Actions planned and in progress

Two Action Areas

4. Two clusters of Government sites have been designated as Action Areas for comprehensive development to facilitate a diversity of land uses and activities that will complement the transformation of Kowloon East

into an alternative CBD. Details of the two Action Areas are summarized as follows --

(a) Action Area 1 -- Hoi Bun Road Redevelopment

It will be a new vibrant node for offices, exhibition/conference facilities, hotel/service apartments and retail/entertainment outlets. With the location of the proposed EFLS station and depot connecting to KTD, the area will become the linkage hub of Kowloon East. The existing waste recycling centre and vehicle examination centres currently occupying the site of Action Area 1 will be relocated to release some 6.4 hectares of Government land for the development.

(b) Action Area 2 -- Kwun Tong Ferry Pier Waterfront Development

It will be a new hub for small offices, artist workshops, entertainments, galleries and specialty retails and restaurants along the waterfront promenade to complement a tourism node to be developed at the runway tip. The size of the proposed site for Action Area 2 is about 2.7 hectares. The existing bus terminus will be decked over to provide open space and outdoor performance area, and integrate with the upgraded Kwun Tong Ferry Pier Square and waterfront promenade. Elevated pedestrian walkway will be constructed to link with the proposed EFLS along Hoi Yuen Road.

Three signature projects

5. To demonstrate the determination to put plans into action, the Administration has embarked on the following three signature projects to create synergy with the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal scheduled for commissioning in mid-2013 --

(a) Open Space cum Zero Carbon Building of the Construction Industry Council

The Administration is collaborating with the Construction Industry Council ("CIC") to develop a public open space of 1.5 hectares from a former CIC training ground with the theme of sustainable living. The public open space will accommodate Hong Kong's first zero carbon emission

building to showcase state-of-the-art eco-building designs and technologies. The project, which is funded by CIC, is tentatively scheduled for completion in mid-2012.

(b) Kwun Tong Promenade Stage 2

Kwun Tong Promenade Stage 1 comprises a 200-metre waterfront open space and was opened in 2010. The Stage 2 project extends the waterfront promenade by 750 metres at the former Kwun Tong Public Cargo Working Area with facilities such as jogging trails, pavilions and an exercise corner with elderly fitness equipment, etc. The Administration will soon seek funding approval from the Finance Committee ("FC") for the project. Construction is tentatively scheduled to commence in late 2012 for completion in late 2014.

(c) Kai Tak Runway Park Phase 1

The scope of the project comprises the construction of a waterfront promenade at the runway tip facing Lei Yue Mun and along the waterfront facing Kwun Tong with a continuous traffic-free pedestrian green walkway and sitting-out areas. Subject to FC's approval of project funding, the construction is tentatively scheduled to commence in mid 2012 for completion in late 2013.

Setting up of the Kowloon East Development Office and a site office cum information kiosk

6. To undertake the strategic project of transforming Kowloon East into an alternative CBD, the Administration has proposed to establish a new multi-disciplinary Kowloon East Development Office ("KEDO") under the Development Bureau to steer, supervise, oversee and monitor the project as well as carry out public engagement activities. Moreover, it is proposed that a site office for KEDO including an information kiosk be set up by mid-2012 to facilitate the conduct of the public engagement exercise and for serving as a focal point for visitors. The information kiosk will provide the venue for exhibits and publicity materials related to the Kowloon East development. It will also be used for holding public engagement events and receiving visitors to promote green infrastructures pertaining to KTD. The site office cum information kiosk will be situated at a site under the Kwun Tong Bypass at Hoi Bun Road in close proximity to KTD, Kowloon Bay and Kwun Tong.

Views and Concerns raised by Members on energizing Kowloon East

7. Since the announcement of the initiative to energize Kowloon East, Members have expressed views on the subject at various meetings, including the Panel meetings on 14 October 2011 (briefing on the Development Bureau's initiatives in the 2011-2012 Policy Address) and 19 December 2011 (briefing on the initiative of energizing Kowloon East), and a motion debate on "Capitalizing on the opportunity presented by the building of a cruise terminal to develop Kowloon East into a business and tourism district" at the Council meeting of 14 December 2011. The wording of the motion passed is at **Appendix I**. Members supported the initiative of energizing Kowloon East in general. The concerns and views expressed by Members on various areas are summarized as follows --

Development strategies

- (a) Kowloon East should be developed into not only a CBD but also a tourism district. Local cultural and heritage elements should be preserved and become essential components of Kowloon East to enrich its colour and vibrancy as well as to promote tourism.
- (b) The project of energizing Kowloon East should cover also Kowloon City and To Kwa Wan, and Kowloon East should be transformed into an integrated development district.
- (c) The Administration should consider converting the existing typhoon shelters and cargo handling areas in Kwun Tong and To Kwa Wan into mooring areas for yachts and pleasure boats.
- (d) In selecting industrial areas for revitalization or transformation, it was necessary for the Administration and would be fair to all parties to keep the public and industrial building owners informed of its plan and timetable in this respect.

