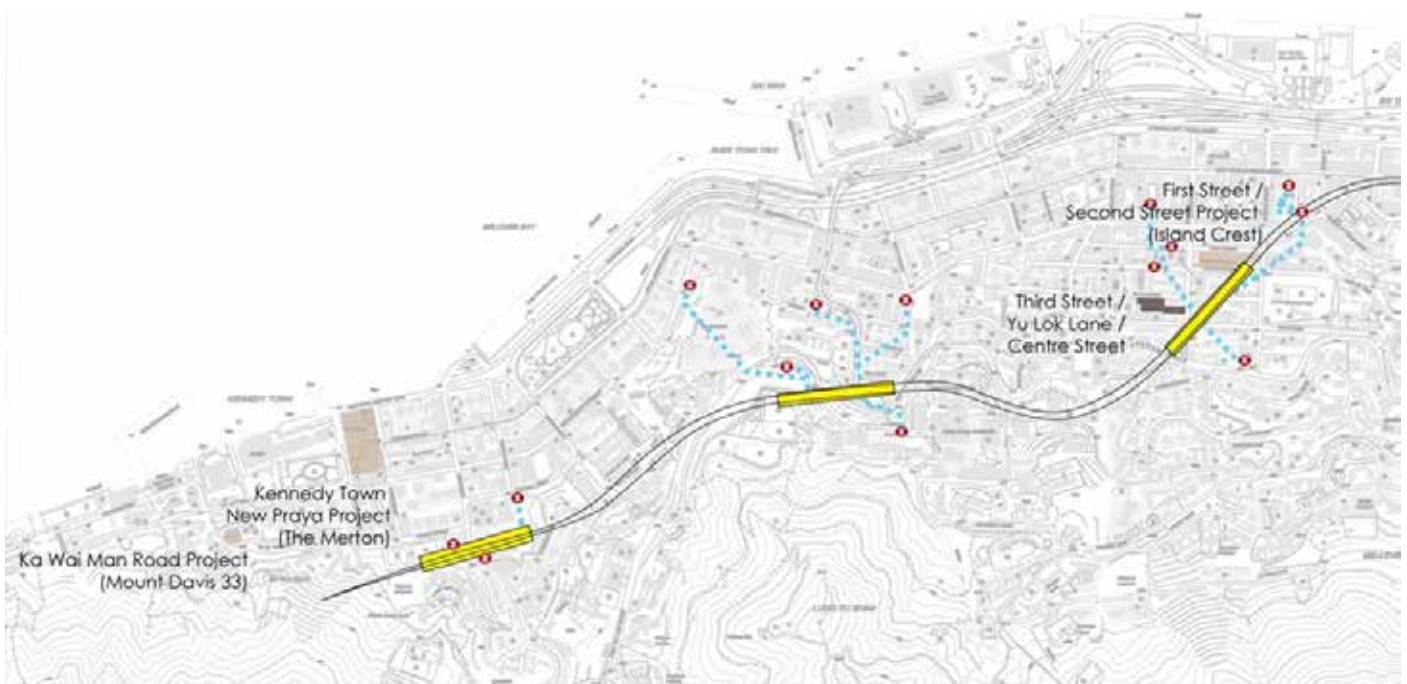# URBAN INTEGRATION & MASS TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT IN HIGH DENSITY OLDER URBAN DISTRICTS: WESTERN DISTRICT, HONG KONG

2015-16 1st Term, Mondays & Thursdays 1.30 – 6.15 pm

Instructors: Sujata S. GOVADA (CHEN Yong Ming - Teaching Assistant)

Hong Kong is a strategically located, compact city known for its high density development on either side of Victoria harbour with its mountain backdrop, very accessible by its world famous public transit system. It is one of the potential models studied for a more sustainable development of cities in Asia and the region. The attraction of the Hong Kong model is based on its highly compact urban areas, their efficient connection by public transport networks 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 these cities are and, under conditions of extreme density, how a positive living quality can be achieved. This question is crucial as it is linked with costly and controversial long term decisions such as the change of established land use plans, controversial building height restrictions and public space guidelines, as well as plans for urban renewal and new development areas. The views on Hong Kong as a model are strongly divided and reflect 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 regarding 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 dense] 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 condition of the city and demand access to the harbourfront, better heritage conservation, sensitive urban renewal, public spaces, lower property prizes, less pollution, and especially more community participation.

In the studio we will address these important arguments by exploring the condition of Hong Kong's older urban district and the impact of the new West Island Line planned and currently developed by the Mass Transit Railway Corporation (MTRC) within the Western District, highlighting some of the key issues and exploring opportunities for better urban integration to ensure sustainable development and community benefit.

