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20 March 2008

Clerk to Bills Committee  
(Attn : Ms. YUE Tin-po)  
Legislative Council Building  
8 Jackson Road  
Central  
Hong Kong

Dear Ms. Yue,

**Buildings (Amendment) Bill 2007**  
**Response to Bills Committee's Enquiries at the Meeting on 11 March 2008**

At the captioned meeting, Members asked about the current regulatory measures taken by the Buildings Department ("BD") in the control of advertisement signboards, especially those concerning lighting installations in such signboards. Our response is set out in ensuing paragraphs.

The Buildings Ordinance ("BO") controls the design and construction of signboard structures as a kind of building works. Under the BO, the erection of signboards, either in the form of a projection from or an addition to a private building or as a structure on private land, is building works and requires the approval and consent of the Building Authority ("BA") under section 14(1) of the BO before the works are carried out. Section 31(1) of the BO prescribes that no building or other structure shall be erected over any portion of any street unless the BA has granted an exemption under section 42 of the Ordinance. For this purpose, the BD stipulates the minimum safety requirements (structural, fire and positional safety) for the control of

signboards through its practice notes.

Pursuant to the legislative intent of the BO, the BD's objective in control over the erection of signboards is to ensure public safety. The BD has issued the "Guide on Erection and Maintenance of Advertising Signs" and set out relevant standards in the "Practice Note for Authorized Persons and Registered Structure Engineers 269" to stipulate the structural, fire and traffic safety requirements for erection of signboards. Such note includes safety requirements of other concerned government departments in addition to those of the BD. Copies of the guide and the practice note are attached for Members' reference. As far as fire safety of signboards is concerned:-

- (a) the BD requires that structural elements as well as display surfaces of signboards should be made of non-combustible materials;
- (b) the Fire Services Department requires that signboards should be made of non-combustible materials; and
- (c) the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department ("EMSD") requires that the electrical installations of signboards should conform to the electrical safety requirements under the Electricity Ordinance (Cap 406) ("EO"), the Electricity (Wiring) Regulations ("E(W)R") and the technical guidelines promulgated in the Code of Practice for the E(W)R.

In general, lighting installations have only a minor impact on structural safety of signboards because the imposed loading of lighting elements is very small. Concerning control over electrical lighting in advertisement signboards under the EO and its regulations, we have consulted the EMSD and the details are set out in ensuing paragraphs.

An advertisement signboard illuminated by electrical lighting fittings, fixed to premises and connected to an electrical distribution board (i.e. not via a socket outlet), is a fixed electrical installation. The workmanship and material used for a fixed electrical installation shall comply with the relevant technical guidelines stipulated under the Code of Practice of the E(W)R. Electrical work on a fixed electrical installation shall be undertaken by registered electrical contractors and registered electrical workers of the

appropriate grade. Pursuant to regulation 19 of the E(W)R, a fixed electrical installation shall, after completion and before energized for use, be inspected, tested and certified by a registered electrical worker to confirm that the requirements of the EO have been met. The certificate shall be passed to the owner of the installation after signing by both the registered electrical contractor and the registered electrical worker. Pursuant to regulation 20 of the E(W)R, if an advertisement signboard forms part of the building communal fixed electrical installation, it shall be subject to periodic (varies from 12 months to 5 years, depending on the type of electrical installations and premises) inspection, testing and certification. The concerned certificate shall be delivered to the EMSD for endorsement within two weeks after the date of the certificate. The EMSD conducts regular inspections to fixed electrical installations, including advertisement signboards, to ensure electrical safety.

Signboards erected without prior approval and consent of the BA are unauthorized building works ("UBWs"). Since August 2003, the BD has undertaken clearance operations against large unauthorized signboards in blackspots such as Causeway Bay, Central and Mongkok. To complement such clearance operations, the BD has also stepped up enforcement actions against large unauthorized signboards through the Blitz UBWs Clearance Operation and the Clearance Operation of UBWs at Pedestrianisation Streets since 2006. Currently, TV-screen type signboards with a display area exceeding 10 m<sup>2</sup> or other signboards with a display area exceeding 20 m<sup>2</sup> are targets of the operations.

The BD also removes unauthorized signboards which are newly erected or under construction if the display area of the signboards is greater than 5 m<sup>2</sup> or the specified dimensional limits of projection, thickness and headroom are exceeded.

When dangerous (including those with exposed or broken fluorescent tubes) or abandoned signboards are identified, the BD will serve Dangerous Structure Removal Notices on the owners of the signboards under the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap 132) to require the owners to remove the signboards or to render the same safe.

Yours sincerely,



(Jerry Cheung)  
for Secretary for Development

c.c.	DB	(Attn : Mr H W Cheung/ Mr S T Lam)	[Fax : 2840 0451]
	SJ	(Attn : Mr Allen Lai/ Miss Selina Lau/ Ms Carmen Chu)	[Fax : 2869 1302] [Fax : 2536 8137]
	DEMS	(Attn: Mr Eric Pang)	[Fax : 2895 4929]



# Guide on Erection & Maintenance of Advertising Signs



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This offers general guidance on the erection and maintenance of advertising signs. The advice contained and the legislations mentioned herein are not exhaustive. A qualified professional should be consulted in case of doubt.

## 2. GENERAL ADVICE

- 2.1 Any person who intends to erect a sign should obtain permission from the building owners and/or owners corporation and prior approval from the electricity supplier concerned as appropriate and check that the sign does not contravene the conditions of the land leases.
- 2.2 Sign owners should arrange to have their signs inspected and properly maintained regularly to ensure continuing safety.
- 2.3 The signboard owners may be liable for damages or injury caused by his sign.
- 2.4 A sign shall not contain obscene or indecent materials.

## 3. ADVICE FROM BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT

- 3.1 Application of the Buildings Ordinance (Cap 123) and Public Health & Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap 132)
- 3.1.1 A Sign permanently attached, fixed, annexed or secured to a building normally falls within the definition of “building” or “building works” and is subject to the control of the Buildings Ordinance.
- 3.1.2 A sign that is liable to cause danger to the structure of a building may be removed under section 26(4) of the Buildings Ordinance. Any structure erected solely for the purpose of exhibiting advertisements and which is dangerous or is likely to become dangerous may be removed under section 105 of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance.
- 3.1.3 Save where exempted by the Building Authority, no building or other structure shall be erected in, over or upon any portion of any street.

