



Elements at Kowloon Station

HONG KONG, CHINA

Elements at Kowloon Station is an 82,750-square-meter (890,714-sf) retail complex at the heart of Union Square, the largest mixed-use development in Hong Kong. The high-end shopping center brings to the vast minicity, built on reclaimed land, retail and nightlife opportunities for residents, businesspersons, and visitors. Situated near the southern coast of Kowloon,



JURY STATEMENT

Elements at Kowloon Station, in the open center of the Union Square megablock, is the final, integrating piece of the plan to transform reclaimed land at Kowloon Bay into a new commercial center for Hong Kong. The interior shopping mall and outdoor public spaces link Union Square's 21 towers—including the 118-story ICC tower, Hong Kong's tallest—while connecting the development to the city's subway system.

DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Owner/Developer

MTR Corporation Limited
Hong Kong, China
<http://www.mtr.com.hk/>

Design Architect

Benoy
London, United Kingdom
www.benoy.com

Architect of Record

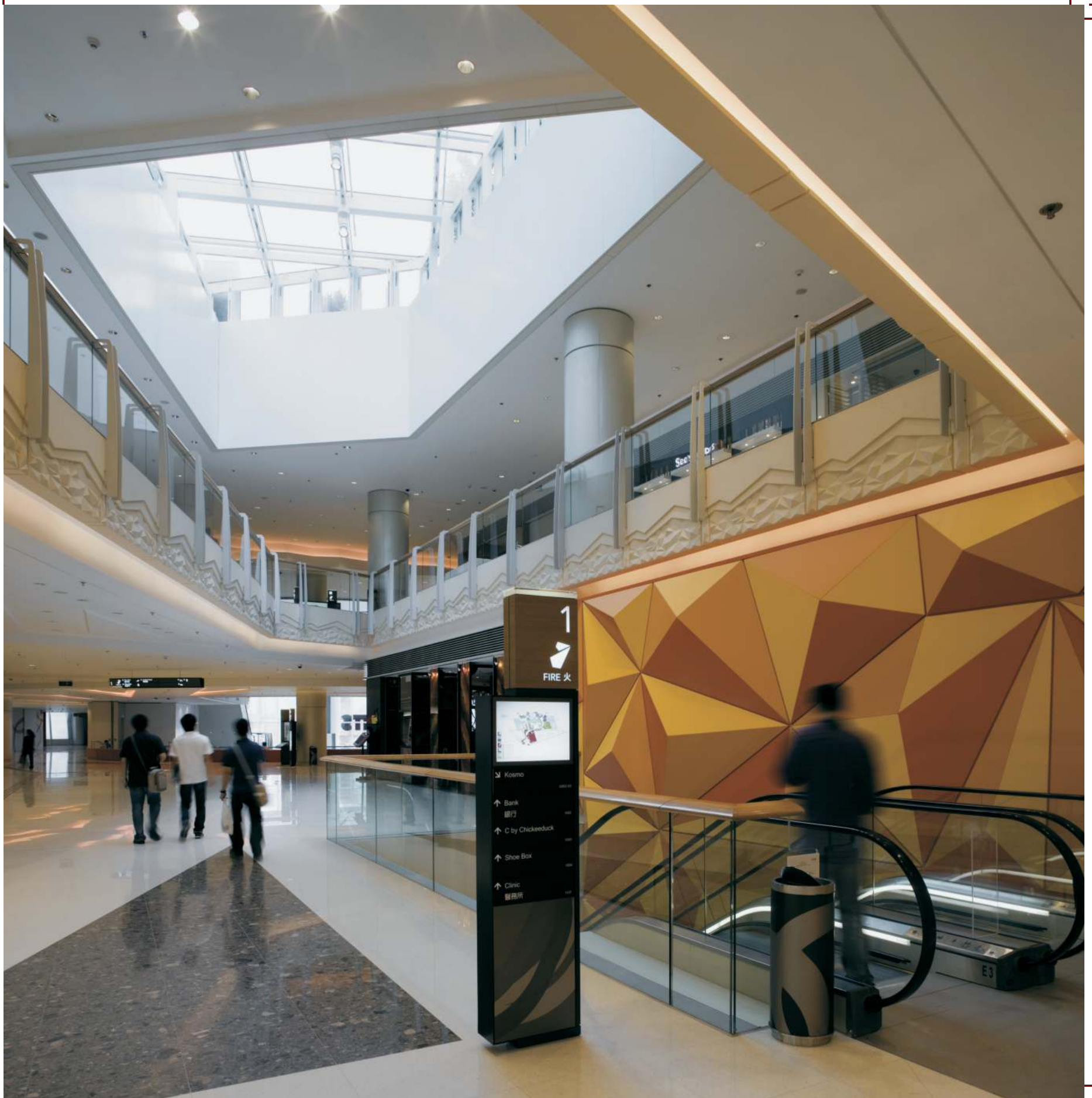
Aedas
London, United Kingdom
www.aedas.com

