

Redevelopment: Tackling Urban Decay Effectively



Yeung Uk Road project (The Dynasty) in Tsuen Wan.

The starting point for urban renewal has to be the control of urban decay. Over the past decade, the URA has commenced 54 redevelopment projects that are aimed at helping more than 30,000 households improve their living conditions. These projects are also designed to bring long-term economic, planning and environmental benefits to the city.

We commenced work on two new redevelopment projects last year and continued to work on other commenced projects that were at different stages of development.

Commencement of New Redevelopment Projects

In March 2011, URA commenced two URAO redevelopment projects:



Fuk Wing Street, Sham Shui Po

This project in Sham Shui Po covers an area of about 650 square metres. Built in 1956, the project area's three buildings, with about 90 households and seven shops in them, are in poor condition, with unauthorised rooftop structures.

The URA plans to redevelop the site and to provide about 70 residential units with flat sizes of approximately 40 square metres to 60 square metres.

Progress

Since commencement, the URA has –

- conducted a freezing survey on 25 March 2011;
- conducted briefings for owners and tenants, and explained the acquisition, compensation and rehousing policies, including three enhancement policies introduced under the new URS;
- deliberated on 16 objections received against the project; and
- submitted the project, together with URA's deliberations, to the Secretary for Development, in August 2011, for consideration and authorisation to proceed.



URA staff conducts freezing survey to ascertain the occupancy status.



Pak Tai Street / San Shan Road, Ma Tau Kok

This project occupies a corner site abutting Pak Tai Street in Ma Tau Kok, and covers an area of about 1,280 square metres. Built in 1957, the six buildings within the project area, which contain about 140 households and 20 shops, are generally in poor condition. The buildings are of eight storeys, without lifts, and with unauthorised rooftop structures and unauthorised building works.



Planning, Development and Conservation Committee endorses the parameters for the project.

The URA plans to redevelop the site and to provide about 130 residential units with flat sizes of around 35 square metres to 65 square metres.

Progress

Since commencement, the URA has –

- conducted a freezing survey on 25 March 2011;
- conducted briefings for owners and tenants, and explained the acquisition, compensation and rehousing policies, including three enhancement policies introduced under the new URS;
- deliberated on one objection received against the project; and
- submitted the project, together with URA's deliberations, to the Secretary for Development, in August 2011, for consideration and authorisation to proceed.

Implementation of Commenced Projects

Among URA's 54 projects, 10 were inherited from the LDC, 25 were announced by the LDC but commenced by URA, while 19 were commenced directly by the URA. A progress update on these projects is as follows:

Project stage	Project total
Planning and Approval	2
Acquisition and Clearance	17
Demolition and Tendering	4
Construction	13
Sales and Leasing	5
Full Completion	13
	54

Brief details on all of URA's 54 projects, are provided in the table on pages 50 to 57.

Improvements aimed at benefitting families and the community

The 54 projects implemented by the URA are aimed at benefitting affected families and the community as a whole. The improvements and benefits are summarised in the table below:

Dilapidated buildings covered by the URA	825 buildings
Living conditions improved	34,000 households
New homes provided	18,000 flats
G/IC areas provided	74,000 square metres
Public open space provided	37,000 square metres



Ma Tau Wai Road / Chun Tin Street, To Kwa Wan

A building on Ma Tau Wai Road collapsed in January 2010 and killed four residents, leaving hundreds of residents living in panic. URA had to step in urgently because of the need to provide help and relief, to the people affected by the tragedy.

In February 2010, the URA commenced this project, which comprises two rows of 50-plus-year-old tenement buildings of four to six storeys, with about 320 households.

Because of the exceptional circumstances, the URA adopted special measures to help domestic owner-occupiers, tenants and business operators within the project to move out to alternative accommodation if they so wished – and this was done ahead of completion of planning approval and the issuance of formal acquisition offers. More than 220 applications were received.

The URA intends to redevelop this project without private-sector involvement, and plans to have more than 400 small flats for the mass housing market. The existing retail-street pattern along Ma Tau Wai Road will be retained, and will be complemented by a low-rise retail podium that will provide around 1,000 square metres of GFA for Government/Institution and Community (G/IC) facilities. Around 500 square metres



URA staff conducts resident briefing.

of at-grade open space would also be provided. This is meant to improve the streetscape and the area's ventilation.

Submissions, including objections to the project, were received during the two-month publication period, which ended in April 2010. Following deliberation by the URA, the outcomes were submitted in May 2010 to Secretary for Development for consideration, along with other information required under Section 24(3) URAO.

In December 2010, Secretary for Development authorised URA to proceed, but appeals against this were lodged. The Appeal Board however upheld the authorisation, and gazetted its decision in April 2011.

