

Asia's Walled City

Development control (out of control)

Legislative Council

27 February 2007

Designing Hong Kong Harbour District

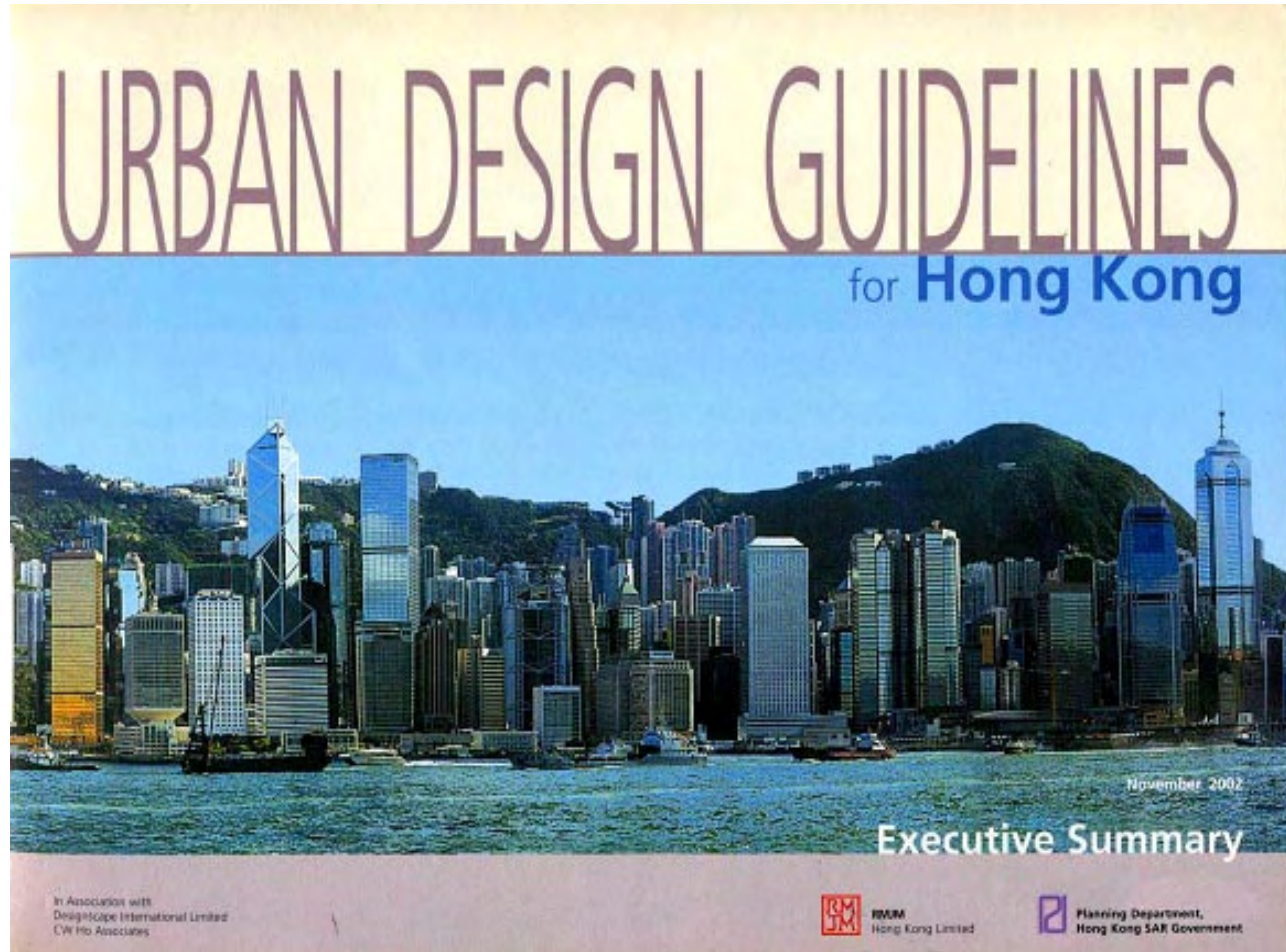
Walled City Concerns

Community concerns with density and bulky buildings

Metroplan Review, 2030 Study, Council for Sustainable Development

- **Quality of life suffers**
 - Poor public domain
 - Loss of sun light
 - Loss of air ventilation
 - Loss of visual corridors
 - Loss of pedestrian mobility
 - Loss of street pattern
 - Loss of culture and vibrancy
 - Health and hygiene issues
- **Economy suffers**
 - Anti-competitive
 - Loss of (SME) job opportunities
 - Loss of tourism
- **Strain on transport**
 - Increased risk of permanent traffic congestion

