

Local Vessels Advisory Committee

Hong Kong Water Sports Council Proposed Water Sports Activities at Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to seek comments from the Local Vessels Advisory Committee (LVAC) on the proposed water sport activities to be carried out by Hong Kong Water Sports Council (HKWSC) at Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter (KTTS).

Background

2. HKWSC was established in 2013 as a non-profit limited company with its members mainly from National Sports Associations of water sports including Hong Kong China Rowing Association, Hong Kong China Dragon Boat Association, Hong Kong Canoe Union, Hong Kong Sailing Federation and Hong Kong Amateur Swimming Association. The purposes of its establishment are to provide a joint platform for the promotion of water sports in Hong Kong and to optimise usage of facilities by resource sharing.

3. HKWSC has applied to the Lands Department for a Short Term Tenancy (STT) of the Former Fire Station Building site at Kai Tak to establish a water sports centre (hereinafter “the Centre”) for rowing, canoeing and dragon boating. The Centre will become a community water sports centre serving mainly residents, workers and students in the Kowloon East by providing them with water sports activities. Government policy support for the grant of the STT to HKWSC has been obtained. The application is now in final processing stage with the STT expected to be granted to HKWSC in the 2nd quarter of 2019. The Centre is expected to be operated in second half of 2019. The Centre has a site area of about 3 570 m² with the 2-storey Former Fire Station Building standing thereon. It is located beside the Runway Park Pier facing KTTS. The location plan of the Centre and a photo of the Former Fire Station Building are shown at *Appendix 1*. The Centre will include an office, boat storage, changing rooms, toilets, etc. A general layout plan of the Centre including the position of the temporary pontoon is shown at *Appendix 2*.

4. Sir David Trench Fund has approved a funding of \$3 million for the

provision of the temporary pontoon and some facilities of the Centre. A temporary pontoon of 50 metres in length will be moored to the sea wall along the northeast boundary of the Centre to provide users of water sports activities with an access to KTTS and Kai Tak Approach Channel (KTAC). The main function of the typhoon shelters is to provide sufficient suitable berthing/mooring space within the Hong Kong waters for local vessels and small visiting vessels to take refuge during typhoon or inclement weather for the safety of the vessels and the crew members onboard. There is a concern that the water sports activities of the Centre to be carried out in KTTS will be deviated from the main function of the typhoon shelter. As such, HKWSC would like to address this concern and seek comments from members of LVAC on the proposed water sports activities at KTTS.

Operation Areas

5. Water Sports activities of the Centre will be restricted to be carried out in the areas at the upper part of KTAC and the northeast area of KTTS along the Kwun Tong Promenade (the "Operation Areas"). The location of the Operation Areas and their access routes are shown on the plan at *Appendix 3*. The Operation Area at the upper part of KTAC will be the main venue for water sport activities including distance and technique trainings of dragon boating, canoeing and rowing. The Operation Area at the northeast area of KTTS along the Kwun Tong Promenade will be for elite trainings and competitions. Such activities will be less frequently held. There were some water sport activities being held in KTTS in recent years. Some photos of these activities are shown at *Appendix 4*.

No Adverse Impact on Main Functions of Typhoon Shelter

6. To mitigate any adverse impact on the main functions of KTTS due to the proposed water sports activities, HKWSC will halt all the water-based operations of the Centre (indoor land training can continue) when typhoon signal No. 1 or black rainstorm warning is hoisted. This arrangement will lead to no reduction of area for the main functions of KTTS by providing shelter area for local vessels and small visiting vessels to take refuge during typhoon or inclement weather for the safety of the vessels and the crew members onboard. Hence, water sports activities to be carried out in KTTS will have no adverse impact on the main functions of the typhoon shelter.