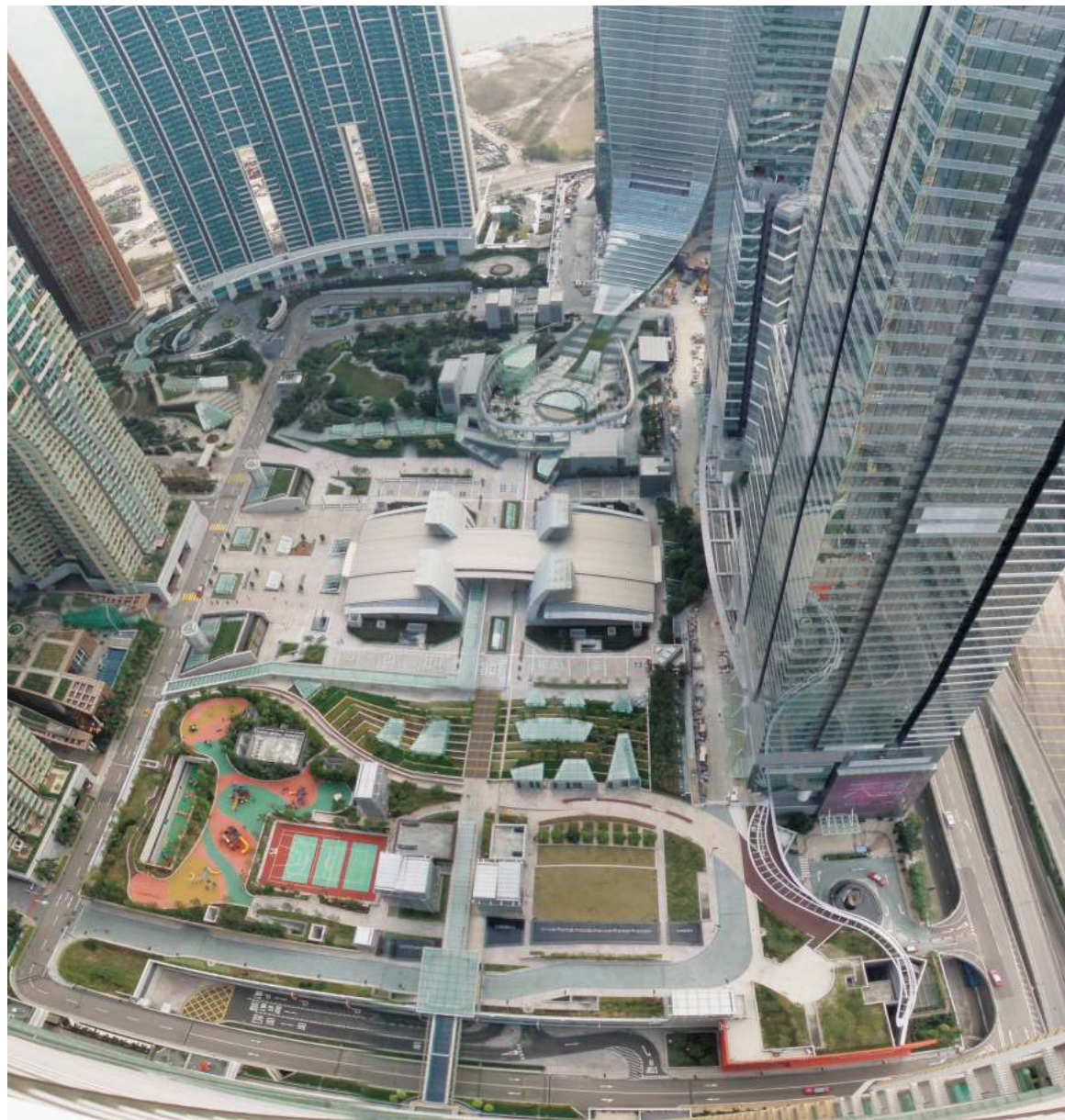
Elements at Kowloon was developed around two Mass Transit Railway (MTR) stations, providing vital links to Hong Kong and Lantau islands.

