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**Minutes of 1307th Meeting of the
Town Planning Board held on 17.11.2023**

Kowloon District

Agenda Item 4

Proposed Amendments to the Approved Urban Renewal Authority Kwun Tong Town Centre Development Scheme Plan – Main Site No. S/K14S/URA1/2
(TPB Paper No. 10938)

[The item was conducted in Cantonese.]

Deliberation Session

1. The Chairperson invited Members to consider whether the proposed amendments (i.e. Items A and B) to the approved Development Scheme Plan (DSP) were acceptable and the draft DSP could be deemed suitable for exhibition under section 5 of the Town Planning Ordinance.
2. Members generally supported or had no objection to the proposed amendments, and some Members had the following observations/suggestions on Item A:

“Vertical City” Development

- (a) the proposed “Vertical City” development at Development Areas (DAs) 4 and 5 (the Site) of Kwun Tong Town Centre (KTTC) was supported. KTTC was strategically located in the centre of Kwun Tong with good accessibility to major public transport. The proposed “Vertical City” development at the Site would provide a wide variety of uses, including residential, office, hotel, retail, government, institution and community (GIC) facilities and public

open spaces (POS)/communal spaces at one place, bringing benefits to the community and demonstrating a good model in urban renewal;

- (b) the concept of “Vertical City” development had actually been reflected in the previous scheme under the s.16 application (No. A/K14/819) submitted by the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) and approved by the Metro Planning Committee of the Town Planning Board (the Board) in September 2022 (the Approved Scheme), which comprised a landmark tower for office, hotel and retail uses with a building height (BH) of 285mPD at the southeastern corner of the Site;
- (c) in response to the unsuccessful tendering for the development of the Site in early 2023 and the changing market needs, URA repackaged the Site from a purely commercial development towards a high-density mixed-use “Vertical City” development with the introduction of residential use in the development mix by increasing the total gross floor area (GFA) to 268,300 m² (accountable GFA of 251,100 m²) and the BH of the landmark tower to 360mPD. It was agreed that the proposed amendments could make the redevelopment project more attractive for the market and hence, a successful tendering;
- (d) the need for developing “Vertical City” in Hong Kong should not be justified simply by the intention to be on par with other major cities and catch up the global development trend. URA should provide more justifications on planning and community grounds;

BH and GFA

- (e) the proposed maximum GFA of 251,100 m² and maximum BH of 360mPD for the Site, as specified on the Notes of the DSP, were supported, and based on the individual merits of the future development proposal, flexibility should be allowed for relaxation of the GFA/BH restrictions;

Air Ventilation, Pedestrian Connections and POS/Outdoor Communal Spaces

- (f) there might be air ventilation impact brought by the proposed development on the surrounding areas. Consideration should be given to refining/enhancing the building design, such as providing wider urban windows along the building façade facing Kwun Tong Road, to create better wind environment in the surrounding areas;
- (g) the pedestrian connectivity between the Site and the surrounding areas should be improved. While URA's good intention to enhance pedestrian connectivity was noted, consideration should be given to investigating the effectiveness of the proposed pedestrian connection measures, such as the proposal of diverting pedestrians to use MTR Kwun Tong Station Exit C, which might probably be less preferred by pedestrians;
- (h) consideration should be given to enhancing the design of the at-grade POS and multi-level outdoor communal spaces in particular to address the traffic/railway noise and dust problem from MTR Kwun Tong Line and Kwun Tong Road;

Planning Gains

- (i) while the provision of POS/communal outdoor spaces and various GIC facilities was the main planning gains URA adopted to justify the proposed development, it would be helpful if URA could provide more relevant information/details in that respect;
- (j) the merit of injecting middle-class households in the old urban area, which could bring along benefits to the local economy as mentioned by the Chairperson, was noted;

Mixed Uses

- (k) while noting the intention to allow domestic and non-domestic uses to be located on the same floor with appropriate physical segregation measures, the

operational efficiency and management issue for such arrangement should be addressed;

- (l) since a wide variety of uses, including residential, office, hotel, retail, GIC facilities and POS/communal spaces, would be provided in the landmark tower and there might be a possibility of co-existence of a high-class residential development/a 5-star hotel with POS/communal spaces, due regard should be given to the distribution and design of the various uses/facilities with a view to achieving the planning objective of social inclusiveness; and

Others

- (m) the design of the local open spaces for future residents and the interface problem between the local open spaces and the POS/communal spaces should be enhanced/addressed.

3. A Member enquired whether the proposed amendments to the approved DSP mainly involved the rezoning of the Site from “Comprehensive Development Area (1)” (“CDA(1)”) to “Other Specified Uses” annotated “Mixed Use” (“OU(MU)”) and whether there were any specifications on the BH of the Site. In response, the Secretary said that the Site was proposed to be rezoned from “CDA(1)” to “OU(MU)” which was intended for high-density mixed-use developments. According to the Notes of the DSP for the “OU(MU)” zone, the Site was subject to stepped height restrictions, i.e. BH restrictions of 360mPD at the southeastern portion for development of the landmark tower (high zone), 100mPD (mid zone) at the southern portion of the Site for development of the GIC-cum-commercial block, and 30mPD (low zone) along the northern boundary of the Site to facilitate podium connection(s) between DAs 2 & 3 and DAs 4 & 5. Besides, the maximum total, domestic and non-domestic GFAs would be specified, and a clause on minor relaxation of GFA/BH restrictions would be incorporated in the Notes of the “OU(MU)” zone.