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- 3.2 Appointment of Authorized Persons & Registered Contractors
- 3.2.1 Approval and consent from the Building Authority should be obtained for the erection of any advertising sign which is within the definition of building or building works under the Buildings Ordinance.
- 3.2.2 An Authorized Person should be appointed to co-ordinate the work.
- 3.2.3 A Registered Contractor should be appointed for the erection of advertising signs.
- 3.3 Projection, Clearance and Location
- 3.3.1 A sign shall not
- obstruct or reduce the width of the escape route or stair provided to a building or service lane
  - obstruct or reduce the required natural lighting and ventilation or open air provided to buildings
  - project more than 4.2m from the main building line or beyond the center line of a street
- 3.3.2 A sign shall
- have a minimum clearance of 3.5m and a minimum clear distance of 1m from the curb if projecting over a pavement
  - have a minimum clearance of 5.8m if projecting over a street
  - have a minimum clearance of 7m if projecting over a tramway
- 3.3.3 Two adjacent signs shall have a minimum lateral distance of 2.4m.
- 3.3.4 Two signs erected from the opposite side of a street shall have a minimum clear distance of 3m.
- 3.4 Material and Structural Safety
- 3.4.1 A sign shall be
- made of durable, fire resistant material proofed against rust and corrosion
  - structurally safe as not to cause any injury to the public and shall not cause any adverse effect on the buildings to which it is fixed
- 3.4.2 The structure of a sign shall be securely fixed to avoid falling or swinging. It shall have a minimum of two support points on the building to which it is affixed.

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- 3.4.3 A sign shall not be affixed to or take support from another sign.
  - 3.4.4 The structural steel members of a sign shall have at least two coats of paint or other treatment for corrosion protection.
  - 3.4.5 Electrolytic reaction shall be avoided (e.g. steel screws shall not be directly fixed to aluminium bars).
  - 3.5 Other Points
    - 3.5.1 Details of the sign owner should be prominently displayed on the sign.
    - 3.5.2 A damaged or defective sign should be repaired or renewed.
    - 3.5.3 A sign should be removed when no longer required.

#### 4. **ADVICE FROM ELECTRICAL & MECHANICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

- 4.1 A neon sign or any other sign with current using equipment shall conform to electrical safety requirements under the Electricity (Wiring) Regulations of the Electricity Ordinance (Cap. 406) and the technical guidelines given under Code of Practice for the Electricity (Wiring) Regulations.
- 4.2 The electrical installation of a neon sign or any other sign with current using equipment shall be undertaken by a Registered Electrical Contractor / worker.
- 4.3 Every switch for a discharge lighting circuit shall be identified with a permanent label.
- 4.4 The neon tubes and current using equipment shall be installed so as to be free from contact with inflammable materials and exposure to mechanical damage.
- 4.5 Ancillary equipment including inductors, capacitors, resistors and transformers shall either be totally enclosed in a rigid and effectively earthed metal container or alternatively be placed in a suitably ventilated enclosure of incombustible material or of fire-resisting construction.
- 4.6 The transformer, discharge tube and other parts of high voltage circuits shall be located out of reach of the public.
- 4.7 Fireman's Switch

- 
- 4.7.1 The Fireman's switch of an approved type shall be situated in a conspicuous position, not more than 3m from ground level. For an exterior installation it shall be as nearly as possible vertically below the sign, or alternatively, a notice shall be placed directly below the sign to indicate the position of the switch, which shall bear a name plate. For interior installation it shall be near the main entrance to the building. Where more than one Fireman's Switch is installed on any one building, such switches shall be clearly marked to distinguish one from another.
  - 4.7.2 The 'ON' and 'OFF' position of the Fireman's Switch shall be conventional. (i.e. push upward – 'OFF'; push downward – 'ON')
  - 4.7.3 The switch is to be affixed on a board approximately 300mm long by 250mm wide, which is painted white and edged with a 50mm red border. The inscription 'NEON SIGN-FIREMAN'S SWITCH' in English is to be painted on the top and in Chinese at the bottom of the board in black. The switch is to be positioned in the middle of the board.

#### 5. **ADVICE FROM CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT**

- 5.1 No sign shall be erected above airport height limits under the Hong Kong Airport (Control of Obstructions) Ordinance, Cap 301.

#### 6. **ADVICE FROM COUNTRY AND MARINE PARKS AUTHORITY**

- 6.1 Regulation 10(1)(a) of the Country Parks and Special Areas Regulations stipulates that a permit in writing granted by the Country and Marine Parks Authority is required for displaying of any sign, notice, poster, banner or advertisement in country parks.
- 6.2 In general, permanent commercial signs will not be allowed to be displayed in country parks and special areas.

- 
- 6.3 The application for permission to erect and display a sign in country parks, or special areas, shall include the following details:-
- 6.3.1 The purpose for displaying the sign.
  - 6.3.2 A sketch of the sign to be displayed showing dimensions, design, and colour of the sign.
  - 6.3.3 A location plan for the proposed sign.
- 6.4 A copy of the application shall be sent to the respective District Lands Office in addition to the copy sent to the Director of Agriculture and Fisheries, who is also the Country and Marine Parks Authority.

#### **7. ADVICE ON TOBACCO ADVERTISEMENTS**

- 7.1 The Smoking (Public Health) Ordinance (Cap. 371) imposes requirements on tobacco advertisements.
- 7.2 Every tobacco advertisement shall contain health warning in accordance with the provisions of the Smoking (Public Health) Ordinance, Cap 371.

#### **8. ADVICE ON MEDICAL ADVERTISEMENTS**

- 8.1 The Undesirable Medical Advertisement Ordinance (Cap 231) imposes restrictions to certain advertisements relating to medical matters.
- 8.2 Section 3 of the Ordinance prohibits any person to publish or cause to be published any advertisement likely to lead to the use of any medicine, surgical appliance or treatment for the purpose of treating human beings for, or preventing human beings from contracting any disease or condition specified in Schedule 1 or treating human beings for any purpose specified in Schedule 2 of the Ordinance.
- 8.3 Section 4 of the Ordinance also prohibits any person to put advertisements relating to abortion.

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#### **9. ADVICE FROM TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT**

