

# URBAN DESIGN STUDIO I REGENERATION OF HONG KONG: KOWLOON EAST

2014-15 1st Term, Mondays & Thursdays 2.00 – 6.00 pm, AIT Bld. Zone A

Instructors: Prof. Sujata S. Govada and Francesco Rossini



Hong Kong is a strategically located, compact city known for its high density development. The city on either side of Victoria harbor, with its mountain backdrop, is accessible by its world famous public transit system. It is one of the potential models studied for its compact and sustainable development in Asia and the region. The attraction of the Hong Kong model is based on its highly compact urban areas, its urban mobility and the conservation of large land resources as country parks. A central question which policy makers, planners and designers face when considering high density cities is how livable, walkable and sustainable are these cities. Under these conditions of extreme density, how can a healthy and high quality of living be achieved.

This question is crucial as it is linked with costly and controversial long term decisions. These include the change of established land use plans, controversial building height restrictions and urban design guidelines, including plans for urban renewal and new development areas. The views on Hong Kong as a model are strongly divided and reflect the contrasting experiences of the city as well as its conflicting values. The 2011 Mercer Quality of Living Survey ranked the Chinese Special Administrative Region on place 70, far behind Vienna (1), Zurich (2), and its main Asian competitor Singapore (25).

The outcome could be different with “spatial adjustments” as proposed by architect Filippo Lovato from the Economist Intelligence Unit. In his “Spatially Adjusted Livability Survey” of 2012, Hong Kong reached the first place, after including aspects such as the “lack of sprawl” and social connectivity. The survey argues that living in a green environment might be more pleasant but is potentially more problematic than in a high dense city. These are the higher land and energy consumption and less social connectivity. Similarly, economists Edward Glaeser in 2011 presented Hong Kong as one of the examples for the Triumph of the high density City.

In addition to these views from outside, there are the experiences of people living and working every day in Hong Kong. In recent years, they are increasingly concerned about the lack of affordable housing, access to the harbourfront, heritage conservation, sensitive urban renewal, public spaces, less pollution, and especially more community participation.

Since 2001 the URA, made attempts to upgrade older urban districts. These attempts were often based on the replacement of existing fabric, with the demolition of the older buildings also traditional businesses and low income residents were replaced, resulting in gentrification. After growing critique, documented in the 2008 Urban Strategy Review, undertaken by the Development Bureau, HKSAR. Government made first steps towards a new regeneration strategy, which includes more community participation and should lead to individual district based plans. Hong Kong’s unique culture is deeply linked to its extreme density and intensity.

#### **Study Area: Kowloon East**

The MSc in Urban Design Program will address these important urban issues by exploring the condition of Hong Kong’s older urban districts, this semester the study area is Kowloon East. Students learn and highlight some of the key community concerns and aspirations exploring opportunities for better urban integration to ensure sustainable waterfront and hinterland development ensuring community benefit.

Kowloon East, one of Hong Kong’s oldest districts and example of its local industrial culture. The studio will learn from the particular character of this waterfront industrial district currently under transformation. Students will study its urban morphology, mobility, transport infrastructure and sustainability; urban fabric, density and public spaces; heritage and socio economic factors and develop strategies for better urban integration and regeneration of the older urban district. Students will develop sustainable and place making strategies based on observations of the people living and working in the district and aims to respond to capture their needs and aspirations.

Kowloon East is an area comprising the former Kai Tak Airport, Kwun Tong and Kowloon Bay Business Areas. This area witnessed the rapid growth of an important industrial base in the heyday of Hong Kong’s manufacturing industry, creating hundreds of thousands of jobs and propelling Hong Kong’s prosperity. Following relocation of the Airport to Chek Lap Kok and manufacturing base to the Mainland, this area has lost some of its past vibrancy, leaving a huge stock of industrial buildings not being fully utilized. Hong Kong’s financial and service sectors as well as large numbers of regional headquarters and regional offices of multi-national companies started setting their offices in Hong Kong. The demand for quality office can no longer be met by traditional Central Business District (CBD). This area initially was beginning to be transformed by the private sector by developing Grade A offices.

In the 2011-12 Policy Address, the Chief Executive announced the adoption of a visionary, coordinated and integrated approach to expedite the transformation of Kowloon East into an attractive, alternative Central Business District to support Hong Kong’s economic development. This was followed by the setting up the Energizing Kowloon East office under the highway closer to the old urban district under transformation.