West Island Line (WIL)

WIL is a 3km-long underground extension of the current Island Line with three new stations west of Sheung Wan – Sai Ying Pun, Hong Kong University and Kennedy Town. The cost of the project is estimated at $15.4billion, of which $12.7b would be subsidised by the government. Started in September 2009, the construction of the line was finished by the end of 2014 and fully opened in March 2015. It now takes 8 minutes to get from Kennedy Town to Sheung Wan, 14 minutes to Tsim Sha Tsui and 13 minutes to Causeway Bay.

Sai Ying Pun

Sai Ying Pun is one of the oldest areas of Hong Kong within Western District, undergoing a major transformation due to urban renewal and infrastructure development in the form of the WIL under construction. Sai Ying Pun station is located near Centre Street with station entrances at Sai Woo Lane and Bonham Road. Ki Ling Lane will be pedestrianized to improve pedestrian access and facilitate interchange with WIL. High speed lifts will be used to gain access to Sai Ying Pun station which is more effective as there is a significant level difference between the station concourse and the entrances.

Shek Tong Tsui and Pokfulam Area

Shek Tong Tsui area is at Sai Wan on the north shore of Hong Kong Island in Hong Kong. Hong Kong University Station is a new station on the Hong Kong MTR West Island Line, an extension to the existing Island Line. The Station will be located close to The University of Hong Kong on Pokfulam Road and will be served the Shek Tong Tsui area. There were disputes among locals and district councilors over the station's name. Some have suggested the previous official name Belcher after The Belcher's, a housing development in the area, as well as Belcher Street and Belcher Bay. Some worried the name University might cause confusion with another existing University Station on the East Rail Line. Some have also suggested Shek Tong Tsui as the name of the station. Finally, MTR named the station Hong Kong University.

Kennedy Town

Kennedy Town is at the western end of Sai Wan on Hong Kong Island in Hong Kong. Kennedy Town is the proposed terminus on the Hong Kong MTR West Island Line, an extension to the current Island Line. The station will serve the Kennedy Town area on the northwestern end of Hong Kong Island, Hong Kong. In the studies in 1970, the station was simply known as Kennedy and It was to be built as part of the Island Line in the 1980s. However, the contractors cited inadequate passengers and technical difficulties. Therefore, construction of the line did not commence westwards beyond Sheung Wan. Today, Kennedy Town would is served by West Island Line as an extension of the Island Line, after pressure from local community groups.

STUDIO DESCRIPTION

Hong Kong's unique culture is deeply linked to its extreme density and intensity. This culture developed first along the northern shore of Hong Kong Island. The first studio of this academic year explores the Western District, one of Hong Kong's oldest districts and example of its local culture. The studio will learn from the particular character of the district and its urban mobility, transport infrastructure and sustainability; urban fabric, density and public spaces; heritage and socio economic factors and then assess the impact of the WIL being implemented by the MTRC and look for opportunities and develop strategies for better urban integration and regeneration of the older urban district. Since the early 1990s, the Land Development Corporation, followed in 2001 by the URA, made attempts to upgrade older 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. During the initial planning stages of the WIL MTRC also conducted several workshops and forums to ensure that a more sensitive approach to infrastructure development. The studio will develop strategies based on observations of the people living and working in the district and aims to respond to capture their needs and aspirations.

Building on the research and studio work done on Sai Ying Pun last year, this year 's urban design studio focuses on West Island Line and the urban integration of the West Island Line currently under construction with the Western District of Hong Kong. This includes in addition to Sai Ying Pun, the Shek Tong Tsui and Pokfulum area and Kennedy Town. As the study area of the studio, as it currently faces strong forces of transformation due to the ongoing construction of the West Island Line and a public escalator system. Hong Kong's role as sustainable urban model is closely linked to its highly efficient metro system (MTR) which boosts its vitality and helps to reduce vehicular traffic and carbon emission. Major investments are made to construct the new metro lines which offer the rare opportunity to fundamentally upgrade old districts, reorganize their traffic system and improve their public spaces. At the same time the construction of the new infrastructure increases development pressure and affects the spatial routine, social life and identity of the district. The impact of Western District in context of the construction of the new MTR stations should respond to the needs and aspirations of the community and increase the livability in this dense older urban district.