Elements at Kowloon is the capstone for Union Square, a megadevelopment that was first conceived in the early 1990s as an integral component of a larger master plan for the area around Kowloon Station. The vision for the plan was simple: concentrate strategic commercial centers and communities along the subway that would achieve symbiotic success, supporting and sustaining each other in an economically viable manner. The first component built was Union Square, a mixed-use complex that includes 21 towers between 35 and 69 stories—housing more than 5,800 residential units, 2,230 hotel rooms, and approximately 232,258 square meters (2.5 million sf) of office space—arranged on the perimeter of the 13.5-hectare (33.5-ac) site. The colossal project includes the International Commerce Center (ICC) tower—now half built and slated for completion in 2010—that is expected to become Hong Kong's tallest building. Completed in October 2007, Elements at Kowloon Station sits at the tapered base of the ICC tower and opens onto the complex's 6.5-hectare (16.1-ac) central park.

Early in the planning stage, it became clear that a key design challenge would be addressing differences in scale: the surrounding project—rising to heights of 484 meters (1,588 ft)—dwarfs the two-story Elements at Kowloon. To reconcile this difference, the developer allocated a significant portion







PHOTOGRAPHS BY GRISCHA RUSCHENDORF

of the retail complex's restaurants and cafés to the civic square, forming an iconic outdoor hub of activity with the majestic towers as a backdrop. Also, the shopping center was designed to integrate seamlessly with the adjoining park and terraced gardens, creating a central, expansive leisure area that fills the site's interior.

The two-story retail complex is perforated by 3,716 square meters (40,000 sf) of skylights, reducing the need to rely on artificial lighting. Other sustainable design elements include a green roof; the use of double-glazed, low-emissivity glass in skylights and transparent walls; custom-designed elliptical entrances to prevent cool air from escaping the indoor environment; and energy-saving dual-speed escalators. Also, the project's access to two stations on Hong Kong's extensive MTR system encourages visitors and residents to use public transportation.