The studio is organized together with the URBD Elective Course Urban Processes, which offers the opportunity to engage directly with the community involving the various stakeholders and residents in the district. Students of the MSc in Urban Design Program should therefore register for this course. Students will form four groups to undertake group research, and group design as well as individual design work.

## Objectives

- Students working in groups begin to understand, map and interpret the urban morphology of Kowloon East.
- Appreciate the importance of increasing living quality, social interaction and economic vitality in high dense urban districts
- Learn and respond to existing local culture, heritage and social routines, recognizing and enhancing sense of place
- Develop design strategies to respond to community needs and aspirations
- Develop district based plans for better community benefit developing strategies for community empowerment

## Student Learning Outcome

- Understand the forces and impact of urban transformation by studying existing urban conditions
- Understand the challenges, impacts and opportunities of infrastructure development in high density older urban environments.
- Understand the complex relationships between enhancing urban mobility and environmental, economic and social sustainability
- Learn to communicate effectively with different stakeholders and community members from various segments of society
- Develop advanced urban design, presentation and communication skills while addressing key issues and developing context sensitive strategies and designs
- Develop methods for critical assessment and peer reviews of design proposals in view of their effects on community life

## Studio Output

Students develop individual strategies and designs for the improvement of urban integration including public spaces and street level building interfaces based on prior identified issues and realizing opportunities. Drawings and models in 1:500 / 1:200, plus detail studies, montages and perspectives should show the intended qualities of urban transformation and integration of public spaces usable in various seasons and times of the day. Statements of addressed issues and design intentions should be formulated in text and drawings. With progression of the design project they should be revised and updated. Research findings and projects will be gathered in a joint studio booklet. All students have to submit a digital documentation.

## Deliverables

- Group studies according to defined issues
- Develop Site model
- Written description of addressed issues and design intentions (500 words)
- 1:500 group drawings and models with strategic propositions
- Phasing plan of proposed development strategies
- 1:200 urban integration, public space/building design drawings and models
- 1:100 detail study of urban integration including mixed development and public spaces
- Photo montages, sketch up models and visualizations and perspectives study of urban integration
- Joint studio booklet (Digital documentation of group and individual work is compulsory after final review)

## Assessment Scheme

- Group Research 20%
- Overall Group Strategy 20%
- Individual Design Work 50%
- Participation 10%

## Course Format

The course is organized in a research part (group work), overall strategy and group design and individual design. The research encompasses field and precedent studies allowing for team and individual work. The studio is linked to the Urban Processes course which offers the opportunity of community workshops and presentations of the design schemes in the Kowloon East area.

## Required Readings

Govada S., 2011, *Ten Principles for a Sustainable Approach to New Development: Towards Sustainable and Integrated Large-Scale Developments for a More Livable Hong Kong*. Washington, D.C: Urban Land Institute

Govada S., 2012, *ULI Calls for a City Champion: Realising ULI 10 Principles for Sustainable Development for a more Livable Hong Kong, ULI SAND STAGE II: Draft Recommendations*, Urban Land Institute

Shane, David Grahame, *Urban Design Since 1945 – A Global Perspective*, Wiley, 2011

Shelton, Barrie, Karakiewicz, Justyna & Kvan, Thomas, *The Making of Hong Kong – From Vertical to Volumetric*, Taylor & Francis, 2010.

Whyte, William H., *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*, New York: The Conservation Foundation, 1980.

## Recommended Readings

Arendt, Hannah, *The human condition*, University Of Chicago Press, 1998.

Aureli, Pier Vittorio, *The Possibility of an Absolute Architecture*, MIT Press, 2011

Busquets, Joan, Barcelona: *The Urban Evolution of a Compact City*, Rovereto: Nicolodi, 2005.

Dovey, Kim & Wood, Stephen, *Public/Private Interfaces in the Inner City*, State of Australian Cities Conference, Melbourne November 2011.

Gehl, Jan, *Life between buildings: using public space*, New York: Von Nostrand Reinhold, 1987.

Glaeser, Edward, *The Triumph of the City. How our Greatest Invention makes us Richer, Smarter, Greener and Happier*, New York: Penguin Books, 2011.