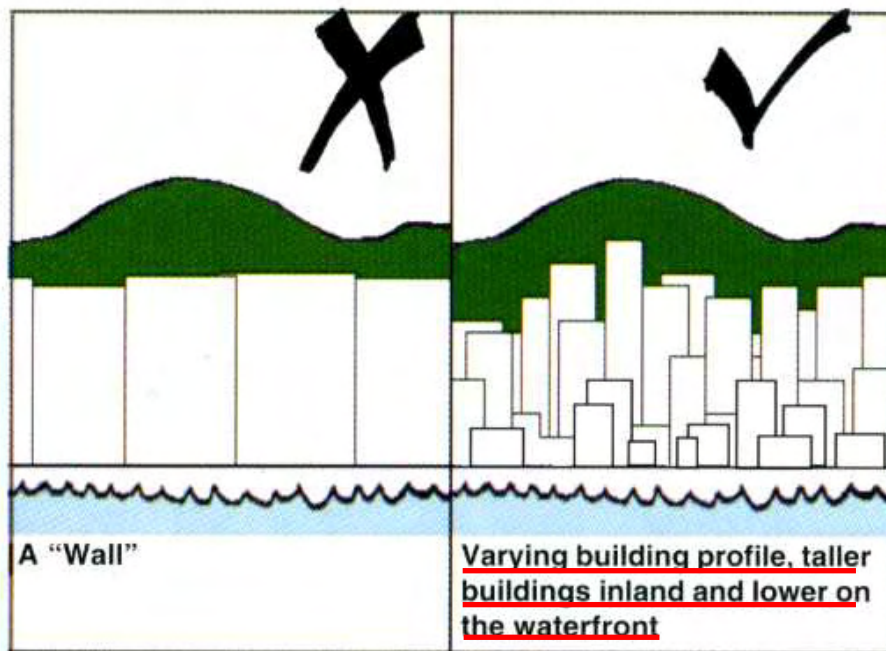
Many Promises Made



Hong Kong: Asia's Walled City

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Promises .. Avoid The “Wall” Effect



- Avoid the “Wall” effect and create a varying building height profile where appropriate. Taller developments should be located inland, with lower developments on the waterfront. In new developed areas, consideration should be given to designation of coastal sites for low density development.