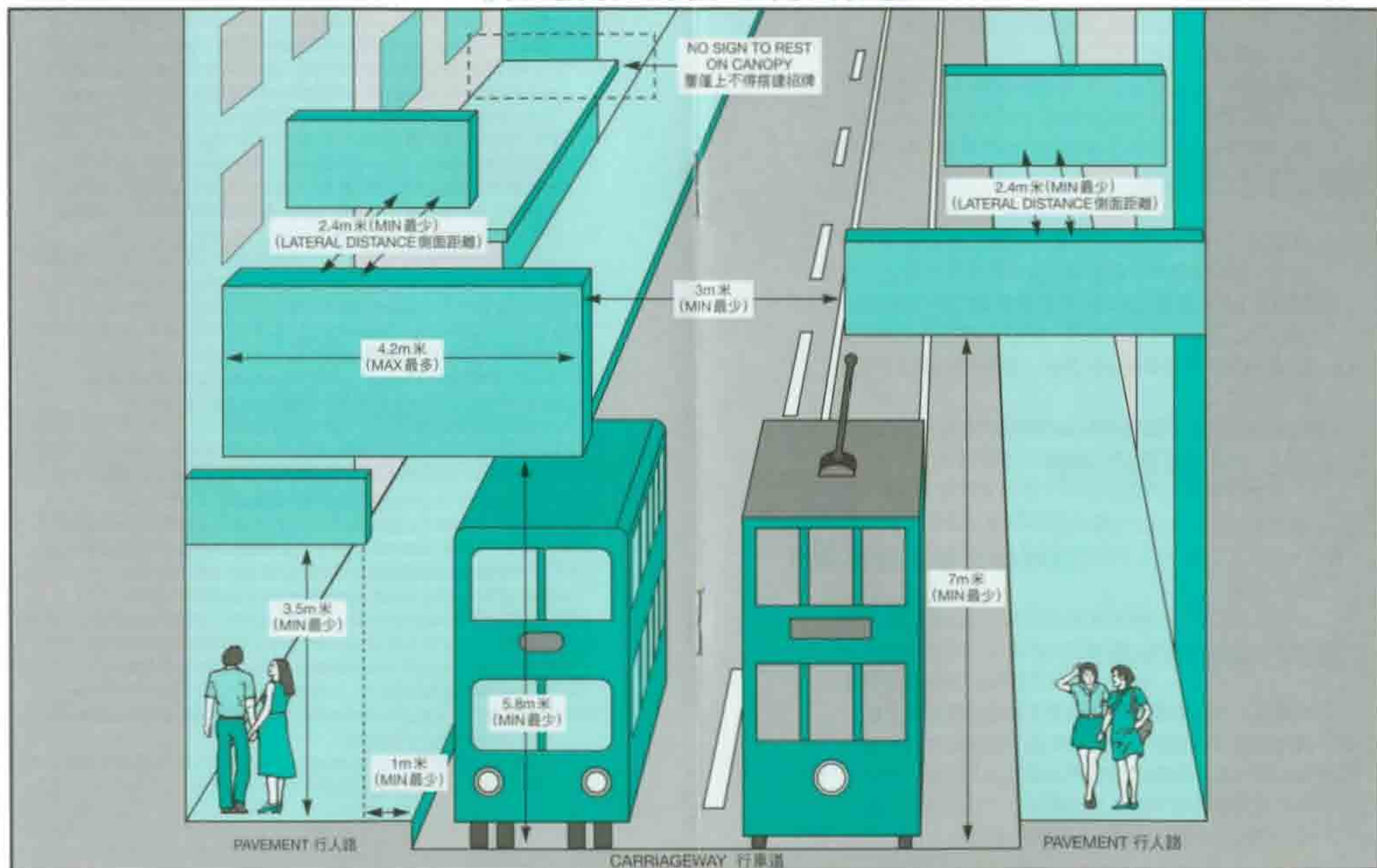
- 9.1 Advertising signs shall not be erected on expressways and other roads with high speed limits; at locations which require a motorist's full concentration such as junctions and crossing points or at locations where the signs may impede already restricted visibility such as at horizontal and vertical curves.
- 9.2 The colours and shape of advertising signs shall not be such that they could be confused with traffic signs.
- 9.3 Advertising signs shall not obstruct the operation and safety of transport facilities such as the Central-Mid Levels Escalator System, traffic signs, traffic lights and surveillance cameras.
- 9.4 Signs shall not be located such that they may cause distraction to drivers. The Transport Department should be consulted regarding the installation or erection of any such signs which will be visible to drivers of motor vehicles.
- 9.5 A sign shall not obstruct traffic signs, traffic lights, traffic surveillance cameras or the operation and safety of transport facilities.

#### **10. ADVICE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MARINE**

- 10.1 Any light or illuminated sign exhibited
  - (a) shall not obscure, restrict or interfere with, or is likely to obscure, restrict or interfere with, the functions or use of any signal station or aid to navigation;
  - (b) is not likely to be mistaken for a light or signal proceeding from any signal station or aid to navigation; or
  - (c) shall not in any way interfere with, or is likely to interfere with, the safe navigation of vessels in the waters of Hong Kong.
- 10.2 Signs not in accordance with 10.1 above shall be removed or extinguished or screened.
- 10.3 Occulting flashing lights may not be used on roof of advertising signs visible from seawards.



# PROJECTION and CLEARANCE of SIGNS 廣告招牌的相距空間及位置



## **Plans for Signboards**

### **Introduction**

The Building Authority (BA) takes the view that building structures used or intended to be used for displaying advertisement, announcement or notification, usually referred to as “signboards”, are “building works” under the Buildings Ordinance (BO). To curb the proliferation of large unauthorized signboards, the BA takes prompt enforcement action to effect removal of these signboards. At the same time, to facilitate the erection of signboards legally to comply with the required safety and health standards, the BA has introduced a fast-track processing service for applications to erect signboards. This practice note provides details of such service and requirements for the erection of signboards.

### **Fast-track Processing**

2. The fast-track processing system is applicable to alteration and addition (A&A) plans for signboards. Signboard proposals associated with new developments will be processed in the usual manner. Under this system, the authorized person (AP) and the registered structural engineer (RSE) are required to ensure and certify that the provisions of the BO and the requirements of the relevant Government departments for the erection of signboards are complied with. The AP should submit a minimum of 9 sets of plans with a certificate (Appendix A) and a checklist (Appendix B) to the Buildings Department (BD) for centralized processing. BD will refer the plans to the relevant government departments as follows :-

- (a) For all cases, to the relevant District Lands Officer, Lands Department;
- (b) For proposed signboards erected on rooftop subject to height restriction under the Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) or facing the harbour, to the relevant District Planning Officer, Planning Department;
- (c) For proposed signboards projecting over a public street, to :-
  - (i) Transport Department  
Regional Chief Traffic Engineer,  
Traffic Engineering Division
  - (ii) Highways Department
    - (1) Chief Highway Engineer of the relevant  
Regional Office;
    - (2) Senior Landscape Architect/Landscape Unit;
    - (3) Chief Highway Engineer/Structures and
    - (4) Chief Engineer/Lighting.

3. In addition, for proposed illuminated signboards facing the harbour or illuminated signboards adjacent to the Hong Kong International Airport or signboards in the proximity of MTR/railway protection areas, the AP shall submit additional sets of plans as required in Part 2 of Appendix B to facilitate referral.

4. Signboards should be structurally adequate and securely fixed to the parent building. It is therefore desirable for building professionals to provide where appropriate anchorages for signboards at the design and construction stages of new buildings. Such anchorages, if proposed, should be shown on plans for approval.

5. Provided that sufficient information as specified in the following paragraphs have been submitted, the building and structural A&A plans will be processed within 30 days of the date of submission to BD. However, cases involving unconventional signboards, which may require consideration by the Building Committee of BD, or submissions not conforming to the relevant requirements as specified in this practice note will not be included in the fast-track processing system. In the case of the latter, the AP will be advised of the position within 14 days of receipt of the submission.

6. To further streamline the vetting process, application for consent to the commencement of the works may also be submitted together with the plan submission for concurrent processing.

7. Taking into account the nature of the works, a site safety supervision plan is not required. However, AP, RSE and registered general building contractor (RGBC) should ensure that sufficient measures to protect public safety are provided during the course of works.