Habermas, Jürgen, "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article" (1964), *New German Critique*, 1974, 49-55.

Hassenpflug, Dieter, *China's Urban Code*, Basel: Birkhäuser, 2010.

Huang Philip, "Public Sphere"/"Civil Society" in China? *Modern China*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (1993), 216-240.

Hou, Jeffrey (ed.), *Insurgent Public Space, Guerrilla Urbanism and the Remaking of Contemporary Cities*, Routledge, 2010.

Marshall, Stephen, *Streets & Patterns*, Spon Press, London and New York, 2005.

Rowe, Peter G., *Emergent Architectural Territories in East Asian Cities*, Basel: Birkhauser, 2011.

Shelton, Barrie, *Learning from the Japanese City*, Taylor & Francis, 1999.

H. Tieben, Woo P.L., Yuet T.C., "Development or Destruction? The Transformation of Sai Ying Pun", V. Pearson and Ko T.K., *A Sense of Place. Hong Kong West of Pottinger Street*, Hong Kong: Joint Publishing (2008), pp.168-183.

## Schedule

### *Group Research*

Mon Sep 1 Studio Start - Arrangement of studio space and introduction

### *Group Research 1 - Kowloon East*

Thu Sep 4 – Studio/Urban Processes - Introduction – Start Day 1

Thu Sep 6 – Studio/Urban Processes – Preparation for Community Event – Day 2

Mon Sep 8 – Urban Processes/Community Event – Magic Carpet – Day 3

Thu Sep 11 – Studio Group Work

### *Group Research 2 – Kowloon East*

Mon Sep 15 – Studio Group Work Review

Thu Sep 18 – Urban Processes/Literature Circle – Day 4

Mon Sep 22 – Studio Group Work

Thu Sep 25 – Studio Group Work

Sat Sep 27 Urban Processes – Presentation/Reflection - Day 5

Mon Sep. 29 – Studio Group Review

Thu Oct 2 – Group Work

### *Group Overall Design Strategy*

Mon Oct 6 – Studio Group Work Review

Thu Oct 9 - Studio Group Work

Sat Oct 11 - Urban Processes/Placemaking Charrette – Day 6

Mon Oct 13 - Studio Group Work

Thu Oct 16 – Mid Term Review

Sat Oct 18 – Urban Processes - Presentation/Reflection - Day 7

### *Individual Design Work*

Mon Oct 20 - Studio Individual Design Work

Thu Oct 23 - Studio Individual Design Work

Mon Oct 27 - Studio Individual Design Work

Thu Oct 30 - Studio Individual Design Work

Sat Oct 30 – Urban Processes/Community Workshop Preparation – Day 8

Mon Nov 3 – Studio Individual Design Work

Thu Nov 6 – Studio Individual Design Work

Sat Nov 8 – Urban Processes/Community Workshop – Day 9

Mon Nov 10 - Studio Individual Design Work

Thu Nov 13 - Studio Individual Design Work

Mon Nov 17 - Studio Individual Design Work

Thu Nov 20 - Studio Individual Design Work Review

Sat Nov 20 – Urban Processes/Workshop Reflection and Final Presentation – Day 10

Mon Nov 24 – Preparation for Final Review

Thu Nov 27 - Studio Final Review – Last Day

Fri Dec 12 - Studio/Urban Processes digital documentation Submission

## FIELD TRIP

[v] Yes [ ] Local; [v] Overseas Date(s): TBC Destination(s): Taipei (TW)

[ ] No

## SAME COURSE OFFERED BEFORE

[v] Yes Offer year [2013] Term [1] Course code [ URBD 5710]

[v] No

## ACADEMIC HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign on the declaration.

Students are required to submit a softcopy of the assignment to the VeriGuide system at: <https://veriguide2.cse.cuhk.edu.hk/cuhk/>. After submission, student should receive a receipt and an academic honesty declaration statement via an e-mail from VeriGuide. Please print the receipt and the declaration statement (below) and submit them to the lecturer together with a hardcopy of the assignment.

I declare that the assignment here submitted is original except for source material explicitly acknowledged. I also acknowledge that I am aware of University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and of the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations, as contained in the website <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student ID

\_\_\_\_\_  
Course code    Course title