

Southern District Council
Economy, Development and Planning Committee

Pilot Case on Public Space next to Tai Wong Ye Temple
in Wong Chuk Hang

Purpose

This paper aims to brief and consult members on the preliminary conceptual design proposal of the pilot case on public space next to Tai Wong Ye Temple in Wong Chuk Hang (“the pilot case”).

Background

2. In line with one of the recommendations under “Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030” for enhancing liveability in a compact high-density city, the Planning Department (“PlanD”) is conducting the “Reimagining Public Spaces in Hong Kong – Feasibility Study” (“the Study”). Through understanding the aspirations and needs of the public regarding open space, as well as the current trends of open space design, the Study reviews the concept and design principles of open space with a view to uplifting the quality and quantity of open space in Hong Kong.

3. The public space next to Tai Wong Ye Temple in Wong Chuk Hang (“the Site”) has been selected as one of the pilot cases. The preliminary conceptual design of the pilot case is developed to showcase the proposed design guidelines under the Study. This paper will present the site context, vision, design principles, preliminary conceptual design proposal and implementation arrangement of the pilot case. The proposal only provides preliminary design concepts. Detailed design will be subject to further study by the relevant government departments.

Site Context of the Pilot Case (Annex 1)

4. The Invigorating Island South (“IIS”) initiative announced in the 2020 Policy Address aims to develop the Southern District into a place full of vibrancy, vigour and velocity for people to work, live, explore new ideas and have fun. As one of the projects under the IIS initiative, the Invigorating Island South Office (“IISO”) collaborates with PlanD and other relevant departments to improve the public space next to Tai Wong Ye Temple, with an aim to re-plan and beautify the Site and enhance its functionality through “place-making approach”.

5. The Site with an area of about 1,490 sq.m, currently mainly serves as a pedestrian corridor connecting other parts of Wong Chuk Hang, including the Aberdeen waterfront via Heung Yip Path.

Vision and Design Principles

6. Wong Chuk Hang is a community with mixed business, residential, tourism and cultural uses. The Site is in proximity to the Wong Chuk Hang Business Area that is undergoing transformation. The Site has good pedestrian connectivity as it is a key local destination and an important node of the main pedestrian circulation network in the area. The vision of the pilot case is to facelift the public space into a vibrant and welcoming public “Piazza” where events can be held, and people can walk through, rest, gather and interact in daily life.

7. Key Design Principles comprise:

- **Place-making** – The location and spatial layout of the Site carries the quality of a “Piazza”. It can connect people to places, and offer people a comfortable open space with pleasant scenery after the revitalisation of Staunton Creek Nullah.
- **Flexible Functions and Adaptive Designs** – Apart from being a gathering place, the Site can also provide the community with space to host events. Moveable street furniture is recommended to facilitate adaptive and flexible use of the space.
- **Synergy with Surrounding Uses** – The design of the proposed “Piazza” and the adjoining Nam Long Shan Road Children’s Playground and Rest Garden shall be complementary to each other.

Preliminary Conceptual Design Proposal (Annexes 2 and 3)

8. The key features of the preliminary conceptual design proposal are as follows:
- **Flexible Event Space** – Considering the western portion of the Site is wider and close to the Staunton Creek Nullah, it is suitable to be used as an event area for different activities and performances. To strengthen the site characteristics, featured paving design is proposed to create a focal point to intuitively guide people across the Piazza for visiting nearby attractions. It is suggested to repave the entire Piazza with a paving design that demonstrates a meandering flow pattern in response to the upcoming revitalisation works of the nullah.
 - **Mobile and Multi-purpose Furniture** – Multi-purpose mobile furniture is proposed to provide more seating and greenery. As an initial concept, moveable furniture with bright and playful colours and variations in heights and shapes is proposed, which would allow users to rearrange these furniture into different combinations and interact freely, enhancing the flexibility of utilising the public space. More artistic elements could also be added to provide visual aesthetics to visitors. These furniture could also be moved aside on special dates when events are held at the Site.
 - **Artistic Visual Anchor** – Artworks are proposed for two columns of the South Island Line (East) (“SIL(E)”) viaduct standing at the Site to create artistic visual anchor, and to forge the landmark ambience for the Piazza. A design competition has recently been organised by the Development Bureau for creating artworks on these two columns.
 - **Social Railing and Benches** – The preliminary conceptual design proposes to replace the existing conventional railing along the nullah with social railing. Benches are also proposed alongside the social railing to allow residents to stay, rest and interact with each other. Additional benches would also be provided beneath the SIL(E) viaduct. Design of the benches would make reference to and build on some successful local examples and be implemented under District Minor Works Programme.
 - **Bollards** – To further increase visual permeability, bollards and chains are proposed to replace the existing railing along Heung Yip Road. The existing emergency vehicular access will be retained.

- **Synergy with Surrounding Uses** – It is suggested to integrate the design of the Piazza with Nam Long Shan Road Children’s Playground and Rest Garden to create synergy effect. The future refurbishment works of the Nam Long Shan Road Children’s Playground and Rest Garden to be taken forward under the IIS initiative would complement with the enhancement proposals for the Piazza, and maximise greening opportunities to provide a tranquil open space.

Implementation Arrangement

9. With reference to the above proposal, PlanD will continue to liaise with relevant bureaux and departments, including IISO, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Architectural Services Department, Transport Department, Highways Department, Drainage Services Department, Lands Department and Home Affairs Department on the implementation arrangements.

Advice Sought

10. Members are invited to offer comments on the proposal.

Annexes

Annex 1 Location Plan

Annex 2 Preliminary Conceptual Design

Annex 3 Illustrative Design (Photomontage)

Planning Department

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