### **Building Plans Submission**

8. Under the fast-track processing system for A&A plans, the following details, information and supporting documents should be provided in the building plan submission where applicable:

- (a) Details of the proposed signboard including the supporting framework and the display surface showing full dimensions, height, projection from lot boundary and over street, horizontal and vertical clearances from ground or street and relative positions of adjacent signboards within 5 metres;
- (b) Plans, sections and elevations of the parent building and the proposed signboard<sup>1</sup>;
- (c) Proposed ties including guy wires and struts;
- (d) Widths of the carriageway and pavement;

/ (e) Position .....

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<sup>1</sup> Contents of advertisement need not be shown.

- (e) Position of any adjacent highway structure, tramway cable, street lighting, street furniture, existing tree, traffic signal, traffic sign, traffic surveillance camera and traffic management facilities;
- (f) An assessment demonstrating that the parent and adjoining buildings will not be adversely affected with regard to the following aspects:
  - (i) provision of lighting and ventilation and open space;
  - (ii) fire-resisting construction;
  - (iii) means of escape; and
  - (iv) means of access for fire-fighting and rescue;
- (g) Sequence and procedures for carrying out the works (for concurrent application of consent);
- (h) Precautionary measures for the protection of the public (for concurrent application of consent);
- (i) Details of proposed illumination and lighting (for road, marine or aviation safety consideration); and
- (j) Photographs showing clearly the building façade, the abutting street and signboards in the vicinity.

### **Structural Plans and Calculations**

9. The following plans and supporting documents/information are required to be submitted under the fast-track processing system for A&A plans:

- (a) Structural plan containing :
  - (i) layout of the signboard supporting frame and its fixings;
  - (ii) layout of the structural frame of the part of the parent building where the signboard is affixed to;
  - (iii) typical connections and supporting fixing details; and
  - (iv) design standard(s), material and workmanship specification adopted for the proposed signboard structural works.
- (b) Supporting calculations for structural works in item (a) above.

/ (c) In ....

(c) In addition to the above, depending on the type, size and location of the signboard, the following additional information/assessments may be required to be submitted : -

(i) **Signboards Projecting from External Wall (Projecting Signboards)**

Additional information/assessments that are required to be submitted are indicated in the table below:-

Information/Assessment Required	Area of signboard <sup>(2)</sup>		
	≥10 m <sup>2</sup>	< 10 m <sup>2</sup>	
		Case A	Case B
Checking of the adequacy of the structural elements of the parent building affected by the proposed work	Yes	Yes	NR
Relevant structural information of the part of the parent building supporting the signboard	Yes	Yes	NR
Assessment of the effect of the proposed work on the overall stability of the building	When the area of the new signboard(s) ≥ 10% of the wind exposure area of a building, normal to the wind direction that is under consideration		

NR – Not required to be submitted.

Referring to the table above: -

Case A refers to a signboard that is not affixed to the parent building at floor slab levels or when any of the floor slabs where the signboard is affixed to is of pure cantilevered slab construction.

Case B refers to a signboard that is affixed to the parent building at floor slab levels only and where the floors are not of pure cantilevered slab construction.

/ (ii) Signboards .....

<sup>(2)</sup> Area of signboard has the same meaning as that depicted in Annexes 1 & 2 of Appendix G.

(ii) **Signboards cladded in parallel to the external wall (Wall Signboards)**

Wall signboards are signboards that project not more than 600 mm from and with no part extending laterally beyond the external wall. For signboards that fall into this category, irrespective of their frontal surface area, additional information/assessments that are required to be submitted are shown in the table below:-

Information/Assessment Required	Case C	Case D
Checking of the adequacy of the structural elements of the parent building affected by the proposed work	NR	Yes
Relevant structural information of the part of the parent building supporting the signboard	NR	Yes
Assessment of the effect of the proposed work on the overall stability of the building	NR	NR

NR – Not required to be submitted.

Referring to the table above: -

Case C refers to the part of wall signboard that is affixed to load-bearing walls or columns.

Case D refers to the part of wall signboard that is affixed to edge beams or pure cantilevered slabs.

(iii) **Other Types of Signboards**

For signboards other than the above two categories and erected at other locations including roof top or standing alone, structural assessments that are required to be submitted should be in accordance with PNAP 249.

Detailed structural requirements are set out in Appendix C.

**Exemption under Section 31(1) of the Buildings Ordinance**

10. Where the proposed building works project over a street, an exemption of section 31(1) of the BO may be granted upon application provided that:

/ (a) .....

- (a) the BA is satisfied that the works are to be constructed in a suitable location and at an appropriate height;
- (b) the design is acceptable to the relevant departments, other than Lands Department which will consider the plan submission separately; and
- (c) the signboard will be removed by the applicant at his own cost within 2 months when required by Government. In this connection, the applicant shall submit an undertaking to this effect in support of the application.

### **Approval of Plans**

11. Under the fast-track processing system for A&A plans, the BA will place emphasis on the AP's certification as mentioned in paragraph 2 above and take into account any advice given by the Commissioner for Transport, the Director of Highways and the Director of Planning. The AP should certify compliance with the requirements of the Fire Services Department, the Transport Department and the Highways Department as set out in Appendices D to F respectively. The positional and dimensional requirements for the signboards are specified in Appendix G.

12. For submissions not adopting the fast-track processing system, paragraph 10 about exemption under section 31(1) of the Buildings Ordinance, Appendix C on structural requirements and Appendix G on positional and dimensional requirements are equally applicable. APs and RSEs are also advised to make reference to other Appendices on the requirements of other Government departments as appropriate.

### **Accountability for GFA/SC**

13. Signboards situating within lot boundaries will generally not be GFA accountable, but will be accounted for site coverage unless its dimensions and extent of projection comply with the requirements laid down in Appendix G. Furthermore, the thickness of wall sign will always be measured from the external façade.

### **Compliance with Lease Conditions and other Enactment**

14. The approval given by the BA should not be deemed to confer any title to land or to act as a waiver of any term in any lease or licence pursuant to section 14(2) of the BO. It is therefore necessary to seek separately the consent of the relevant building owners or Owners' Corporation, as the case may be, for the erection of signboards. It may also be necessary to seek the permission of the District Lands Officer, Lands Department under the lease conditions, particularly for projection over government land. In this connection, the requirements of the Lands Department at Appendix H should be observed. The AP should consult other relevant authorities and ensure compliance with their requirements. In this regard, a list of other legislation relating to signboard is attached at Appendix I for general reference.

/Sanctions...

## **Sanctions**

15. APs and RSEs wishing to take advantage of the fast-track processing procedures should ensure that the above submission requirements are fully met. The BA will take a serious view on any misrepresentation in the plan submissions or misconduct in the carrying out of the works. APs and RSEs are strongly reminded of their statutory duties under section 4 of the BO and the sanctions under sections 7 and 40 thereof.