Safety Measures

7. Apart from the fact that all water-based operations will be halted during inclement weather, HKWSC will implement the following measures to

ensure maximum safety:

- a. Water sports activities will generally only be carried out between sunrise and sunset. In times of restricted visibility when boats cannot be seen from the Centre or themselves see the Centre (which in practice would be a distance of less than 2 nautical miles), boats must return to an area where they can be seen from the Centre or cease activities entirely until visibility improves.
- b. Traffic Rules display boards will be erected at the Centre to remind all users of the Operation Areas and requirements.
- c. Proposed means of communication to be established between the Marine Department, other relevant departments and organisations, and HKWSC. The name of the person(s) in charge of the Centre who can be contacted by the Marine Department and other relevant departments and organizations on 24-hour basis and means of procedure for contact should be arranged. Contact with the ferry company, who runs ferry services between Kwun Tong, Kai Tak and North Point, will also be established. The ferry company will be informed of the proposed water sports activities to be conducted in both KTTS and KTAC.
- d. All instructors and team leaders of water sports activities will be required to attend a structured briefing session of about one hour so that they understand the nature and pattern of boat movements in KTTS and KTAC, the boundaries of the Operation Areas, the designated routings between the Operation Areas and the Centre and relevant Ordinances governing use of Passage Way before they are allowed to lead any activities. Instructors and team leaders will be told that the primary area for carrying out water sports activities will be KTAC and that the passageways are to be used for leaving from and returning to the Centre. Any water sports activities in the mooring areas of KTTS are prohibited unless the Marine Department gives its specific approval for, say, a special event, when participants in the event must abide by any conditions imposed by the Marine Department. Failure to abide by these requirements will result in appropriate disciplinary action being taken by HKWSC against those responsible, ranging from temporary suspension of the right to use the Centre until those responsible have undergone a refresher course all the way up to termination of their individual and, if necessary, their parent organisation's right to use the Centre

Consultation Work

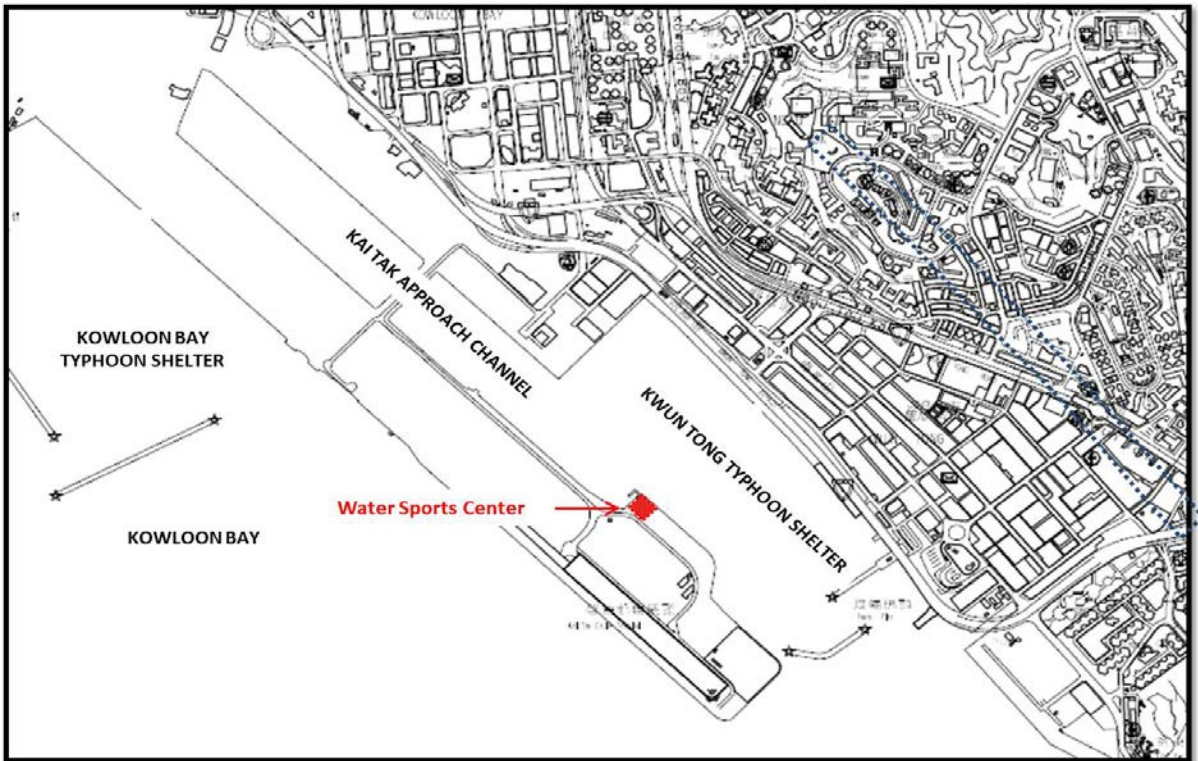
8. The Lands Department has finalised the circulation of the STT application to concerned Government Departments including the Marine Department, the Police Force, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, the Civil Engineering and Development Department, the Transport Department and the Highways Department. Their comments have been dealt with. Preliminary view from the Marine Department made during the circulation of the STT application was that it has no further comments on the proposed use of the operation area. Meanwhile, the Transport Department reminded HKWSC during the circulation of the STT application to ensure that the access and operation of the landing steps at Kai Tak Runway Park should not be affected by its water sports activities as the future water taxi operator will use those landing steps.

