

**LegCo Panel on Planning, Lands and Works  
Meeting on 6 June 2003**

**List of concerns raised by Members on the discussion item on  
"Town Planning Board — statutory powers, composition and criteria for  
appointment of member"**

1. General

- (a) Members urge for the early introduction of the proposed amendments to the Town Planning Ordinance (TPO) (Cap. 131) in relation to the Town Planning Board (TPB), including the composition, powers and operation of TPB. Members are also concerned about the timetable for introducing and coverage of the proposed amendments.

2. Planning process

- (b) To expedite the planning process, Members are concerned whether the time taken by TPB to consider applications for permission in respect of plans and applications for review under sections 16 and 17 of TPO respectively could be shortened.
- (c) There should be a statutory timeframe for fixing a date for the hearing of an appeal by the Town Planning Appeal Board, e.g. to provide in TPO that the date shall be a day not more than two months of the receipt of an application.
- (d) There is a need to amend TPO to enhance the role and participation of District Councils in the planning process.

3. Composition of TPB, criteria for appointment of its members and duration of membership

- (e) To ensure that TPB represents the interests of the community, it should have a balanced membership representing all sectors concerned. In this connection, there is a need to stipulate clearly

the criteria for the appointment of members of TPB and to cap the number of members from each sector.

- (f) Membership of TPB should be changed regularly so as to minimize conflict of interests arising from any person holding TPB membership for a long period of time.
- (g) Noting that seven members of TPB have been serving on the Board for more than six years, Members are concerned that this contravenes the current practice of appointing members of Government advisory boards for not more than six years.
- (h) Training or briefing should be provided to TPB members to keep them abreast of new policies and new planning concepts.

4. Conduct of meetings

- (i) Given the significant statutory powers of TPB, there is a need to enhance its transparency through conduct of open meetings. This should be arranged through administrative measures as soon as possible.
- (j) Under section 2(2) of TPO, five members of TPB shall form the quorum at any meeting of the Board. Members consider that the quorum should be enlarged to enable meaningful deliberation, e.g. one-third of the membership shall form the quorum.
- (k) There is a need for clearer and more stringent requirements on declaration of interests of the Chairman, Vice-chairman and members of TPB so as to minimize conflict of interests.

5. Other concern

- (l) Members are concerned about the poor planning of Tseung Kwan O, the lessons learnt from such and how the situation could be rectified.