( Marco M H WU )  
Building Authority

Ref : BD GP/BOP/39 (III)

First issue May 2003

This revision July 2005 (AD/NB1 & AD/NB2) - Paras 4, 12 & 13 added, title, paras 1, 2, 5, 8 to 11, Appendices B, C and G amended

Index under : Fast track processing  
Signboards  
Signs  
Signboard anchorage



**Request for  
Fast-track Processing of Alteration and Addition Plans for Signboard and  
Self-certification by Authorized Person and Registered Structural Engineer**

To the Building Authority

**Part A (to be certified by AP)**

In accordance with PNAP 269, I hereby request for fast-track processing of the plans (drwg no. \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_) submitted for the proposed signboard to be erected at \_\_\_\_\_.

2. I undertake to comply with the provisions of the BO and I certify that the proposed building works do not adversely affect the parent and adjoining buildings with regard to the following aspects:

- Fire safety – means of access for fire fighting and rescue, means of escape in case of fire, fire resisting construction
- Health and environment – lighting, ventilation, open space

3. I also certify that the following requirements are fully complied with :

- Requirements of the Fire Services Department as specified in Appendix D to PNAP 269
- Requirements of the Transport Department as specified in Appendix E to PNAP 269
- Requirements of the Highways Department as specified in Appendix F to PNAP 269
- Requirements on the projection, clearance and location as specified in Appendix G to PNAP 269
- The height restriction controlled under the Hong Kong Airport (Control of Obstructions) Ordinance
- The height restriction under the Outline Zoning Plan
- Requirements of the other relevant authorities i.e. MTRC Ltd., KCRC, Marine Department, Civil Aviation Department

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Authorized Person

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name in full)

Certificate of Registration No. : \_\_\_\_\_

Date of expiry of registration : \_\_\_\_\_

**Part B (to be certified by RSE)**

4. I certify that the structural requirements as specified in Appendix C to PNAP 269 are fully complied with.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of RSE

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name in full)

Certificate of Registration No. : \_\_\_\_\_

Date of expiry of registration : \_\_\_\_\_

5\*. A Form BA 8 applying for your consent to the commencement and carrying out of the works mentioned in paragraph 1 above is enclosed.

Tick box as appropriate

\* Delete where inapplicable

(5/2003)

**Check List on Documents to be  
Included in A&A Plan Submission for Signboard**

**PART 1 – DOCUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED**

	Yes	No/NA
2 sets of signed and coloured plans, calculations and supporting documents to BD		
1 set of plans with development schedule to DLO, Lands Department		
1 set of plans to DPO, Planning Department for signboard erected on rooftop subject to height restriction under the OZP or signboard facing the harbour		
1 set of plans to the Chief Traffic Engineer, Transport Department for signboard projecting over a public street		
4 sets of plans to the Highways Department for signboard projecting over a public street (i) Chief Highway Engineer; (ii) Senior Landscape Architect 1/Landscape Unit; (iii) Chief Highway Engineer/Structures and (iv) Chief Engineer/Lighting		
Request Form for Fast-Track Processing and Self-Certification		
Form BA 4 (Appointment of AP/RSE)		
Form BA 5 (Application for approval)		
Form BA 6 (Stability Certificate of AP/RSE)		
Form BA8 (Application for consent to the commencement and carrying out of building works)		
Form BA 16 (Application for modification/exemption) (e.g. BO s.31(1))		
Applicant's undertaking in support of the application for exemption under Section 31(1) of the Buildings Ordinance as specified in paragraph 10(c) of PNAP 269		
Site photographs showing the building facades and the vicinity		
Name and address of the Owners' Corporation and/or the management company		

**PART 2 – ADDITIONAL SETS OF PLANS FOR REFERRAL TO RELEVANT AUTHORITIES**

Does proposal involve or affect the following?	Relevant Authorities	Yes	No
Scheduled Area No. 3, MTR Protection Area & Work Sites (PNAP 77) or KCR Protection Area & Work Sites (PNAP 279)	Mass Transit Railway Corporation Ltd or Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation as appropriate		
Proposed rail routes	Railway Division, Highways Department		
Light Rail Transit Railway route or reserves	Light Rail Division, Kowloon Canton Railway Corporation		
Illuminated signboards facing the harbour	Marine Department		
Illuminated sky signboards near Hong Kong International Airport	Civil Aviation Department		
Others (e.g. Monuments or Listed Buildings)	(e.g. Antiquities and Monuments Office, Leisure & Cultural Services Department)		

## **Structural Requirements for Erection of Signboards**

### **Design**

1. All signboards together with their supporting frames shall be fixed to structural elements of building in such a way that it will not impair the structural integrity or behaviour of the supporting structural members. The fixing so provided should not overstress the signboard and should be able to safely sustain and transmit all loading including wind load acting upon the signboard.
2. The supporting structural members of building to which the signboard is to be fixed should be structurally sound. The assessment of the structural integrity of such members including insitu verification of structural strength and site photographs should be submitted for reference and record purposes except for those smaller signboards as stated in paragraph 9(c) of this practice note.
3. All signboards should except as stated in paragraph 4 be fixed to approved structural members of building and should in no case be fixed to or supported by unauthorized structures. No signboard should be affixed to or take support from another signboard.
4. Regardless of the size of signboards, cantilevered canopy/balcony should not be used as structural supporting members for any part of the signboard or its supporting frame.
5. The construction of the signboard, its supporting frame and fixing should be justified with structural calculations.
6. The determination of dead loads, wind loads and imposed loads should be in accordance with the Building (Construction) Regulations. The signboard and parts thereof should be capable of sustaining the most adverse combination of dead, wind and imposed loads. A structural assessment should also be made to ensure that there are no adverse effects to the overall stability of the parent building for those signboards with an area equal to or greater than 10% of the wind exposure area of the building, normal to the wind direction that is under consideration.
7. Reference should be made to the current edition of Code of Practice on Wind Effects Hong Kong for the effect of the wind load on the structural analysis of the supporting frame and fixing of signboards.
8. The allowable permissible stresses of materials to be used for the design of the supporting frame may be increased by 25% due solely to wind loading.
9. The supporting frame for signboards should be structurally tied to provide for adequate lateral stability. Guy wires should not be treated as structural members of the supporting frame.

10. Through bolts should be used in place of anchor bolts whenever practical for fixing of signboards.

### **Materials & Workmanship**

11. Materials utilized for signboards and its supporting frame shall be of quality and grade as specified for building works in Building (Construction) Regulations. Structural members should be made of non-combustible materials.
12. All structural steel used should have a minimum yield strength 250 MPa and possess such chemical compositions and mechanical properties as specified in recognized standards.
13. All connections by welding should be carried out by qualified welders. All welded connections and electrodes should comply with recognized standards.
14. Anchor bolts, if used, should be preferably of stainless steel and mechanical types. Installation of anchor bolts shall be strictly in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. At least one of each type of anchor bolts being used should be tested on site by pull-out test up to 1.5 times the safe tensile capacity of the bolts. The tested anchor bolts should not show any signs of separation, plastic deformation or deleterious effects. The records of pull-out test should be submitted upon completion of works.
15. The display surfaces of signboards should be made of metal, aluminum, non-breakable glass or any other materials that are non-combustible and non-brittle (i.e. material not easily broken).
16. Electrolytic reaction resulting from two dissimilar metals that are to be connected should be avoided unless adequate proof has been given that such chemical reaction will not occur between the two metals at any time during their service life.
17. Structural steelwork to be covered up with external cladding shall be clean, free from grease, loose rust and scale. They should be corrosion protected before being cladded.
18. The corrosion protection to structural steelwork should have the following system or equivalent:-
  - (a) Blast cleaning and surface preparation to comply with the recognized standard; and
  - (b) Protective coating to comply with the recognized standard.

