CHINA MERCHANTS WHARF PIER

Located at the western tip of Kennedy Town, China Merchants Wharf Pier is private land owned by the China Merchants Godown, Wharf & Transportation Co., Ltd., a subsidiary of China Merchants Group.

China Merchants Godown, Wharf & Transportation Co., Ltd.
The company relocated its headquarters to Kennedy Town in the 1980s and set up its cargo warehousing business. Until today, more than half of the local grain inventory is stored inside the 2 high-rise godowns, which have a total capacity of over 50,000 tonnes.

Business Diversification

Warehouse
Berthing Facility
Marina Logistics
Event & Exhibition

SWOT Analysis

S
Proximity to the Harbour
Long-established Wharf & Godown Business

W
Restricted Access to the Waterfront
Presence of Incompatible & Under-utilized Areas

O
Upcoming Government Redevelopment Project
Improvement on Transportation

T
Land Pollution (e.g. Soil Contamination)
Potential Decline in Residents' Quality of Life

Urbanscape of the Western Kennedy Town

Activities Along the Waterfront

Decontamination Work
Warehousing & Logistics
Recreation
The Unappealing Waterfront

Past (Year 1988)

Kennedy Town was once a dumping ground for undesired facilities, and the waterfront is currently dominated by industrial and institutional land uses.

The Unappealing Waterfront

Current (Year 2020)

A public research team revealed serious land contamination where the former incinerator and abattoir were located, this has prompted the government to commence a 7-year decontamination project before turning the waterfront into a space for public enjoyment.

Underutilization of Land

Disconnected Waterfront

The presence of China Merchants Wharf and Godowns is a physical blockage along the existing waterfront because it disallows public access.

Section 6.2.18

“Sites along the waterfront should be reserved for cultural, tourism-related, recreational, and retail activities. An active waterfront with diversity in activities and functions should be created to introduce a sense of enjoyment... incompatible land uses such as cargo handing uses, which would obstruct the continuity of harbourfront promenade, and major infrastructure projects such as roads which create a visual and physical barrier to the open water should be avoided.”

Monographic Study on Open Space

Quantitative Analysis

Current Provision of Open Space in Kennedy Town:

\[ 0.77 \text{ m}^2 \text{ per head} \]

Suggested Provision of Open Space from HKPSG:

\[ 2 \text{ m}^2 \text{ per head} \]

Suggested Provision of Open Space from 2030+:

\[ 2.5 \text{ m}^2 \text{ per head} \]

The Draft Kennedy Town & Mount Davis Outline Zoning Plan No. 5/H1/20

Other Specified Uses
(Recreational, Tourism or Commercial-related Uses)

Planning Intention:

This zone is intended primarily for phasing out of existing industrial uses through redevelopment (or conversion) for commercial, leisure and tourism-related uses taking advantage of its waterfront setting.

Qualitative Analysis

Examples from the site are extracted from the site to illustrate the existing qualitative problems.

Disconnected Waterfront

Unattractive Design

Unhygienic Resting Space

Controversies Arised from a Temporary Garden

As part of the government’s redevelopment plan for Kennedy Town west, the Cadogan Street Temporary Garden was once set to be torn down in 2016, to make way for 700 new flats.

“The garden has been ‘temporary’ for almost 20 years. It is time to give Kennedy Town residents a permanent recreational space.”

Hui Chi-fung, Central and Western district councillor

“Though we welcome the (withdrawal) decision, it is a pity the government insisted on pushing for the (demolition) plan despite strong opposition from residents from a long time ago.”

Cherry Wong, activist of the Concern Group for Protecting Kennedy Town
We all love open spaces and enjoy the waterfront. But where is the fun when the waterfront is inaccessible?

The project “COMMON SQUA2E” would like to offer an opened waterfront for public enjoyment, as well as to provide vibrant waterfront activities. The naming of COMMON SQUA2E (CM) also implies the arrival of China Merchants’ second spring, revitalizing the diminishing wharf pier into a cultural landmark.

COMMON SQUA2E

Vision
To transform the old wharf into a vibrant, green, and accessible waterfront that promotes public enjoyment and local tourism.

Objectives
01. To beautify the waterfront with well-designed and quality structures.
02. To provide extensive open space for public enjoyment and leisure.
03. To promote sustainability with nature-compatible settings.
04. To improve connectivity and accessibility of the harbourfront.

Design Strategies
- Adopting an Industrial Aesthetics
- Making Use of Soft Landscaping
- Promoting the Use of Green Transport
- Creating a Social & Cultural Hub
- Promoting Water-friendly Culture
- Implementing New Water Transport

Proposal Evaluation Based on POSPD

Spatial Issues
- Regular-shaped space
- Long street frontage
- Elongated space mainly for circulation purposes

Landscape Planning Issues
- Hard and soft landscape
- Universal access to facilities
- Distinctive local character and amenity of the area

Perceptual Issues
- Visibility into and around the space without any blockage
- Tree shading for a more comfortable microclimate
- Space for staying with added attractions
- Clear space with flexible arrangement on amenities

Guidelines for Promenade
- Spatial recess every 50m along the promenade
Stepping into COMMON SQUA2E, a wide pathway can be seen readily at the entrance, which links all the way to the heart of the Square - a cluster of shopping mall, hotel and office for the China Merchants.