9. HKWSC introduced at a liaison meeting with stakeholders of KTTS on 3 August 2017 that KTAC would be used for the primary water sports activities. This was to respond to their concern on the reduction of mooring space and safety arising from water sports activities to be carried out in KTTA. HKWSC presented an updated of progress on the implementation of the Centre to the Harbourfront Commission Kai Tak Task Force on 28 September 2018. Its members were supportive of the proposal and amongst other things urged the Government to facilitate development of the Centre as soon as possible.

Advice Sought

10. Members are invited to note the proposed water sports activities to be carried out in KTTS. They are welcome to provide their comments on the proposal to facilitate HKWSC to achieve the maximum safety.

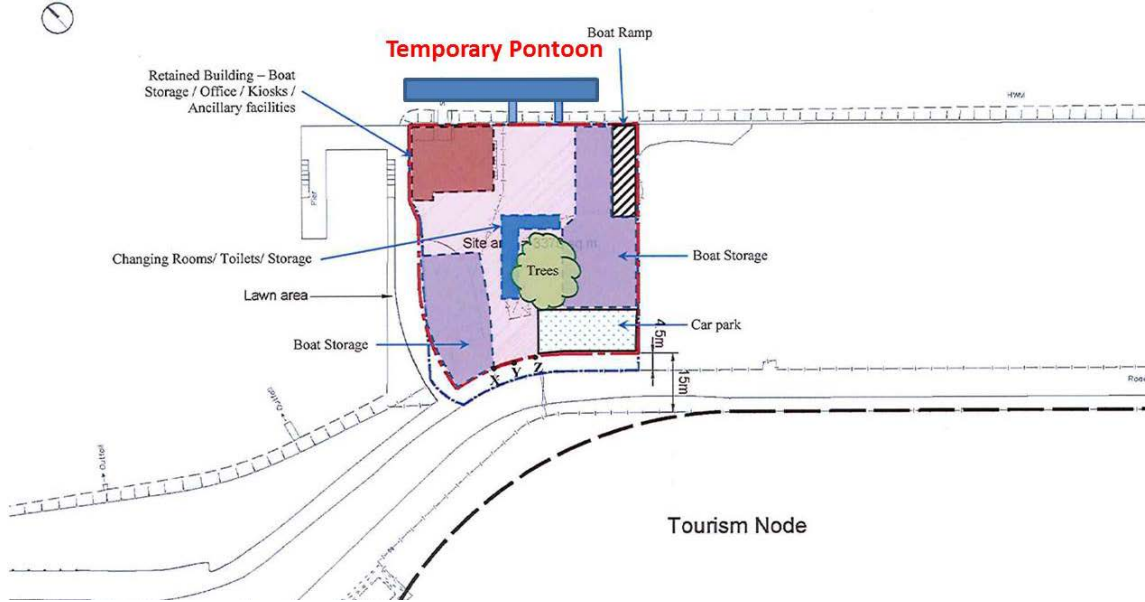
Recreation and Sport Branch
Home Affairs Bureau
April 2019