HK Planning Standards & Guidelines, Urban Design Guidelines, 2003

Reality: Walls in Island East



Reality: Walls in Island East



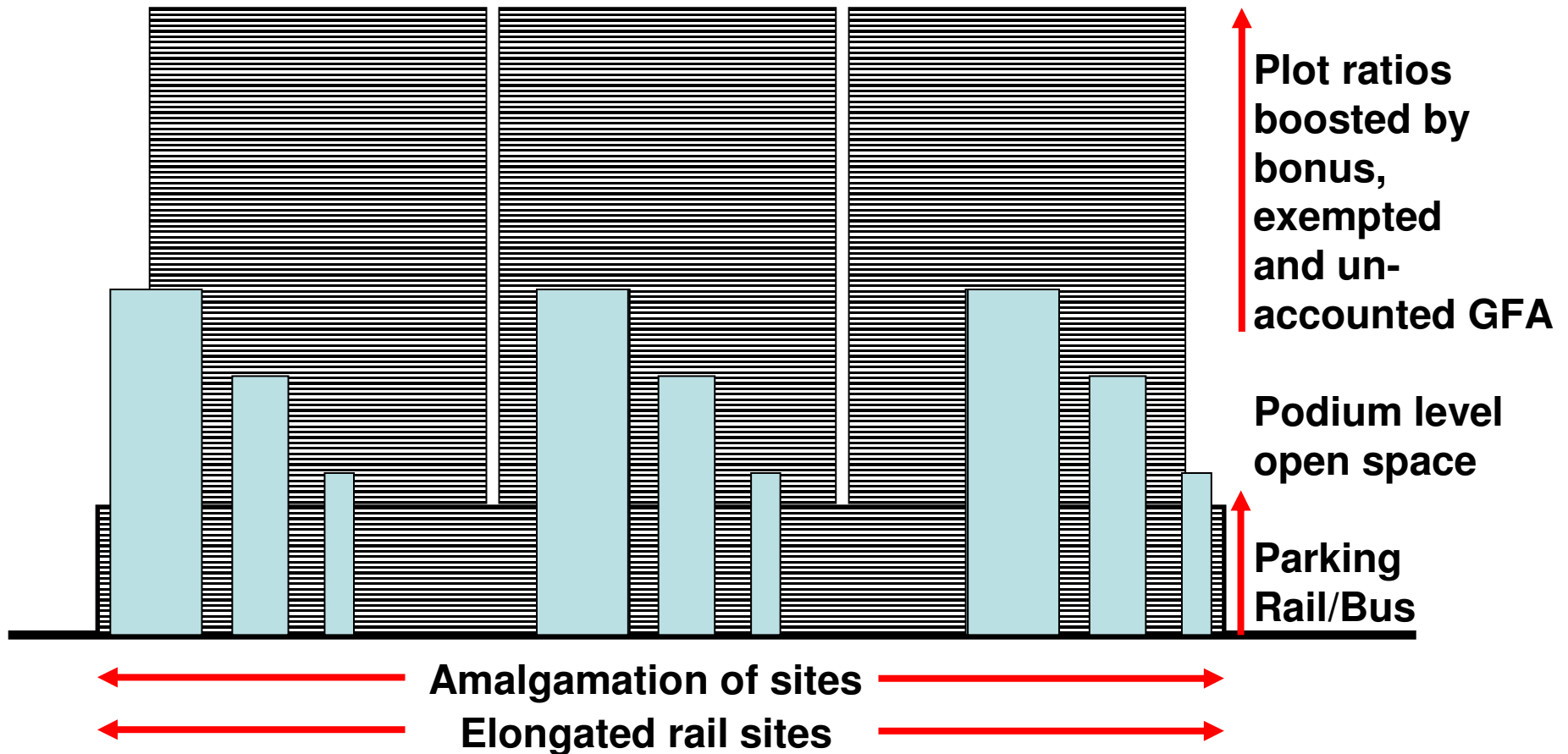
Reality: Walls in West Kowloon



Reality: Walls in West Kowloon



Walled City Syndrome



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Walled City Syndrome

1. Extreme large plot sizes

- Ever larger sites sold by Government
- Amalgamation of sites by URA and developers

2. Rail sites are elongated O/U zones

- Site area predetermines wall shape
- O/U zoning bypasses Town Planning Board control

3. Final plot ratios out of control

- **Unlimited** bonus, non-accountable and exempted GFA

Walled City Syndrome

4. Building regulations ‘dictate’ built form

- Podium structures: 100% site coverage permitted up to 15m
- No set-back rules to ensure green spaces around buildings
- AVA and ridge line requirements have very limited impact