### **Erection**

19. Precautionary measures should be taken during the erection of the signboards

by the provision of adequate temporary shoring, platform or otherwise, to prevent, so far as is practicable, the accidental collapse or falling down object of any part of the signboard and its supporting frame, which may endanger any person and traffic or cause any hindrance or disturbance to the pedestrian and/or vehicular traffic flow underneath.

20. The erection of the signboard including the fabrication and installation of fixing and supporting frame of signboard should be carried out by Registered General Building Contractor.

**Maintenance (for advice only)**

21. All signboards should be properly maintained at all times. After completion of erection, maintenance manuals should be issued to owners of signboards to undertake the maintenance inspections of signboards after typhoon and annually. The following should be included in the manuals:
- (a) Maintenance inspections should be carried out by skilled and experienced persons on the supporting members of parent building and every component of signboard including its supporting frame and fixing;
  - (b) Worn and torn characters forming the inscription should be replaced;
  - (c) Broken and/or detached parts of display surfaces should be repaired or replaced;
  - (d) Dangling and loose fluorescent tubes or other lighting installations should be taken down and replaced with new ones securely plugged in;
  - (e) Loose electrical wires/installations should be re-connected to the circuit;
  - (f) Heavily corroded steel sections should be replaced;
  - (g) Slightly corroded steel sections should be cleaned before re-painting;
  - (h) Fractured, buckled or missing members of the steel frames shall be replaced;
  - (i) Dislocated, detached or heavily corroded fixing bolts should be replaced;
  - (j) Slightly corroded fixing bolts should be thoroughly cleaned and re-painted with anti-corrosion paint, e.g. zinc-rich primer; and
  - (k) The signboard and its associated structures should be removed when it is no longer required. The removal should be carried out by a competent and experienced contractor and adequate precautionary measures should be taken to prevent accidental collapse or falling down of any part of signboard and its associated structures.

(Rev. 7/2005)

**Fire Services Department's Requirement**

1. A signboard if projecting over a street shall have a minimum horizontal clearance of not less than 4.5m from central divider, adjacent highway structures or pavement curb at the opposite side whichever is nearer to the signboard.
2. A signboard shall have a minimum headroom clearance of 5.8m if projecting over a carriageway and shall have a minimum vertical clearance of 5m above the elevated road level of any adjacent highway structure.
3. Two adjacent projecting signboards shall have a minimum lateral clearance of 2.4m. No signboard shall be allowed within this lateral clearance at a level higher or lower than the two signboards.
4. Signboards erected from the opposite sides of a street shall not project within 1.5m from the geometrical centerline of the street.
5. Guy wires tied to secure signboards shall not run laterally or diagonally on either side of signboards to minimize the possible obstruction to access to upper floors by fire services ladders.
6. The signboard should be made of non-combustible material. If woodwork and/or other combustible material are required, it shall be covered by metal sheet or other non-combustible material.
7. No neon light tubing, electrical circuits or lamps shall be installed on woodwork or other combustible material.
8. The transformer, neon light tubing and other parts of high voltage circuit shall be located out of reach of the public.
9. No roof exit shall be obstructed by the signboard or any of the steelwork used in the construction of the signboard.
10. A signboard shall not cause any obstruction to openable windows. If obstruction to such windows is unavoidable, then approval has to be sought from the Building Authority.
11. The Fireman's Switch of an approved type shall be situated in a conspicuous position, not more than 3m but not less than 2.5m from ground level. It shall either be as nearly as possible vertically below the sign or near the main entrance to the building, where appropriate. Notwithstanding this, it shall be positioned at a point out of reach of the general public. Where more than one Fireman's Switch is installed on any one building, such switches shall be clearly marked to distinguish one from another.

12. The 'ON' and 'OFF' position of the Fireman's Switch shall be conventional (i.e. push upward - 'OFF'; push downward - 'ON').
13. The switch is to be affixed on a board approximately 300mm long by 250mm wide, which is painted white and edged with a 50mm red border. The inscription 'NEON SIGN-FIREMAN'S SWITCH' in English is to be painted on the top and '霓虹招牌 - 消防掣' in Chinese at the bottom of the board in black. The switch is to be positioned in the middle of the board.
14. Precautionary measures should be taken to prevent the sparks generated from electric welding in the process of erecting signboards from igniting nearby combustibles.



**Transport Department's Requirement**

1. Signboards shall not be erected on or above expressways except with the written permission of the Commissioner for Transport under Regulation 15 of the Road Traffic (Expressways) Regulations.
2. Signboards, in general, should not be erected over roads with speed limit 70 km/h or above.
3. The illumination, colours and shape of signboards shall not be such that they could be confused with traffic signs including all traffic management facilities, such as traffic lights, direction signs, variable message signs, etc. Signboards shall not be located too close to traffic signs so as to avoid causing confusion.
4. Signboards shall not obstruct traffic signs, traffic lights, traffic surveillance cameras and transport information systems/ variable message signs or affect the operation and safety of transport facilities. If necessary, relevant parties should be consulted, for example, if CCTVs are likely to be affected/obstructed, Transport Department should be consulted.
5. TV screens and any signboards or lighting that change or show moving images shall not be located such that they may cause distraction to drivers. The Transport Department should be consulted regarding installation, erection or alteration of any such signboards that will be visible to drivers of motor vehicles.

**Highways Department's Requirements**

1. Signboards and its associated supports and guy wires shall not be fixed to or cause obstruction to street lighting, traffic signs/signals, highway structures, trees, street furniture etc. and shall not obstruct the maintenance operations of the same. In case of doubt, Highways Department must be consulted.
2. No signboard shall be erected above expressway and trunk roads. A minimum clearance of 2m to highway structures and 3m to street lighting should be maintained in order to avoid obstruction to maintenance access.
3. In order not to affect the illumination of the street lights, any proposed signboard should not encroach into the space bounded by the main beams from the lantern of an adjacent street light which are about  $72^\circ$  from the vertical, i.e. an angle of cone of  $144^\circ$ . The AP is required to carry out a site visit/survey to ascertain the as-surveyed location of any lamp post which is required for verification of vertical clearance provided and its compliance with the above requirement.
4. The signboard(s) should be removed by the owner(s) within 2 months when required by the Government.

