

City of Indus - (Trial)- Housing

International Grand Prize and Honor Award

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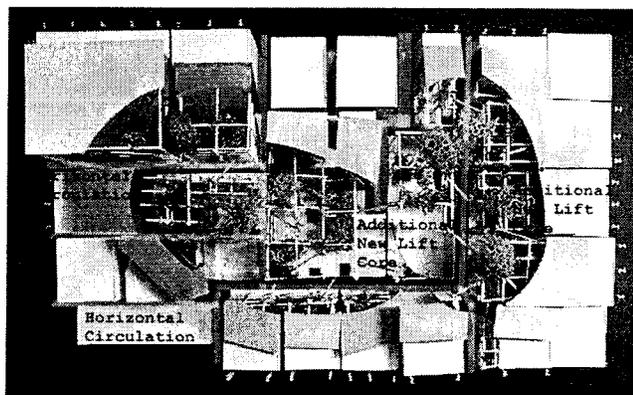
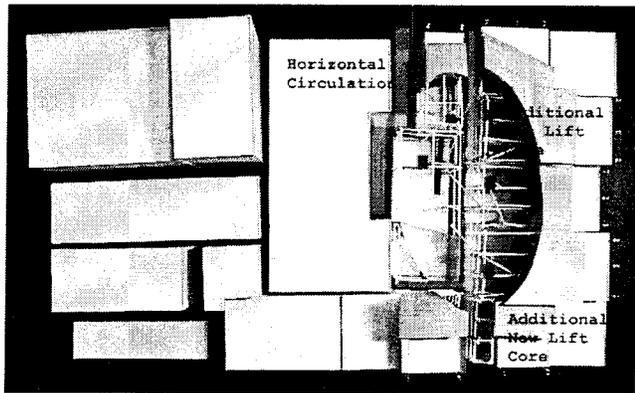
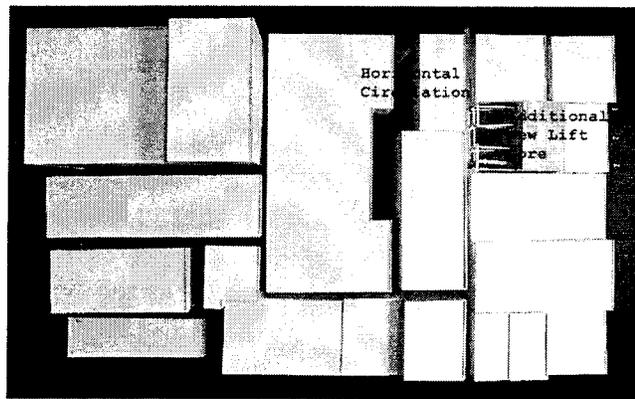
For a 21st century housing, it is quite obvious that our minds will relate this to the icons of technology, energy conservation, healthy environment, sustainability, etc. However, in the notion that how those ideas can be applied to an existing developed district, and which has long functioned as an industrial area, then the subject seems to be difficult to achieve. Traditionally, in the sense of functioning, performance and energy use, housing and factories are two distinct and opposite items, and so this design proposal describes how this can be worked out, and gives a possible solution to the above problem.

Kwun Tong, the site that we try to deal with is one of the high-density industrial areas in Hong Kong, with its boundary defined by enclosing highways and flyovers. From the planning point of view, the industrial area is systematically planned with 10 to 20 typical buildings forming an "industrial island," and more than 30 of such islands altogether create the whole working environment. Most of the industries and businesses have been moved to mainland China since the early '90s, and hence left quite a number of vacant buildings in the region. From both an economic and social point of view, those vacancies would be a cornerstone of our design program.

In dealing with the existing problems, such as traffic congestion, pollution, noise over-crowding, etc. it is clear that they cannot be solved instantly. However, by considering the future possibilities, like advancements in technology, we can alleviate the situation in a gradual manner. Program of staging is the case in point:

1st Stage - Environmental friendly lots are inserted at first as an injection of "seed." With a view to considering energy and material conservation, a residential block is inserted into the building by transforming and modifying the existing vacant industrial buildings. Part of the building is to be demolished until the existing structural framework is left, and the flats are located beyond the exposed framework. The framework serves as the connector for circulation, services ducts, and could also allow future expansion of the circulation system to be connected to adjacent buildings.

In order to alleviate the traffic problem, new layers of elevated circulation systems start to be introduced by utilizing the existing alley grid. Existing roads on ground level will distinctively serve workers and other transportation for industrial use, and on the other hand, the elevated alley introduced on podium level will mainly serve for the residents. New lift cores and services towers will be installed at the junction of the new alleys and the exposed frames, which then allow direct access to different residential levels. In this initial stage, by giving immediate response to the present situation, this transformation may only accommodate single hard labors for supporting the labor-intensive industry. At this moment, such lots/buildings aim at surviving in the adverse industrial environment and make provision for future development by keeping minimal alteration and providing minimal services to support a small



portion of living density within the industrial enclosure.

2nd Stage - When more and more traditional industries and old factories fade out around, more vacant buildings will be available to be occupied by new "seed" and even dispersion. As the society continues to develop, the industrial mode changes to a more high-tech industry that is capital intensive rather than labor intensive. With the development of high-tech, it will certainly lower job opportunities, and in turn, the number of hard labors will decrease. Instead, more high-tech professionals will be needed and created as the basis for the industry. As a result, the "island" will not only accommodate hard labor, but also act as an intermediate type, which allows professional and technicians to move in.

When the number of residents increases, and hence essential communal facilities, e.g. clinic, schools, convenient stores, etc. are needed, and, are provided on the lower floors below the landscape foyer. As the modification gets more intense, sky bridges /new pedestrians levels are established to connect the adjacent islands. As a result, a small dependent community is created, and within the two, they can share the services, facilities, and also the energy use.

3" Stage - When the industry further develops, high-tech industry becomes the major industrial type in the new society, and hence much more available vacancies can be used for residential purpose. At this moment, the "seed" will be fully-grown, and cover the area. Both industrial and residential developments will ultimately merge together, and this process of fusion will create a new Kwun-Tong.

The building groups will be linked up and will function, creating a new meaning of a "complete community." Undoubtedly, the newly modified living environment is in excess when compared

with the actual number of workers in the future industrial sectors, but the whole site should be adaptable to be occupied by the outsiders, that is, it can also accommodate residents from the surrounding cities. When the population increases dramatically, the needs and desires from the residents get more and more diverse and sophisticated, and therefore, the area below the landscape foyer should be designed to function as larger shopping arcades, clinic, rehabilitation centers, youth centers, mega-markets, etc. Within this complete community, a well-interconnected circulation layer is formed in between each individual island. In the macroscopic view, each island is dependent on one another. One mainly functions as an entertaining character, others may act as recreational, medical characters, that is each building group will be performing a finite role in the final sustainable society, in order to satisfy the needs from all walks of life.

According to the above description, this design program not only is targeted to achieve energy conservation and create a healthy living environment, but also makes it and the district sustainable in the sense that it can tackle both social and architectural problems. By considering the development of the society and mode of industry in the future, and at the same time utilizing existing materials, the design is susceptible for future expansion and development. In this economic and environmentally concerned approach, a living environment can actually be inserted within an industrial area, that is, people can live in to a working environment. When this happens, Kwun Tong is no more only an industrial region, but it will be accurate to say that Kwun Tong is a high standard residential area, which survives on its industrial surplus.