This allowed the URA to go full steam ahead and issue initial acquisition offers to the owners of the project within one month on 30 May 2011. In addition to these acquisition offers, eligible domestic owner-occupiers were each offered an Expression of Interest to Purchase Arrangement (EIPA) at prevailing market values. The arrangement also enables them to return to the site upon completion of the project. Non-domestic owner-occupiers and tenants of ground-floor units have been offered the opportunity to lease commercial spaces in the redeveloped project, at prevailing market rental rates.



The "Sports Retail City", a special feature of the project.



Sai Yee Street, Mong Kok

This redevelopment project incorporates a sports theme that helps preserve and enhance the local character of this part of Mong Kok. Under a special local sports-shop arrangement that is exclusive to this project, all current sports-shop operators will be offered priority lease space within the retail portion.

Resumption of the site was gazetted in February 2011, and the site reverted to the Government in May 2011. Clearance and phased demolition are now underway.



Nga Tsin Wai Village, Wong Tai Sin



Three preserved items at Nga Tsin Wai Village: gate house and stone tablet above the gate and Tin Hau Temple.

The URA has adopted an innovative conservation-paramount approach for this special project. Three core heritage elements of this urban village, namely, the gatehouse, the embedded stone tablet and the Tin Hau Temple as well as the central axis and eight authentic village houses, will be retained within a new Conservation Park.

To accommodate this approach, the planned residential towers will be 'raised' so as to provide vertical clearance above ground. They will also be set well apart and designed with minimal encroachments on the Conservation Park.

Acquisition and phased demolition are now in progress. Resumption was gazetted on 15 July 2011.



Kwun Tong Town Centre, Kwun Tong

The Kwun Tong Town Centre project is URA's largest redevelopment project to date. It covers a total site area of 5.3 hectares and affecting 1,657 interests. About 5,000 people living in the area will be able to improve their living condition.

When launched in March 2007, this project was then estimated to cost over \$30 billion.

The Master Layout Plans for the Project involve two Development Scheme Plans for two sites, namely, the Yuet Wah Street and Main Sites. The Plans were approved by the Town Planning Board, in December 2008 and January 2009 respectively. The Project will be developed in phases, in 5 Development Areas (DA).

Since the start of 2010/11, the URA has made good progress by –

- achieving an overall acquisition rate of 88%, at the end of June 2011;
- continuing to discharge the planning conditions stipulated by the Town Planning Board;



Green coverage of almost 30 percent in the site area.

- continuing development of the Yuet Wah Street Site, which began in 2009 and upon completion in 2013/14, will comprise a residential tower and a health centre on the three lower levels;
- preparing for land resumption of DAs 2, 3 and 4 to facilitate the early development of four housing blocks above an integrated two-level public transport interchange and other Government/Institution and Community (G/IC) facilities;
- obtaining approval from the Government to re-provision the Kwun Tong Methadone Centre at the Hoi Yuen Road Roundabout Site, and starting preparatory works;
- obtaining approval from the Government to re-site their departments, from the Kwun Tong District Branch Office Building in DA 4 to other interim premises in the neighbourhood, to enable DA 4 to be used as an interim solution space for the GIC facilities currently in DAs 2 and 3; and
- submitting the application for a land grant for DAs 2 and 3, in February 2011.



Hai Tan Street / Kweilin Street and Pei Ho Street, Sham Shui Po

This group of three projects in Sham Shui Po is being implemented collectively as a Comprehensive Development Area (CDA). It covers a total area of over 7,400 square metres, with a gross floor area of over 25,300 square metres and a population of around 1,300 people. This is the third largest project to be launched by the URA.

750 domestic households, including 660 tenants and 90 occupiers of staircases, lanes and roof-tops, are benefitted.

The future development will provide almost 850 flats, about 5,000 square metres of commercial space, about 2,200 square metres of G/IC and about 1,500 square metres of open space.

The G/IC will include a special child-care centre cum early-education centre, a day-care centre for the elderly, a neighbourhood elderly centre, and space for a social enterprise.

URA commissioned a study to keep track of the residents and shop operators in terms of where they moved to and how well they may have adapted to the new environment.

The final report of the tracking study was completed in October 2010. It shows that:

- Most of the affected residents still reside in the district.
- Owners have chosen to purchase smaller but newer replacement units, while retaining over \$1 million of their cash compensation.
- The majority of the tenants and owner-occupiers were generally satisfied with the rehousing, compensation and acquisition payments that they received, as well as the adequate consultation and support from the social service team.
- The respondents also said that their living environment had improved, and that adaptation to their new environments had been easier than expected in terms of employment opportunities, education, medical support and social lives.

Resumption of the site was gazetted in November 2010. The site reverted to the Government in February 2011. Clearance is now underway.



Peel Street / Graham Street, Sheung Wan

This project is bounded by Peel Street, Graham Street, Gage Street, Wellington Street, Cochrane Street, Gutzlaff Street, Staveley Street and Kin Sau Lane, in Central and Western districts. The buildings in the redevelopment area were mainly constructed in the mid 1950s and early 60s.