**Positional and Dimensional Requirements for Signboards**

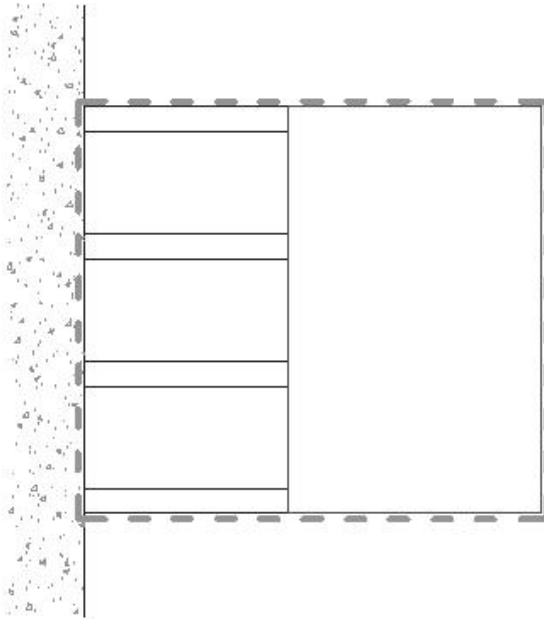
1. No part of a signboard shall obstruct or reduce the width of the means of escape of a building.
2. No part of a signboard shall obstruct or reduce the required natural lighting and ventilation or open space provided to a building.
3. No part of a signboard shall project more than 4.2m from an external wall of a building or within 1.5m from the centre line of a street, whichever is the less. In this connection, the outer wall of a projecting structure from the building shall not be regarded as an external wall. The thickness of a projecting signboard shall not be more than 600mm.
4. For a wall signboard with the display surface parallel to the external wall, it shall not project more than 600mm from the building façade or 600 mm from the lot boundary whichever is the less.
5. All parts of a projecting signboard (including its supporting structure but excluding structural members solely for preventing lateral movement of the signboard) shall be contained within a prescribed prism. Prescribed prism means a virtual rectangular prism of which the area of the largest planar surface is 40m<sup>2</sup> and the smallest dimension is 600mm. Some illustrations of calculating the rectangular planar area of the prescribed prism are shown in Annex 1.
6. Projecting signboards within the same projecting vertical plane from a building shall have an aggregate rectangular planar area of not more than 40 m<sup>2</sup>. Where one or more signboards are erected in the same vertical plane of a building, the aggregate of the vertical height of the signboards shall not be more than 20m (Annex 2).
7. No signboard shall rest on or attach to a canopy.
8. The minimum vertical clearances above ground are :

<b>Position</b>	<b>Minimum Clearance</b>
Over pavement	3.5 m with minimum 1 m clear distance from the curb or the carriageway
Over carriageway	5.8 m
Over tramway	7 m

9. Any part of a projecting signboard including supporting frames and lateral struts shall have a minimum distance of 2.4m, measured laterally and throughout the height of the building, from any other projecting signboard.
10. Two signboards erected from the opposite side of a street shall have a horizontal minimum clear distance of 3m.
11. No signboard shall obstruct or affect any trees.

The above requirements are diagrammatically shown in Annex 3.

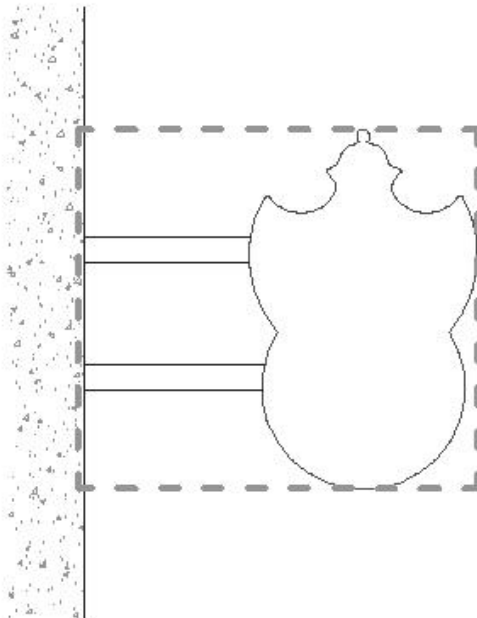
**Annex 1 to Appendix G**  
**(PNAP 269)**



Signboard contained within the prescribed prism:-

Rectangular planar area =  $40\text{m}^2$  (MAX)  
(Area shown dotted)

Thickness = 600mm (MAX)

