

For consideration on
2.11.2001

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL ON PLANNING, LANDS AND WORKS

Second Public Consultation on the Consultancy Study “Urban Design Guidelines for Hong Kong”

PURPOSE

1. This paper seeks Members’ views on the proposed guidelines and major urban design issues as outlined in the attached Consultation Digest for the consultancy study on “Urban Design Guidelines for Hong Kong”.

BACKGROUND

2. The Planning Department initiated a consultancy study on “Urban Design Guidelines for Hong Kong” (the Study) with a view to preparing a set of urban design guidelines to promote public awareness on design considerations and providing a broad framework for urban design assessment. A public consultation exercise of the Study was undertaken in 2000 to collect public views on the various major urban design issues of Hong Kong. Based on the views collected, the Consultants have suggested broad design guidelines for the urban design issues agreed in the first consultation. For the controversial topics, it is considered necessary to further seek the views of the public before proceeding further. A Consultation Digest (Annex) was prepared by Planning Department for the purpose of this second public consultation exercise.

CONSULTATION DIGEST

3. The Consultation Digest (Annex) basically consists of three parts:

Part I - Summary of the Results of the First Public Consultation

- Broad Consensus Views
 - (a) The Study had adequately covered the major urban design issues of Hong Kong.
 - (b) There is a general agreement to preserve views to ridgelines around the harbour and to formulate guidelines for waterfront developments.
 - (c) Barrier-free pedestrian environment for the elderly and disabled should be provided.

- (d) There is a general agreement for advisory guidelines to be formulated for most of the urban design issues.
- Diverse Views

Whether height restrictions should be imposed on developments around Victoria Harbour for:

- (a) preserving views to ridgelines; and
- (b) achieving well-designed waterfront developments.

Part II - Broad Advisory Guidelines on Major Urban Design Issues

- These are the broad guidelines proposed to cover the major urban design issues which have been accepted by the public in the first consultation exercise. The broad guidelines have taken into account the public views received. They are intended to be applied on an administrative basis.

Part III - Proposed Approach to Achieve Preservation of Views to Ridgelines/Peaks and Well-Designed Waterfront around Victoria Harbour

- (a) The Metroplan (1991) guidelines are to be used as a starting point for preservation of views to ridgelines/peaks but there should be flexibility for relaxation on individual merits, such as “punctuation” at suitable locations.
- (b) Ridgelines/peaks with distinguished identity should be preserved as far as possible.
- (c) The vantage points and the ridgelines/peaks for preservation should be agreed by the community at large.
- (d) There should be no loss of development plot ratio on private land.
- (e) High rise nodes could be encouraged at selected strategic locations depending on nature of land uses, location and impact on ridgeline preservation.
- (f) Developments at prominent locations along the waterfront should be subject to special design consideration. There should be explicit criteria established in assessing proposed developments at these locations. The special design panel set up to scrutinize these development proposals should have representations from the various professions and various sectors of the community.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

4. The proposals in the Consultation Digest have been formulated after taking into consideration opinions expressed by a number of stakeholders in a series of informal consultation. The parties consulted include the Hong Kong Institute of Architects, the Hong Kong Institute of Planners, the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors, the Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects, the Real Estate Developers Association, and the Hong Kong Institute of Real Estate Administration. The Consultation Digest was considered by the Town Planning Board on 29.6.2001 as suitable for public consultation.
5. A public consultation forum was held on 8.9.2001 with over 200 participants from various sectors of the community. There was general support to the recommended advisory guidelines and to the proposals of preservation of views to ridgelines around Victoria Harbour and the achievement of a well-designed waterfront. Presentation has also been made to Housing Authority's Strategic Planning Committee on 27.9.2001. So far responses have generally been supportive.

WAY FORWARD

6. The Administration will consider carefully the public views before finalizing the guidelines.

ADVICE SOUGHT

7. Members are invited to comment on the proposals in the Consultation Digest at Annex.

ATTACHMENT

Annex The Second Consultation Digest of the "Urban Design Guidelines for Hong Kong"

PLANNING DEPARTMENT
NOVEMBER 2001