



香港城市設計學會
Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design

25 January 2019

By Email: spkba-pe-general@aecom.com

8/F, Grand Central Plaza,

Tower 2, 138 Shatin Rural Committee Road,

Shatin, Hong Kong

Dear Sir / Madam,

Re: The HKIUD Public Affairs Committee's views on the "San Po Kong Business Area Pedestrian Environment and Traffic Improvement - Feasibility Study" Public Engagement

On behalf of the Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design, we would like to provide comments on the San Po Kong Business Area Pedestrian Environment and Traffic Improvement - Feasibility Study

Attached please find our Position Paper for your reference. If it would be helpful, we are pleased to meet to explain the content of our Paper. Should further information be required, please kindly contact me or Ms. Cherry Lau, our Administrative Officer at 2530 8135.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Y. TAM', written over a horizontal line.

(P. Y. TAM)

Chairman, Public Affairs Committee, HKIUD

Cc: HKIUD President – Mr. Joel Chan

Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design Limited

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The HKIUD Public Affairs Committee's views on the "San Po Kong Business Area Pedestrian Environment and Traffic Improvement - Feasibility Study" Public Engagement

1. Indeed, Kowloon East is going through substantial transformation in view of the changes in Hong Kong's economic development. San Po Kong is one of these areas, together with Kwun Tong and Kowloon Bay. We support Government's initiatives in principle, to improve the pedestrian environment in San Po Kong Business Area (SPKBA). However, before we go into the details, it is important to point out that improving the pedestrian environment is not just to facilitate the movement of people from point A to point B as quickly as possible like shifting of cargo. This is a common flaw which we have seen in other pedestrian related studies in recent years and not just in the present Study. Although the terms "walkability" and "connectivity" appeared in the Study Objectives, the presentation which we have been shown has placed a lot of emphasis on pavement widenings and signal control measures, etc. whilst the "connectivity" to adjacent areas was mainly featured in the landscaped walkway across Prince Edward Road East leading to the future MTR Kai Tak Station. We are of the opinion that a lot more has yet to be done on place making, greening, heritage preservation and the creation of variety and vibrancy. Our specific comments are set out as follows.
2. San Po Kong has been one of the important industrial areas and economic engines of Hong Kong in its heydays of the 1960s. SPK has an even much longer history and deep-rooted connections with the Kowloon City district and the Kai Tak Airport. An amusement park provided the public with venue for leisure until the 1980s and left fond memories in the minds of elder Hong Kongers even up to the present days. The way of street naming in this area according to the cardinal numbers one, two, three, four and so forth embedded in auspicious Chinese proverbial sayings is also so exceptional. In the past there was a Po Kong Village in the area. All these are of great interest in the history of Hong Kong. There is overall a very rich cultural heritage in this area besides its contributions to the development of Hong Kong in terms of the industrial past. The Government should make greater effort in this project to preserve the area's heritage, and to make beneficial use of these resources in the planning and design.
3. The Improvement Framework has depicted two major pedestrian corridors through the SPKBA from the Diamond Hill CDA development site to the Kai Tak development area, namely, the Tai Yau Street corridor (the orange line) and the Sze Mei Street corridor (the pink line), while a third corridor is shown at Sam

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Chuk Street (the blue line) leading from the Choi Hung Road Playground, through the GIC sites of the proposed Holistic Centre for Youth Development and Proposed Reprovisioning of the Kai Tak East Playground and Sports Centre, linking to the Kai Tak development area.

4. We do not dispute the need to accord priority to pedestrian safety and therefore the need for pavement widening and installation of traffic lights and pedestrian crossing facilities at suitable locations. However, apart from serving the purposes of commuting during the morning and evening peak hours when people hurry along from the public transport interchanges / MTR stations from home to their workplace and vice versa, the pedestrian areas should also be designed with facilities at suitable human scale, to slow down the pace of movements and to induce people to stay within the area instead of just passing through it. Otherwise, these corridors would possibly become dead after business hours. We suggest that the pedestrian network should, with suitable improvement, impart a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere at all other times to allow for various activities like street performances to take place, and roadside cafes, etc. to thrive. Greening, shading and suitable street furniture and public art displays should therefore be taken into account right from the beginning instead of widening the corridors first and sprinkling some of these in the left over spaces afterwards.
5. It would be worthwhile for the three major pedestrian corridors to have suitable themes and individual identities. More specifically, whilst the Tai Yau Street and Sze Mei Street corridors have more or less similar orientations, they may perhaps be accorded a similar theme with the industrial heritage as the design reference whereas the Sam Chuk Street corridor which links up more leisure related sites may adopt another recreation/ sports related theme in its design. Kwun Tong and Tsuen Wan are doing similar things, by conserving and making use of their industrial assets.
6. At present there is a bus and mini bus terminus at the junction of Choi Hung Road and Sze Mei Street. The site appears to be quite under-utilised. It is given to understand that the terminus will be removed to the CDA site upon the completion of the development. The location of this site is very prominent and could act as a gateway into the SPKBA from the MTR Choi Hung station. This site should be linked to the CDA development via a pedestrian bridge or landscaped deck with careful and comprehensive design. It is given to understand that the District Council wishes to use the site for GIC purposes. Although the detailed uses and design cannot be determined now, it is strongly suggested that generous setback and greening should be allowed for at the pedestrian deck level in the design of this GIC building in due course. The

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overall pedestrian linkage from the CDA site, the bridge across Choi Hung Road, the deck at this GIC site and the links further south along Sze Mei Street leading to the landscaped deck across Prince Edward Road East should preferably be designed comprehensively instead of being designed and developed by different agencies without any coordination.

7. There appears to be yet another important “gateway” leading to the SPKBA at the junction of PERE and Kai Sun Road – where the “pink line” and the “blue line” converge. However, there is no detailed information on how pedestrian flows will be connected to the Kai Tak development area here, although it is given to understand that there will be underground vehicular access with the present Kai Sun Road. A snag with this is that since Kai Sun Road is where the two major pedestrian corridors converge, a substantial ground level space will be taken up by the Kai Sun Road underpass and related vehicular road structures, and the vehicular traffic at Kai Sun Road actually cuts through the two GIC sites. It appears that vehicular traffic has again been given priority over pedestrians in the mindset and overall framework before we come to the present pedestrian “improvement” project.
8. Another aspect of the transformation of the SPKBA is seen in the increasing number of industrial buildings converted into hotels and commercial development. The Study should highlight where these sites are and any impact that has resulted from the concerned traffic flows and parking demands, including those due to the tourist coaches.
9. Last but not least, since EKEO is charged with promoting the development of Kowloon East as a pilot area of Hong Kong as a Smart City, smart designs and systems should be provided in the SPKBA pedestrian improvement scheme, including the provision of smart lamp posts, etc. Initiatives in the scheme also appear to be limited mainly within the study area boundaries and have not sufficiently taking the connections with the adjacent residential areas of SPK and Wong Tai Sin into account. Pedestrian network design should not be restricted by departmental responsibility boundaries. If this limitation is due to the EKEO’s terms of reference, Government should take a steer at policy bureau level and break down the departmental barriers if we believe in the value of good urban design.

**Public Affairs Committee of
The Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design
25 January, 2019**

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