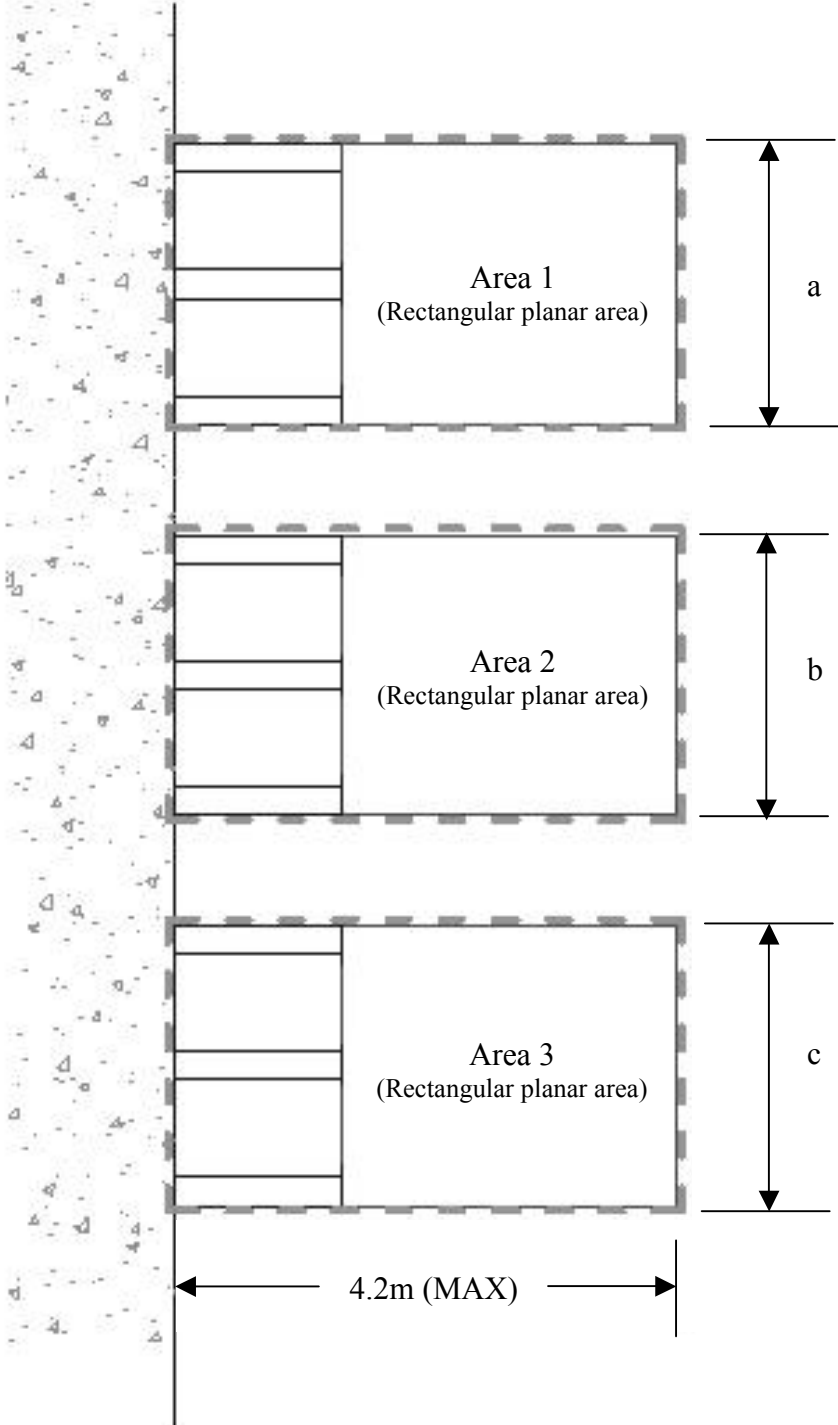


Signboard contained within the prescribed prism:-

Rectangular planar area =  $40\text{m}^2$  (MAX)  
(Area shown dotted)

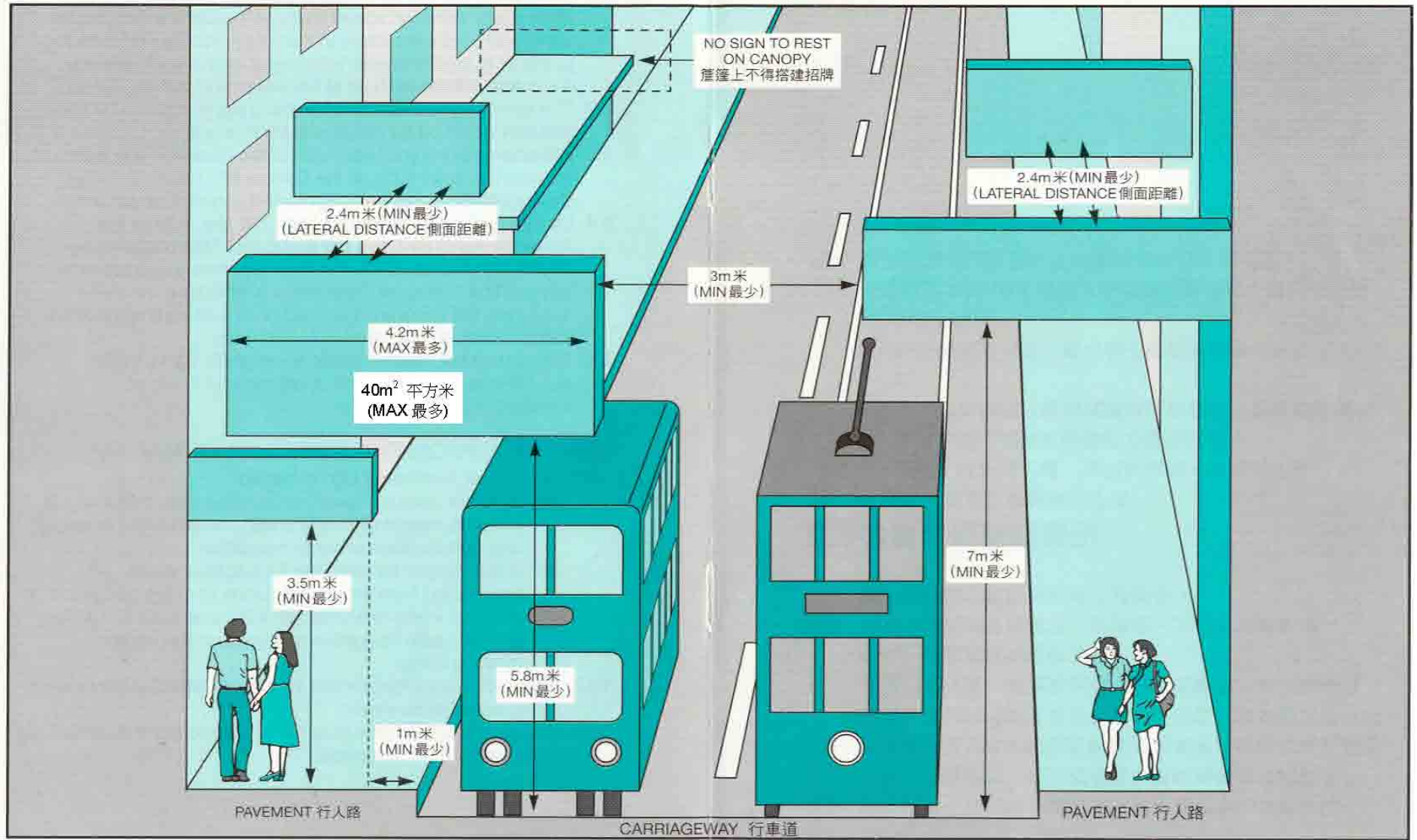
Thickness = 600mm (MAX)

**Annex 2 to Appendix G**  
**(PNAP 269)**



$$\text{Area 1} + \text{Area 2} + \text{Area 3} \leq 40\text{m}^2$$
$$a + b + c \leq 20\text{m}$$

### PROJECTION and CLEARANCE of SIGNS 廣告招牌的相距空間及位置



**Lands Department's Requirement**

1. A development schedule under the lease conditions should be accompanied with the building plans submission.
2. The building plan should clearly show the lot boundary and whether the proposed signboard would protrude over the Government land.
3. The AP should indicate in the submission the name of the signboard owner and the name of the property owner in which the signboard is to be erected.
4. Further information such as photographs showing the proposed location of signboards and the Deed of Mutual Covenant of the property concerned may be required depending on individual cases.



**Other Legislation Affecting Erection of Signboards**

1. Building Management Ordinance, Cap 344
2. Control of Obscene and Indecent Article Ordinance, Cap 390
3. Country Parks Ordinance, Cap 208 and Special Areas Regulations
4. Land (Miscellaneous Provisions) Ordinance, Cap 28
5. Electricity Ordinance, Cap 406
6. Fire Services Ordinance, Cap 95
7. Hong Kong Airport (Control of Obstructions) Ordinance, Cap 301
8. Public Health & Municipal Services Ordinance, Cap 132
9. Public Lighting Ordinance, Cap 105
10. Road Traffic Ordinance, Cap 374
11. Shipping and Port Control Ordinance, Cap 313
12. Smoking (Public Health) Ordinance, Cap 371
13. Summary Offences Ordinance, Cap 228
14. Undesirable Medical Advertisements Ordinance, Cap 231