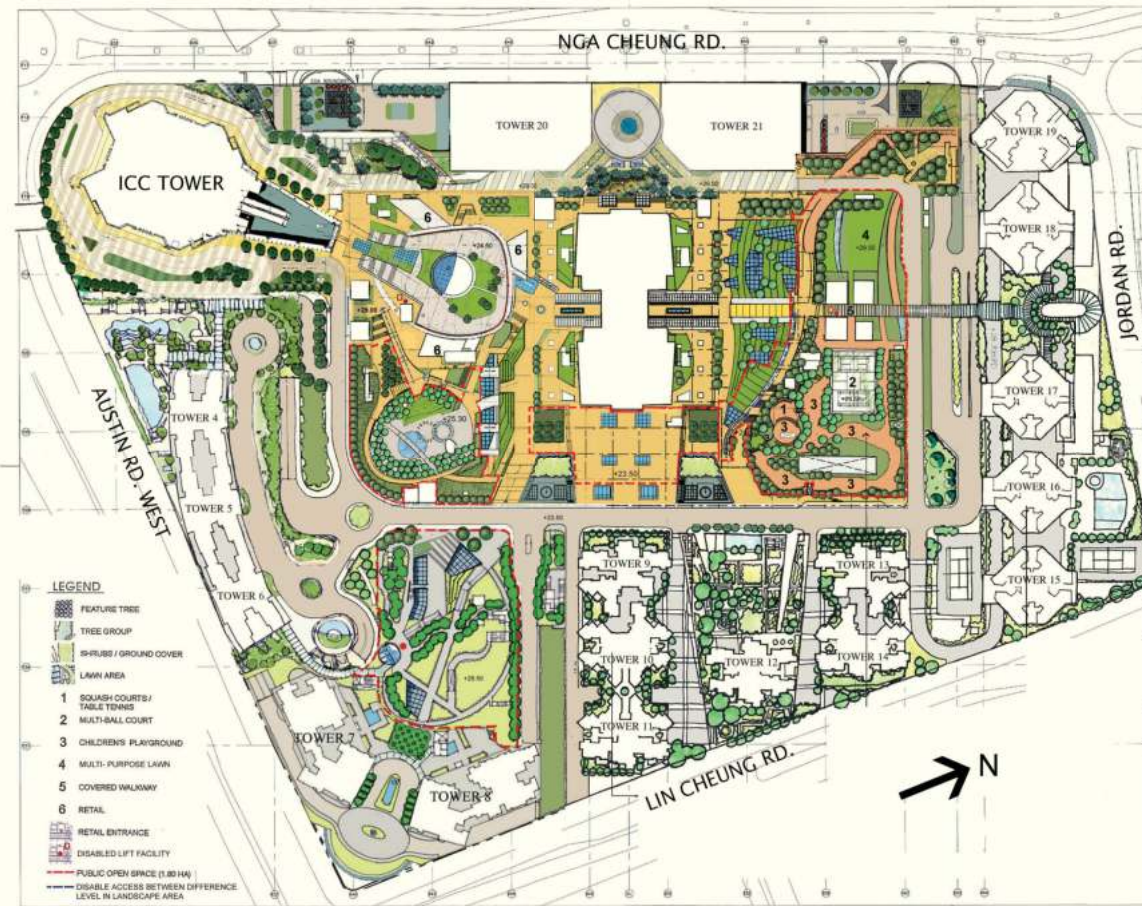
Managed by the development arm of MTR Corporation Limited, a private company that operates Hong Kong's public subway and light-rail system, the retail center links two separate mass-transit

zones at either end of the complex, 250 meters (820 feet) apart, leading to a horizontal design. Such a linear layout is rare in the dense, vertical city of Hong Kong, and the design team, by necessity, created a stimulating and diverse retail design to animate the shopping experience.

The design concept, created by the architecture firm Benoy, originated from historic Chinese examples in which retail districts were segregated by the goods offered—for instance, a city would have a shoe street, a wedding street, or a market street. Adopting this notion of shopping quarters, the retail mix was divided into broad zones of entertainment, home, luxury, fashion, and food.

After each of the districts had been established in the overall retail plan, the design team explored the idea of using distinct themes to brand the zones, instilling each area with its own identity. Responding to the absence of nature in Hong Kong, the design team seized upon the feng shui-inspired five elements: earth, wood, metal, water, and fire. For instance, the entertainment district became the fire zone, with red and orange hues highlighting the space, and a large red sculptural wall became a dramatic addition to the large central area. The differentiated retail zones shape a sequence of distinct spaces that orient the shopper within the larger complex.

SITE PLAN



PROJECT DATA

Website

www.elementshk.com

Site Area

13.5 ha [33.5 ac]

Facilities

82,750 m² [890,714 sf] retail

Land Uses

retail, restaurant, entertainment, parks/open space, parking

Start/Completion Dates

August 2005–October 2007