4. Two Members enquired whether more detailed explanation could be given on how the maximum BH of 360mPD was determined and opined that URA’s justification for the proposed increase in BH from 285mPD to 360mPD was mainly related to the need to

accommodate additional GFA and URA should provide more justifications for such an exceptionally tall BH for the Site.

5. In response to Members' enquiry on how the maximum BH of 360mPD for the landmark tower was determined, the Secretary made the following main points:

- (a) the determination of an appropriate BH for the landmark tower had taken into account the BH profile of the surrounding areas and the characteristics and constraints of the Site;

BH Profile of the Surrounding Areas

- (b) there was a stepped BH profile in the Kwun Tong area with BH gradually ascending from the harbourfront area (i.e. Kwun Tong business area) with BHs of 100/130/160mPD to the inland area (i.e. KTTC) with a BH of 200mPD (i.e. APM Millennium City) and further to the uphill area (Kwun Tong residential area) with various BHs. The BH of 360mPD for the landmark tower was proposed after taking into account the stepped BH profile in the area, among other considerations;

Characteristics and Constraints of the Site

- (c) the Site was originally zoned "CDA(1)". Under the "CDA(1)" zone, only GFA restrictions were specified, but not the BH restrictions. Any proposed development under the "CDA" zoning required planning permission from the Board. The applicant had to submit a Master Layout Plan with key development parameters, design concepts and relevant technical assessments/proposals to the Board for consideration;
- (d) in the past years, URA had demonstrated efforts to submit various planning proposals to the Board for consideration and the Kwun Tong District Council (KTDC) had been consulted on the planning proposals. Under the latest Approved Scheme, major design elements including the provision of an iconic egg-shaped GIC building at the southwestern corner of the Site,

cascading building design of the GIC-cum-commercial block along the southern boundary of the Site, the provision of a landmark tower at the southeastern corner of the Site and the provision of at-grade POS of not less than 7,200 m² (including the re-provisioning of the Yue Man Square Rest Garden) had been incorporated. Those design elements had been generally accepted by the public/KTDC. With those design commitments, there was limited scope of redistributing the additional GFA horizontally over the Site and the most possible option was to increase the BH of the landmark tower to accommodate the additional GFA; and

- (e) the proposed increase in GFA and BH had also taken into account the infrastructural (such as traffic and sewerage) capacities, findings of the noise impact assessment as well as other urban design/visual/air ventilation considerations while optimising the development potential of the Site. A high-rise tower at the southeastern corner of the Site was accepted in approving the previous schemes, and the proposed increase in BH was mainly to accommodate the increased GFA in a proportional manner. After testing and comparing of different BH options, the proposed maximum BH of 360mPD was considered as appropriate by URA.

6. The Chairperson concluded that Members generally supported or had no objection to the proposed amendments to the approved DSP as set out in the Paper, and remarked that Members' observations/suggestions, including those on justifications for the increase in GFA/BH, details of planning gains, air ventilation/wind environment, pedestrian connectivity, provision of POS/communal spaces and GIC facilities as well as local open spaces for the future residents would be recorded in the minutes of the meeting for URA's consideration and follow-up actions, as appropriate. The Chairperson remarked that the Town Planning Board could further scrutinise the proposed redevelopment project during the consideration of representations in respect of the draft DSP, and it was believed that URA would be able to provide more details of the layout design, planning gains/design merits, etc. to address Members' concerns at that juncture.

7. After deliberation, Members decided to:

- (a) agree to the proposed amendments to the approved Urban Renewal Authority (URA) Kwun Tong Town Centre (KTTC) – Main Site Development Scheme Plan (DSP) No. S/K14S/URA1/2 and that the draft URA KTTC – Main Site DSP No. S/K14S/URA1/2A at Attachment II of TPB Paper No. 10938 (the Paper) (to be renumbered as S/K14S/URA1/3 upon exhibition) and its Notes at Attachment IV of the Paper being suitable for exhibition under section 5 of the Town Planning Ordinance; and
- (b) adopt the revised Explanatory Statement (ES) at Attachment VI of the Paper for the draft URA KTTC – Main Site DSP No. S/K14S/URA1/3 as an expression of the planning intentions and objectives of Town Planning Board for various land use zonings of the DSP and agree the revised ES being suitable for publication together with the DSP.

8. Members noted that, as a general practice, the Secretariat of the Board would undertake detailed checking and refinement of the draft DSP including its Notes and ES, if appropriate, before its publication under the Town Planning Ordinance. Any major revisions would be submitted for the Board's consideration.

9. The Chairperson reminded Members that according to the Town Planning Board Guidelines No. 29C, the Board's decision on the DSP would be kept confidential for three to four weeks after the meeting and would be released when the draft DSP was exhibited for public inspection. Members should exercise due care so as to avoid inadvertent divulgence of their views on the proposed amendments to the DSP to the public before its publication.