Implementation of the project

- (e) The Kowloon East project must have full policy support which will be essential for resolving problems that might arise from redevelopment of older industrial buildings in the district. The Secretary for Development should play an

overall coordinating role for the project to ensure that the different priorities and requirements of Government departments will not become barriers to development opportunities.

- (f) The future KEDO should be provided with sufficient power to achieve effective coordination among Government departments in taking forward and expediting the transformation of Kowloon East.
- (g) Public-private collaboration in land development would be important to the success of the project, and such development mode would help tackle complicated issues that could not be resolved solely by the efforts of the market or the Government.
- (h) The Administration should involve the private sector and non-government organizations in taking forward the project and tackling the wide range of issues that would emerge.

Inter- and intra-regional connectivity

- (i) The Administration should commence public consultation on the initial findings of EFLS as early as possible and expedite completion of the system before the initial target date of 2023 in order to bring early economic benefits for the district. Where appropriate, consideration could be given to commissioning the system in phases.
- (j) To integrate new developments in KTD with the older areas in Kowloon City and To Kwa Wan, EFLS should be designed to link these areas together, so as to revitalize the economy of these areas and achieve facelift for the district.
- (k) EFLS can be operated as a branch line of the existing railway system. Noise pollution problems caused by the operation of the system should be avoided.
- (l) The fares for EFLS should not become financial burdens on commuters. Arrangements similar to the existing interchange fare concession schemes implemented by the Mass Transit Railway Corporation should be considered.

- (m) In addition to undertaking planning for rail-based transport, the Administration should commence early studies for improving the capacities of the road networks of Kowloon East to meet future inter- and intra-regional traffic demand. The traffic demand from areas outside the district, such as Sai Kung, and Clear Water Bay, and arising from tourism activities, should be taken into account.
- (n) A cycling track along the waterfront in Kowloon East should be constructed to promote green transport, and a promenade from Lei Yue Mun to Sham Shui Po should be developed to connect all the major waterfront scenic spots in Kowloon.
- (o) The Administration should study how to connect the three CBDs, namely the Central, West Kowloon and Kowloon East.

Maximizing land resources in Kowloon East

- (p) The Administration should review the use of existing flatted factory buildings of the Housing Authority in Kwun Tong and Kowloon Bay, which might free up land for office/commercial uses.
- (q) The Administration should consider offering owners of industrial buildings tax or land premium concessions as incentives in order to expedite the revitalization of older industrial buildings in Kowloon East, including converting them into hotels.

Rehousing and social issues

- (r) To meet the rehousing needs of residents affected by the development in Kowloon East, the Administration should plan the rehousing arrangements as soon as possible, and consider offering in-situ rehousing for affected people.
- (s) When conducting the social impact assessment for the Kowloon East project, the Administration should take into consideration the needs of small shop operators and assist them to continue their businesses.

Public engagement

- (t) There should be two-way communication between the Administration and the public in the process of public engagement, and all relevant research information and data related to the project should be made public to enable the public to give views in an informed manner.
- (u) The Administration should consider involving the public in the design of waterfront facilities and redevelopment.

Recent Developments

8. The Administration will brief the Panel on the proposed staffing structure for KEDO and seek members' support for the establishment of the Office at the Panel meeting on 16 January 2012 before submitting the proposal to the Establishment Subcommittee and FC in February and April 2012 respectively.