The development will help improve the living conditions of some 320 households, involving around 820 people who, over the years, have repeatedly urged for early implementation of the project.

This project will also help preserving a century old market, which is indeed outside the project boundary. The URA decided to develop the project in phases so as to facilitate a smooth revitalisation of the market. This arrangement will postpone the completion of the project for 24 months and the URA will have to invest \$200 million more.

A comprehensive plan to address the needs and requirements of shops and stalls operating in the market



Promotional scheme for Graham Street market.

has been developed so as to minimise inconvenience to them.

Phased redevelopment allows for fresh-food operators who are currently operating in the first phase, and who wish to continue their businesses, to be moved to temporary shop premises that are URA-owned. These premises are within the remaining two sites. Upon completion of the project's low-rise retail block, the existing fresh-food operators would be able to operate from there if they so choose.

Balloting for alternative shop premises in the latter two phases of redevelopment that these fresh-food operators could eventually relocate to, took place in May 2010. Installation of purpose-built electricity meters for retained on-street hawkers commenced in June 2010, and was completed in early 2011. Resumption of Site B was gazetted in December 2010, and the site reverted to the Government in March 2011. Clearance and demolition are now underway.



Lee Tung Street / McGregor Street, Wan Chai

This residential and commercial redevelopment project in Wan Chai will –

- reflect a Wedding City theme that features Hong Kong's early wedding traditions, a culture gallery and a retail area for wedding-related trades such as wedding dresses, flowers, decorations, cakes, hair salons, jewellery, photo studios and wedding planners;
- offer space for social enterprises;
- preserve three pre-war shophouses;
- provide a pedestrianised Lee Tung Street; and
- provide a new east-west pedestrian link with open spaces.

This is also the first URA project that comes with a formalised comprehensive environmentally friendly policy. It has been planned to reduce greenhouse gas emission of the project by about 23%.

Lee Tung Street was physically closed on 25 February 2010. In due course, Amoy Street will be opened up. Construction is now underway and completion of construction is targeted for 2015.



The core elements of the market building have been preserved in-situ.



Tai Yuen Street / Wan Chai Road, Wan Chai

This residential and commercial redevelopment project in Wan Chai is on three sites. Sites A and B have already been redeveloped into the 'Zenith', and all flats built on these sites have been sold.

The design of Site C incorporates the preservation in-situ of the core elements of the Wan Chai Market building, with residential accommodation to be built above it. The preserved market building will form the commercial portion of the development. This provides a pragmatic solution whereby the URA can honour its contractual agreement with the developer whilst, at the same time, recognising the community's wish for preservation of the market building to the extent practicable, albeit at additional cost to the URA and with a longer development period.

The foundations have been completed. Pre-sale consent was obtained in June 2011. Construction is now underway and completion is targeted for 2013.



Excise of Site A including Wing Lee Street area is gazetted.

Staunton Street / Wing Lee Street, Sheung Wan

This residential and commercial project covers three sites. The URA, in its early years, was asked by the Government to implement this project as a matter of priority because the buildings were dilapidated and living conditions were appalling.

In November 2008, the URA decided to take a conservation-led redevelopment approach for the project and align it with the Government's conservation policy for the Former Police Married Quarters site on Hollywood Road.

In March 2010, URA proactively proposed an alternative implementation concept for conserving Wing Lee Street, one of the sites in the project, for the Town Planning Board's (TPB) discussion. The alternative concept was well received by the public.

At TPB's request, the URA on 7 May 2010 provided information regarding the structural conditions of the existing buildings at Wing Lee Street, and the costs involved in their rehabilitation. URA also explained the implications to all affected owners and tenants.

The URA has undertaken to continue to acquire the interests of the owners in Site A until the TPB decides on this particular Site.

URA has also made special arrangements for current Site A tenants who had registered for the freezing survey of March 2003. The arrangements include

- rehousing to URA's rehousing block at Shun Sing Mansion, 466 Des Voeux Road West, or
- assistance for tenants facing hardship. Such tenant cases arise when their landlords do not wish to sell their properties to the URA.
- URA is also rehabilitating acquired buildings in Wing Lee Street, and assisting those wishing to retain ownership and to upkeep their buildings.

In June 2011, the TPB announced that the Chief Executive in Council had referred the approved URA's Staunton Street/Wing Lee Street Development Scheme Plan (DSP) back to the TPB for amendment, in respect of Site A.

In July 2011, the TPB gazetted amendments to the approved DSP and the approved Sai Ying Pun and Sheung Wan Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) to –

- excise Site A, comprising the Wing Lee Street area and the Bridges Street Market site, from the DSP;
- incorporate the excised area into the OZP;
- zone 1-12 Wing Lee Street and 17 and 19 Shing Wong Street as a "Comprehensive Development Area" with a building height restriction of four storeys; and
- zone the Bridges Street Market site as "Other Specified Uses" annotated "Historical Site Preserved for Cultural and Recreational Uses" with a building height restriction of three storeys.