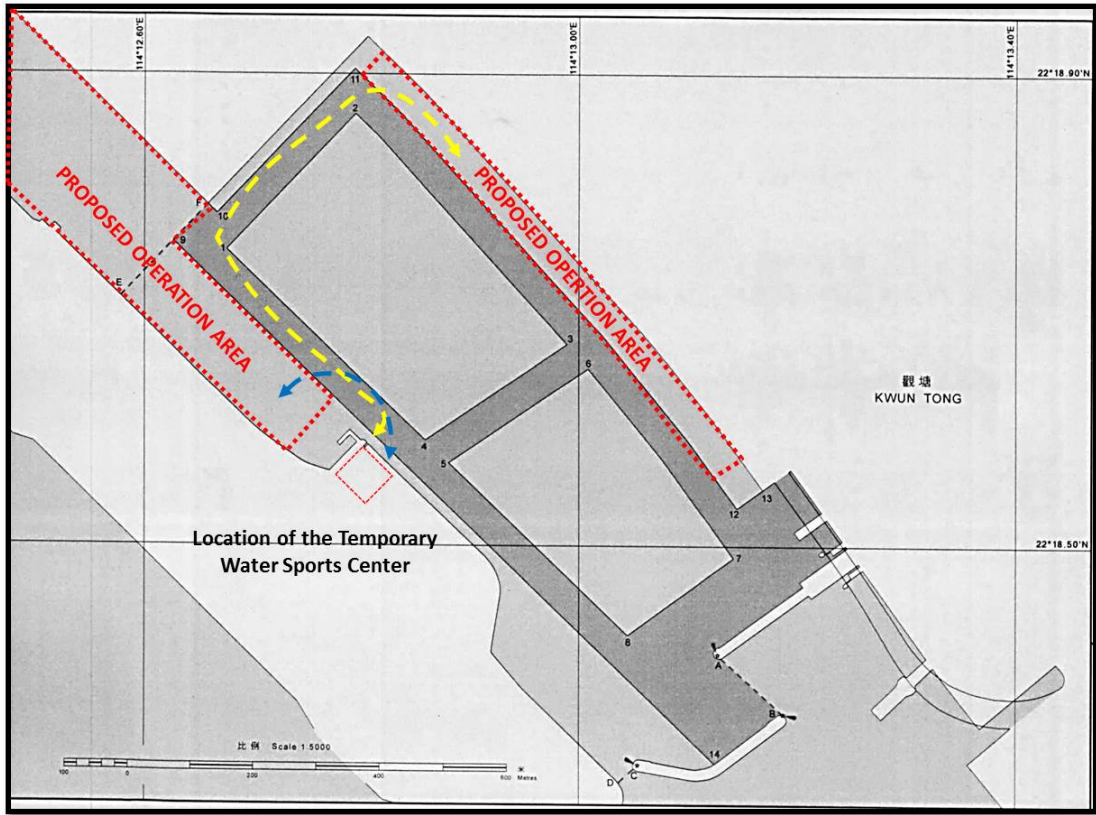
Location of the Water Sports Centre



Photo of the Former Fire Station Building



General Layout Plan of the Water Sports Centre



Location of Operation Areas and Access Routes



Photos of Water Sports Activities at Kwun Tong Typhoon Shelter