**Entrance Space Visualization**

The entrance is always the first focus of a place. Therefore, entrance beautification is crucial for giving a good first impression of the aesthetics of CM2. Apart from that, greenery installation and hard or soft landscape promote a longer length of stay.

**Interior Environment of the Shopping Mall**

A quality shopping place is indispensable to a tourist hotspot. Therefore, diversified types of shops, including markets, arts and crafts shops, and restaurants are distributed on different floors to provide a more comprehensive shopping experience.

**Rooftop Garden Plan**

A 36.5-meter tall hotel is built on top of the shopping mall to accommodate around 200 visitors. Built in modern industrial style, the deluxe hotel brings people closer to the harbour with a fabulous sea view and introduces Kennedy Town to a wider scope.

**Different Routes to Enter COMMON**

Shoppers and non-shoppers may have a different route of access to CM2. Shoppers, (indicated yellow), may access the waterfront by going through 2 shopping blocks. Alternatively, for non-shoppers who are not interested in shopping, they may access through the 3Om wide entrance, or by the promenade walkways at the 2 sides.
After looking at the entrance, the promenade supplements the spirit of providing an entertaining and accessible waterfront to the public.

**Biking by the Sea**

Instead of a means of transportation, most people in Hong Kong treat bicycle riding as a weekend entertainment at parks and along the promenade.

**Provision of Cycling Amenities**

- Cycle Lane
- Bike Racks
- Speed Reducing Ballards

To promote the bicycle as a green transport to residents, a 610m two-way bike lane is constructed. The lane tends to connect both sides of the waterfront, where a sports and recreational ground and a waterfront promenade will be built by the government soon.

**Is a Continuous Cycling Track Along the Waterfront Possible?**

Several obstacles are found along the current waterfront. For example, there is only 1 one-way lane across New Praya Kennedy Town, lacking an additional pedestrian walkway for passage at the frontmost of the waterfront. Also, the existing cargo handling activities in Belcher Bay Promenade and Western District Public Cargo Working Area remain indispensable to Hong Kong’s marine logistics industry.

**Improvements on Connectivity**

- Water Transportation
- Green (Bike) Transportation
- Road Transportation

To make it possible, either rerouting or reclamation of Victoria Harbour (under the regulation of Harbour Protection Ordinance) is required.

To make way for a continuous bike lane requires a holistic analysis of its feasibility, along with careful land use planning in the long term.

**Introducing Water Taxi to Kennedy Town**

The water taxi is a new concept to local water transport, which aims at linking up attractions along the Victoria Harbour. The transport provides an alternative route to access the square, and it is expected to be another source of visitors.

**Proposed Water Taxi Route**

**Barge Pool: Public Water Enjoyment**

Swimming pools and sunbathing areas are provided to give visitors a unique swimming experience, promoting public enjoyment.

**Provision of Pool Facilities**

- Changing Rooms & Showers
- Sunbathing Area
- Sand Pool
Walking pass the promenade, here comes the social hub of COMMON SQUARE.

Building on a former wharf pier, the plaza has retained some of the localized features of the old pier in addition to the original pier shape. It is hoped that the collective memories of the distinguished wharf pier would remain in the hearts of residents in the neighborhood, who have witnessed the development of the wharf and godown business for 40 years.

Visualization of Amphitheatre

With extensive active and passive open space, the plaza is a must-visit destination that people can do whatever they like while enjoying the stunning sea view along Victoria Harbour. Moreover, with an ambition to make the plaza one of the local favourite hangouts, a wide range of themed events will be held regularly to attract people from all walks of life.

Is There Any Visual Blockage?

Standing at the end of the CM2 entrance and looking at the front-view, visual access to the sea is maximized as no structure or building is present that would block the sea view. Moreover, the open-to-sky design, suggested by HKFSG, ensures the continuation of airflow, allowing air breezeways for better air ventilation.

Apart from being a space for leisure and recreational activities, the lawn is a perfect place for holding festivals, weekend markets, music performances, and so on.

Amphitheater

Al Fresco Dining Area

Situated at the entrance of the plaza, the dining area features refreshment kiosks with a cargo container exterior design, which provides a variety of international food options that echoes with Hong Kong’s reputation as a food paradise.
**Harbourfront Steps**
A series of harbour steps are built to promote human-water interaction. As a passive open space, it allows visitors to do various kinds of static activities while enjoying the breathtaking sea view.

**Water Play Area**
Being a much-loved water feature, a water play area is introduced to provide entertainment to the visitors. Not only does it keep people cool in the hot summer, but it also contributes to a more diverse landscape experience.

**Multi-functional Lawn Space**
The lawn acts as the major leisure space of the plaza. Given an extensive green open space, visitors can gather and spend their time on either relaxation or recreation.

**Viewing Deck**
Serving as a landmark of the square, the deck resembles the past glory of the China Merchants Group in marine logistics and other businesses with its modern industrial architectural style.

**Temporal Uses**
- **Residents**
- **Tourists**
- **Workers**
- **Students**

**Visualization of Harbourfront Steps**

**Experience on the Viewing Deck**
In fact, the viewing deck is one good spot for enjoying the sea-view and the scenery of the Victoria Harbour. When the sky is clear, it is always possible to spot the West Kowloon Cultural District.