

Annex I: Introduction to the designing task – North area of Harbin Railway Station

Background

1. Harbin City

Harbin is an important city in the north of the Northeast China and also one of the 10 largest cities in China. The city is the political, economic, cultural, financial and scientific and technological centre and the hub of communications of Heilongjiang Province, where the Harbin-Dalian Railway, Harbin-Manchuria Railway, Harbin-Suifenhe Railway, Harbin-Bei'an Railway and Harbin-Lafa Railway converge. Harbin is a young city that has grown up together with the development of railways. In the past years, the construction of railways contributed greatly to the development of the city; nowadays, the reconstruction and upgrading of the existing Harbin Railway Station also bears on the development of the city and on the life of every Harbin citizen in the future.

Harbin is a well-known international tourist destination. The CR Expo which is reputed in the Northeast Asia, and the world-renowned Ice and Snow Festival, as well as international beer festivals and auto shows are held here every year. In addition, the city once successfully hosted the 2009 World Winter Universiade. Harbin is a city of art and culture. It is the seat of the renowned Harbin Summer Music Concert, the Central Avenue, the St. Sophia Church and the Jihong Bridge (Rainbow Bridge), etc. It is also the cradle of the long-standing Jurchen, Liao and Jin ethnic culture. In history, the cultures of the Central Plains, the Liao and Jin peoples and the whole world integrated here and created the Unique Harbin Culture, which finds expression in the everyday life of Harbin citizens.

2. Harbin Railway Station

Harbin Railway Station is located at the centre of the city. It is an important hub of existing passenger railways and will be one of the main nexuses of the city's future railway system consisting of two main lines and two ancillary lines. It is also the largest inter-city and ordinary railway hub in Heilongjiang Province, integrating a whole array of the means of communications, including the intercity railways, regular speed railways, highways, intra-city railways, public transportation systems and taxis, etc., hence serving a double function of the

internal and external transportation hub. Harbin Railway Station is a window of the City of Harbin, so it is expected to reflect the taste and style and exhibit the image and charm of the city.

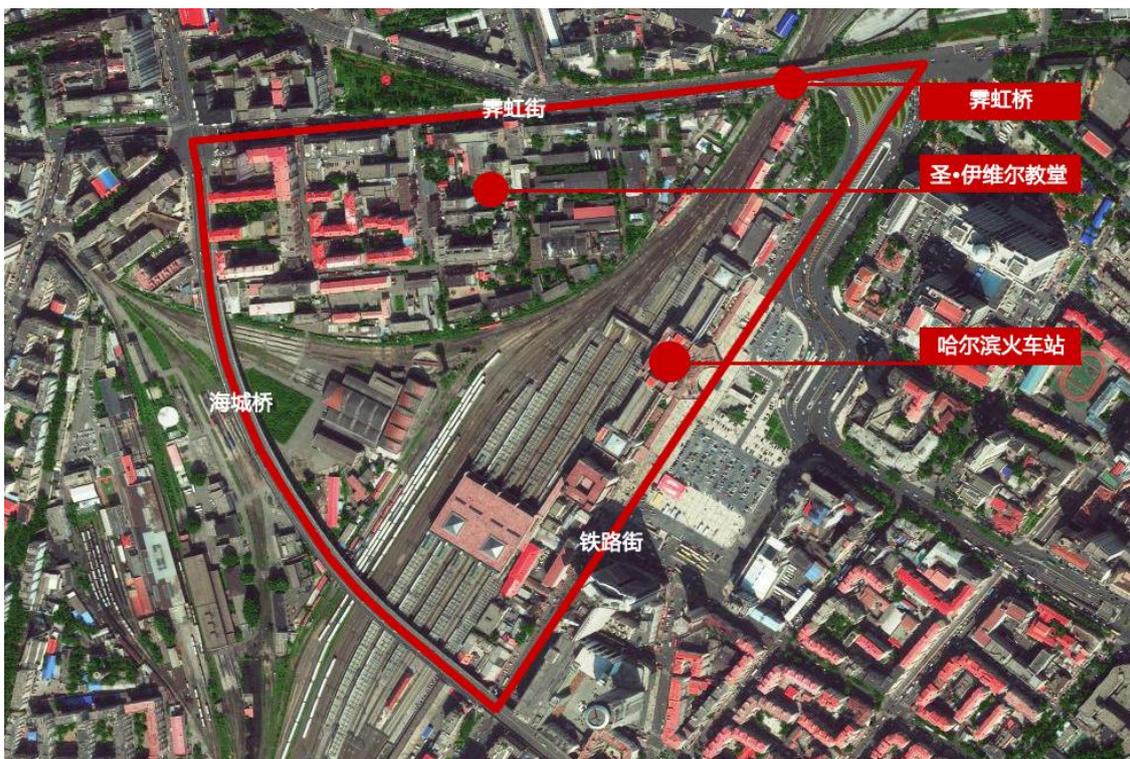
Due to historical and geographic reasons, the railways separated and restricted the transportation systems on both sides of the railway station, where the long-distance transit system, the local transportation system and the collector-distributor transportation system highly overlap. In the Daoli District to the north of the railway station in particular, buildings and transportation systems are rather underdeveloped. On the Jihong Street, for example, there are only two Hutongs on the railway station's side from Haicheng Bridge to the Newspaper Group, resulting in very poor traffic conditions. In the 1990s, because of the newly built Haicheng Bridge, the traffic conditions there were improved to some extent; however, due to the restrictions placed on the road systems by the surrounding terrains and the existing land use conditions, the transportation there remains inconvenient and even difficult to meet the traffic distribution needs. The railway station area's function positioning is not very clear yet; the aboveground and underground land uses are rather complicated; the traffic transfer facilities' supply and spatial deployment are not reasonable; so the value of land is not fully realised there. Moreover, the image of the railway station area is not conspicuous: the buildings there are of confusing styles and short of human-centred designs for the extremely cold environment.

