

HISTORICAL CUM SOCIAL STUDY ON KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT

IN CONNECTION WITH KAI TAK AREA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The study of the Ma Tau Kok Animal Quarantine Depot with its vicinity is an imminent and necessary investigation to liberate the potentials of the cultural assets and community resources of the district in its future development.

As coherent and interrelated districts both geographically and socially, To Kwa Wan and Kowloon City should inevitably be considered in conjunction with the past, the present and the future as a totality. With the unique characters of authentic livelihood, layered histories from ancient times to recent urbanization, alternative art and cultural communities' presence, and inseparable memories of Kai Tak aviation imprints, the districts are awaiting a transformation making positive relevance to the upcoming Kai Tak Redevelopment.

As the first stage enquiry, the research is focusing on an overall understanding of the context in terms of historical significance, archi-significance, cultural imperative, social connection of the Ma Tau Kok Animal Quarantine Depot as the centre within mainly four clusters and some other selected sites of interest. 38 sites of heritage and cultural interest are identified within the four clusters and seven other sites of heritage and cultural interest are discovered in other areas.

Along with the physical analysis and scenario proposals, the study also includes a comparative study of the local artist colonies including JCCAC and Fotan Industrial Area, as

well as the operation & management models of foreign cases, e.g. the Arts & Heritage District in Singapore, Huanshan Former Wine Plant in Taiwan, and 798 Art Zone in Beijing.

Within the given time and resource limitations, the research aims to provide a conceptual framework to interpret the physical heritage and social assets of the study area. For its richness of social contents and cultural potentials, the concerned districts should be further explored with additional perspectives including a/ a thorough social science survey; b/ an artistic interpretation of the living heritage; and c/ a community building process. Given the fragility of the social networks and the sensitivity of the artist communities, it is recommended to plan, to engage, and to share the findings and the planning as a process instead of a project.