Relevant papers

9. A list of relevant papers is shown in **Appendix II**.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
12 January 2012

(Translation)

**Motion on
"Capitalizing on the opportunity presented by
the building of a cruise terminal to develop Kowloon East
into a business and tourism district"
moved by Hon Paul TSE
at the Council meeting of 14 December 2011**

**Motion as amended by Hon CHAN Kam-lam, Hon Alan LEONG,
Hon WONG Kwok-kin and Hon Fred LI**

That the plan of Energizing Kowloon East announced by the Chief Executive in the Policy Address this year will inject fresh economic impetus and create employment opportunities for the entire Kowloon; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to capitalize on the opportunity presented by the building of a cruise terminal and the development of Kai Tak new area, expeditiously finalize an environmentally friendly linkage system and its extension to To Kwa Wan, enhance the designs of the Metro Park and the Longjin Bridge conservation zone, construct a new Kowloon harbourfront promenade stretching from Lei Yue Mun to Sham Shui Po, enhance the uses of typhoon shelters, introduce leisure water sports facilities, and improve the transport network of Kowloon; and, to consolidate the existing tourism infrastructure and facilities and build new ones, while implementing the plan of Energizing Kowloon East, with a view to developing Kowloon East into an important core business and tourism district; this Council also urges the Government to:

- (a) when establishing a Kowloon East Development Office responsible for steering and monitoring this strategic development project, follow the same approach of holding discussions with the public adopted in the planning for the Kai Tak Development Area, so as to enable people, especially those from Kowloon East, to fully participate in the discussions and put forward views on the alignment, station locations and fares of an environmentally friendly elevated monorail system, as well as the layout of public open spaces, the construction of footbridges, and the designs of waterfront promenades, etc.;
- (b) expeditiously complete and announce the financial report and feasibility study on the monorail system, and study the sustainable development of monorail operation;

- (c) improve the linkage of the existing transport network of Kowloon East with those of the various districts in Hong Kong, and ensure that the new developments will not cause any traffic congestion and obstruct local district residents commuting to and from work and travelling to and from the district; and
- (d) expedite the relocation of Government office buildings in Wan Chai to the district, so as to stimulate economic activities in the district and create employment opportunities;
- (e) review the road transport network of the various areas of Kowloon East, project whether the traffic loads of the existing road networks in the various communities are adequate for dovetailing with the future development of the district, and expeditiously implement improvement works in accordance with the review outcomes and development needs;
- (f) study the linkage of the new and old areas in Kowloon East by an environmentally friendly mass transit system, and improve the public transport supporting facilities connecting Kowloon East to other districts, so as to cope with the needs of tourists and businesses in the future;
- (g) perfect the pedestrian linking systems and barrier-free facilities in the new and old areas of Kowloon East, so that tourists and residents can travel between new and old development areas smoothly and without obstruction;
- (h) expeditiously finalize the construction of a general hospital in Kai Tak and expedite the expansion of the United Christian Hospital, so as to meet the medical needs arising from the population growth and development of Kowloon East in the future;
- (i) study the construction of cycle tracks along the harbourfront of Kowloon East and various other districts for linkage with the cycle track to be constructed in the Kai Tak New Development Area, so as to develop a network of urban cycle tracks;
- (j) make use of the advantages of Kowloon East, such as cultural monuments and existing waterways, etc., for developing a special heritage trail blending environmentalism, historical monuments, local culture and tourism, so as to add special features to the district;

- (k) increase the space for greening and public art in Kowloon East, and introduce bazaars with local characteristics, such as temple fairs, so as to attract tourists and create employment opportunities; and
- (l) use the site of the former Tai Hom Village and San Po Kong Industrial Area, etc., for developing cultural and creative industries, so as to build the district into a tourism spot related to the Hong Kong film industry; and
- (m) construct a network of designated cycle tracks in Kowloon East for internal and external connection, strengthen green transport as a feature of the district and upgrade bay water quality standards for enjoyment by the public and tourists, promote diversified local development and provide Hong Kong people with an appropriate urban residential area.

Energizing Kowloon East

List of relevant papers

Date	Meeting/Event	References
14 October 2011	Panel on Development	Administration's paper -- Initiatives of the Development Bureau in the 2011-2012 Policy Address and Policy Agenda (LC Paper No. CB(1)35/11-12(01)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/english/panels/dev/papers/dev1014cb1-35-1-e.pdf
19 December 2011	Panel on Development	Administration's paper -- Energizing Kowloon East (LC Paper No. CB(1)599/11-12(03)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/english/panels/dev/papers/dev1219cb1-599-3-e.pdf
14 December 2011	Council meeting	Motion debate on "Capitalizing on the opportunity presented by the building of a cruise terminal to develop Kowloon East into a business and tourism district" Hansard (Floor)(14 and 15 December 2011) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/chinese/counmtg/floor/cm1214-confirm-ec.pdf (pps. 279-301) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/chinese/counmtg/floor/cm1215-confirm-ec.pdf (pps. 361-378)