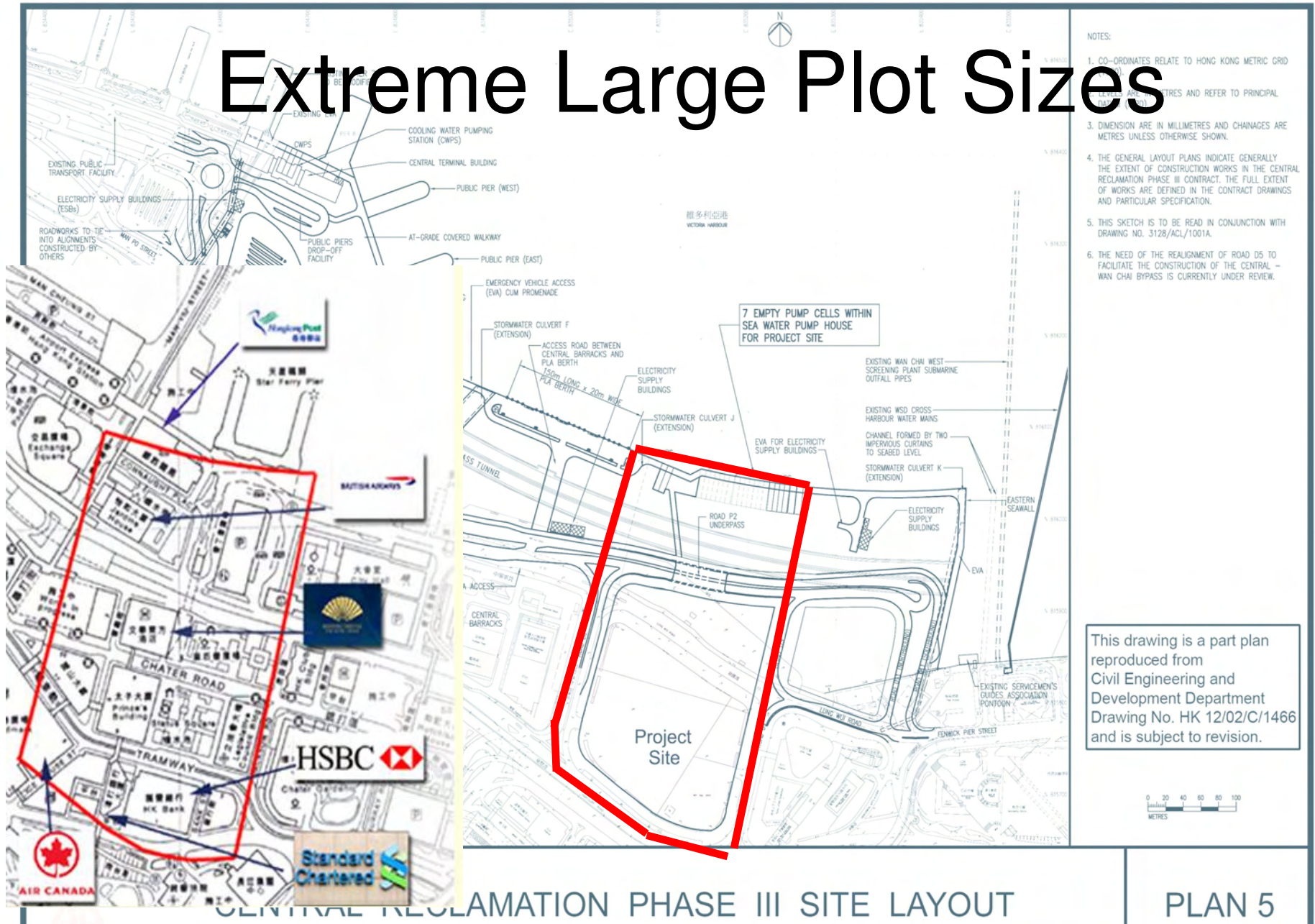
5. Financing with linked development rights

- Urban renewal, Rail, Cultural venues, Cruise