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 Programme should therefore register for this Urban Design Studio course. Students will form three 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 the older urban district of Western District. Studens learn to appreciate the importance of increasing living quality, social interaction and economic vitality in high dense urban districts

• Learning from and responding to existing local culture, heritage and social routines, recognizing and enhancing a sense of place

• Developing design strategies for urban integration of the new WIL with a focus on public space to respond to community needs and aspirations

- Developing district based Community Benefits Plans for better community benefit developing strategies for community empowerment

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Understanding forces and impact of urban transformation by studying existing urban conditions
- Understanding the challenges, impacts and opportunities of infrastructure development in high density older urban environments.
- Understanding the complex relationships between enhancing urban mobility and environmental, economic and social sustainability
- Learning to communicate effectively with different stakeholders and community members from various segments of society
- Developing advanced urban design skills while addressing key issues and developing context sensitive strategies
- Developing 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 integration including station related development and 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 intensions (500 words)
- 1:500 group drawings and models with strategic propositions
- Phase evolutions of urban development
- 1:500 / 1:200 urban integration, public space/building design drawings and models
- 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 30%
- Final Design 60%
- 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 work. The studio is linked to the course Urban Processes which offers the opportunity of community workshops and presentations of the design schemes in the Western district.

REQUIRED READINGS

Govada Sujata, 2011, T*en 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 Sujata, 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, T*he 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.

Ng, Edward, *Consultancy for Air Ventilation Assessment Services for Sheung Wan and Sai Ying Pun*, Hong Kong: CUHK, 2010.

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.

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

Schedule

Aug 29	**UN-Habitat - Urban Thinkers Campus Event** **CUHK & Designing Hong Kong (participation highly encouraged)**
Aug 31- Sept 4	Pre-course for MSc in Urban Design students (Y.M. Chen)
Mon Sept. 7	Lecture 1: Introduction: "Towards a community benefit plan for the Western District" Exercise 1: ""*Understanding Western District and WIL and Class Readings" – Exercise 2:* *Model Making*
Thu Sept. 10	Site explorations WIL Stations (SYP/STT/KT) and Surrounding Areas in Western District
Mon Sept. 14	Continue working on Exercise 1 & 2 Continue site explorations & readings *Station Area Model making*
Thu Sept. 17	Lecture 2: Urban Design and Place Making Site Visit Presentations Desk Critiques and Completion of *Models*
Mon Sept. 21	Lecture 3: The Importance of Public Realm: Public Space Design and Development of Public Space Index Pin up – Group Work – Site Analysis and Surrounding Area Analysis Exercise 3: Local and International Case Studies Exercise 4: Public Space Index
Thu Sept. 24	Presentation of Local, Regional and International Case Studies Pin up and presentation of Group work Site Analysis and Public Space Index Preparations for Community Event I
Sun Sept. 27	**Start: HFTS-CUHK International Workshop** **Community Event - Street Exhibition of Research Results** **(Co-organized with Caritas Hong Kong)**
Mon Sept. 28	**Lecture: Geiger / Tieben / Paetzold/Govada (MTR Model & WIL/TOD)** **Presentation: CUHK students: and exercises 1-3**
Tue Sept. 29	**Joint Workshop - Desk critiques – URA Presentation**
Wed Sept. 30	**Joint Workshop - Desk critiques**
Thu Oct. 1	**Joint Workshop - Presentation of design intervention**
Fri Oct. 2	**Final Presentation - International Workshop**
Mon Oct. 5	Reflections workshop & Start individual projects
Thu Oct. 8	Desk Critiques
Mon Oct. 12	Pin up and review of group and individual work
Thu Oct. 15	Mid-term review of group and individual work presentations Preparation for Community Event II
Mon Oct. 16/17	**Community Event II: Street Exhibition and Community Workshop in STT/KT** **(Co-organized with Caritas Hong Kong)**
Mon Oct. 19	Desk critiques
Thu Oct. 22	Desk critiques
Mon Oct. 26	Pin up and individual design review
Thu Oct. 29	Desk critiques
Mon Nov. 2	Pin up and Individual Design Review
Thu Nov. 5	Desk critiques
Mon Nov. 9	Pin up and Individual Design Review
Thu Nov. 12	Preparation for SYP Community Forum
Mon Nov. 14	**Community Event III – Public Forum** **Presenting ideas with residents to the Sai Ying Pun District Council** **(Co-organized with Caritas Hong Kong)**
Mon Nov. 16	Reflections and Desk critiques
Thu Nov. 19	Pin up and Pre Final Individual Design Review
Mon Nov. 23	Desk critiques – preparation for final review
Thu Nov. 26	Desk critiques – preparation for final review
Mon. Nov. 30	**UD Studio Final Review**
Thu Dec. 3	Work on Final Documentation
Mon. Dec. 7	Hand in Final Documentation – Leave for India Trip
Thu Dec. 7-15	India Trip to Delhi- Agra- Jaipur

FIELD TRIP

In context of the course there will be the opportunity to take part in a field trip to Taipei (over a weekend in October) and of collaboration with teachers and students from the National Taiwan University.

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

[ ] No

SAME COURSE OFFERED BEFORE

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

[ ] 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