With the fast social development and the advent of high-speed railway era, Harbin Railway Station is in urgent need of reconstruction and upgrading on a large scale. Availing of this opportunity, the city authority plans to launch a number of municipal projects in the vicinity of Harbin Railway Station, including renovation of the local road system, reconstruction of the railway station's southern square, construction of the railway station's northern square, and trenching of the tunnel traversing the railway station from underground, etc., with the aim to improve the traffic conditions in the railway station area, disperse the traffic flow on Jihong Bridge, regulate the collector-distributor road system and reduce mutual interference between the transit and collector-distributor transportation systems there. The southern square, as the main square of the railway station in the construction plan, will be positioned to mainly perform the function of urban form and transportation, as well as the function of offering supporting services for the railway station. In terms of the

transportation function, the square will directly link to the various downtown areas of the city, and based on the surrounding road networks, connect and serve Nangang District, Xiangfang District, Pingfang District and part of Daowai District. To the contrary, the northern square will be used as an ancillary square that mainly performs the transportation function. It will mainly serve Daoli District, Songbei District, Hulan District and part of Daowai District through Yimian Street.

Subject of the Design

The subject of the design is the Harbin Railway Station area and the area to its north, in a total area of 39 hectare, demarcated by Haicheng Bridge, Tielu



Street, Jihong Bridge and Jihong Street. Apart from the railway station, this area is mostly dotted with the multi-storey buildings constructed in the early 1990s. With a high density, they are not sufficiently spaced, not open in style, and are of poor quality, contrasting sharply with the function and style of the neighboring areas in the same district.

The historical buildings within this area and their historical information are introduced as follows:

(1) Harbin Railway Station: it was first built in October 1899 as one of the earliest railway stations on the Chinese Eastern Railway constructed by

Czarist Russia. Originally, the station was located at the site of the present luggage house, in the name of Qinjiagang Railway Station. In 1903, a new tower was being built at the site of the main tower of the existing station. In 1904, the new tower was completed and given a new name, i.e. Harbin Railway Station. This is the so-called Old Harbin Railway Station, a Russian-style, two-storey building in an area of 2,700 square metres or so. In a beautiful shape, the old station often appeared on the postcards of Harbin City. After the founding of the PRC, the old station was expanded for five times in 1955, 1960, 1972, 1989 and 2002 respectively.

(2) Jihong Bridge: Jihong Bridge is in the shape of an arch and looks like a rainbow, making itself a typical bridge structure of the European style. It is 51 metres long and 27.6 metres wide, carrying a motor way (21.4 metres wide) and a footpath (3.1 metres wide) on either side of the motor way. On both sides of the bridge stand skew-symmetric tower structures, whose pedestals are cuboids and embossed with 24 floral hoops in all four directions. Moreover, there are the elegant and tall floral-pattern lamp holders and the hollowed out, inlaid iron rails. They are all cleverly conceived and exquisitely forged. What's more, the wheel-like emblems of the Chinese Eastern Railway embedded into the guard rails make the bridge seem more historical and artistic. The whole bridge uses no rivets and screws at all and emanates a unique architectural style. Jihong Bridge is the only bridge that is considered as "a historic cultural heritage" in Harbin. Being of double historical identities makes it irreplaceable among the historical relics of Harbin. It records the important contribution of railways to the development of the city; it also records the city's history of development and carries its cultural quintessence. Standing among the building blocks in Harbin, the bridge gives people a unique sense of beauty. It is indeed a highlighted urban landscape.

(3) Holy Iveron Icon Orthodox Church (the Iveron Church for short) is located at Gongchang Hutong, Jihong Street, Daoli District, Harbin. Built in 1908, it covers an area of 555.8 square metres. Originally, it was an Orthodox Church serving the External Amur Military Command Area of Russia in Harbin. The church is an eclectic, brick-wood structure designed by Denisov. During the Cultural Revolution, the five onion-like domes on the top of the church were dismantled, but the main body was preserved. Nowadays, the church is a level II protected building of Harbin City, but is quite dilapidated and actually used as

a warehouse. The Iveron Church is one of the two earliest extant churches in Harbin. It is also an important building that mirrors the city's history.

(4) Gongchang Hutong: originally, it was part of Jihong Street. In 1931, it was separated from the street and given the present name.

(5) Jingxiao Hutong: it came into being in 1931. It was so named because the police school of the Japanese puppet army was formerly located here.

Goals of the Design

- **Improving the Traffic Conditions**

Given that the railway station area is a portal of Harbin, the design must, on one hand, strengthen the link between this transportation hub and the city's main roads and enable it to serve the entire city in a better way, and on the other hand, take diversion measures to address the problem of traffic congestion, so as to ensure orderly and smooth transportation in the surrounding areas and create a good image for the city.

- **Building a City Centre**

The design must reflect the overall positioning of the railway station area as a railway passenger transportation hub at the centre of the city, give fully play to the catalytic effect of the integrated transportation hub, and make full use of the existing and inventory land on the site to create a new city centre and increase the value of the land.

- **Integrating Historical and Cultural Resources**

The design must integrate the historical resources on the site to enrich the culture of the locality and remind people of the city's history. It must make the site become a landmark of the city that can reflect the railway culture, the European continental culture and the snow and ice city culture.

Tasks of the Design

The final results will include:

1. A design specification and key technical and economic indicators;
2. Conceptual design & analysis diagrams (you may include the following content in your analysis: zoning, land use, functional structure, traffic organisation, open spaces and green space system, etc.);
3. General layout design;

4. Design drawings of important locations;
5. Perspective views of the main building blocks and a couple of localised perspective views;
6. Other design drawings.