terminals, etc

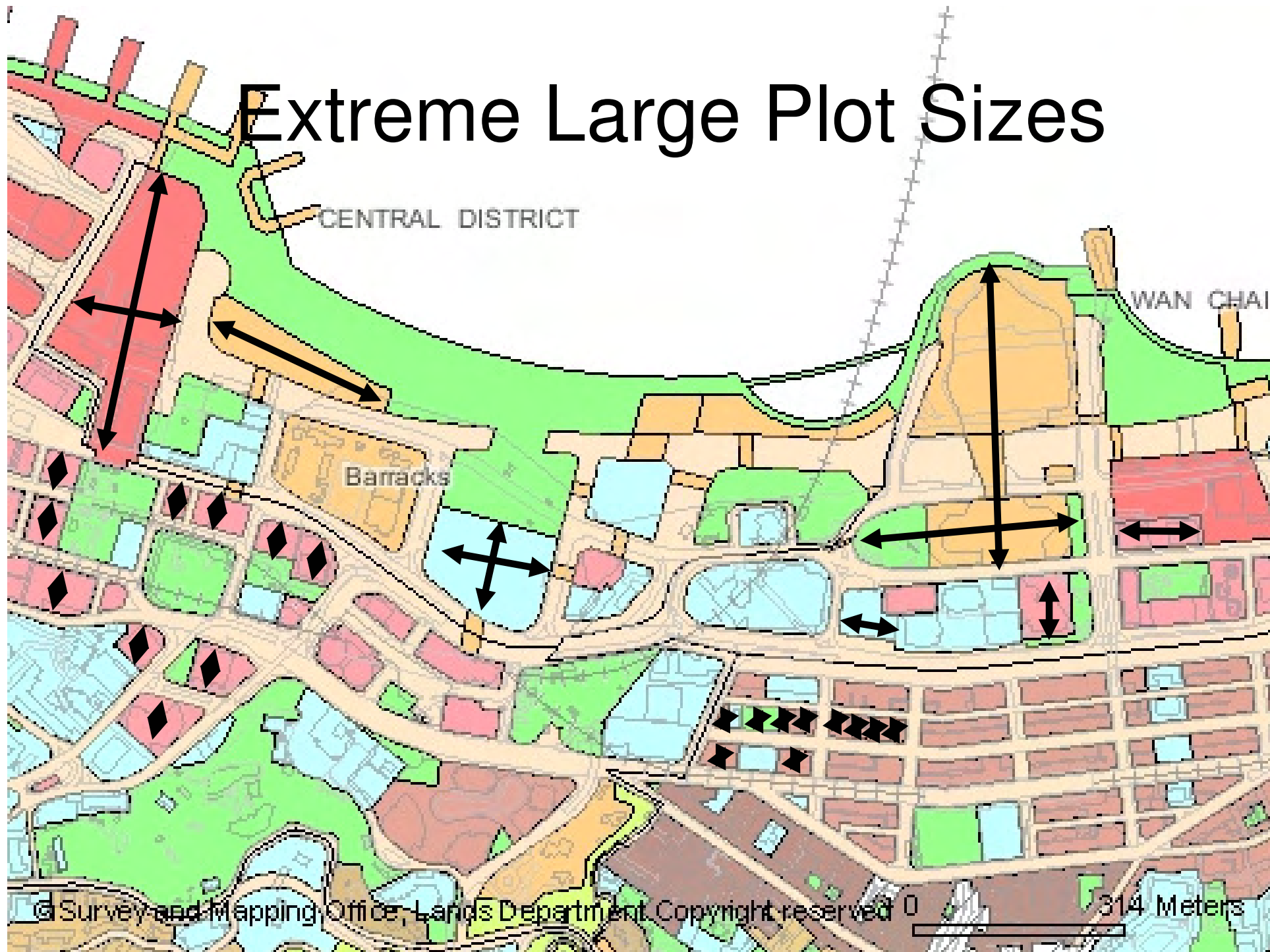
6. Sale of new development rights in already high density areas

- Insufficient green and open spaces in urban districts
- Ongoing sale of land and Government properties
- Failure to grade and preserve existing private structures

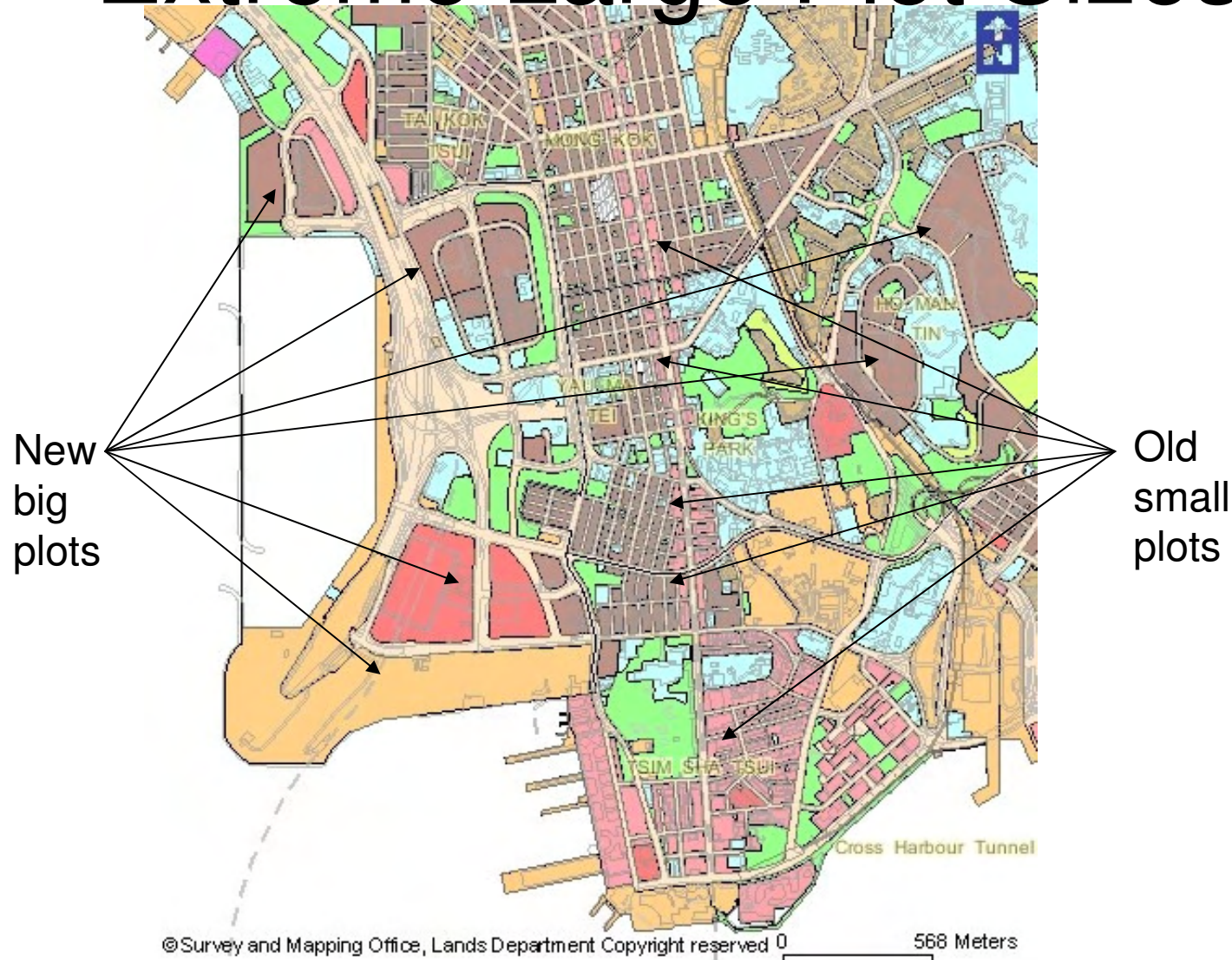
Extreme Large Plot Sizes



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Extreme Large Plot Sizes



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Plot Ratio Control (Out of Control)

- **Granting of bonus, non-accountable and exempted GFA** under building regulations, notes to OZPs and land leases.
- The intent is good: green features, balconies, utility platforms, lift provision, sky gardens and transport facilities.
- Because the granting is **cumulative**, the final plot ratios increase beyond what is planned for the area.
- **Who has benefited?** Developer gets GFA for free but charges the consumer in surrender and re-grant cases.
- **Collusion of developers and land owners (profit), and Government (interest in premiums, transport facilities, etc)**

Plot Ratio Control (Out of Control)

Development	Permitted plot ratio	Final plot ratio	%
Tsuen Wan Town Centre	6.7	8	20
Noble Hill, Sheung Shui	3	4.1	30
Harbourfront Landmark, Hung Hom	8.4	11	35
Victoria Tower, TST	9	12.5	40

Plot Ratio Control (Out of Control)

Development	Permitted plot ratio	Final plot ratio	%
Tai Yuen Str, A, Wanchai	9.7	13.5	40
Sky Tower, Ma Tau Kok	9	12.5	40
Aegean Coast, Tuen Mun	3.2	5.0	50
Hillary Court, Hing Hon Rd	8	12.5	60

Plot Ratio Control (Out of Control)

Development	Permitted plot ratio	Final plot ratio	%
The Palace, Kowloon Tong	3	4.8	60
The Orchards, Quarry Bay	4.5	6.8	60
Grand Promenade, Sai Wan Ho	10.1	16.3	60
The Cliveden, Tsuen Wan	3	6.5	115

Plot Ratio Control (Out of Control)

Development	Permitted plot ratio	Final plot ratio	%
KCRC projects	SOME	OF	
MTR projects	THE	WORST	
Public housing projects	OFFENDERS		

Development Control

1. Limit amalgamation of sites

2. Amend zoning

- Break plots into smaller areas (urgent for waterfront sites)
- Rezone rail sites from O/U to CDA and reduce plot ratios
- Increase open spaces, visual and air ventilation corridors at street level (, and increase funding for public amenities)

3. Cap final plot ratios

- Limit final plot ratios to what is permitted on the OZP
- Reduce payable premiums/rents/rates as compensation for 'good things'

Development Control

4. Amend building regulations

- Implement set-back rules for re-developments
- Remove incentives for podium structures
- Require visual and air ventilation corridors at street level

5. Limit sale of new development rights

- Grade/preserve/re-use existing structures
- Specifically in high density areas

6. De-link development rights

- Use land premium income collected in Capital Reserve Fund to finance rail, urban renewal, cultural venues, public facilities

Development Control Policy

1. Reverse intensification policy

- In line with new population forecasts
- Re-invest land premiums in urban environment

2. Sustainable transport: Prioritize rail

- Reduce need for roads and road space

3. Reduce dependency on land premiums

4. Independent Town Planning Board

- With oversight over planning, lands, buildings and transport