

Subcommittee to study the Urban Renewal Authority White Bill

Proposed Amendment to Clause 5 of the Urban Renewal Authority Bill

Proposal

We propose to amend Clause 5 (“Purposes of Authority”) of the Urban Renewal Authority Bill to fully reflect the importance which the Government attaches to the preservation of buildings of historical, cultural or architectural interest in urban renewal target areas and urban renewal redevelopment sites.

Background

2. In his Policy Address, the Chief Executive announced that “the concept of preserving our heritage should be incorporated into all projects for redeveloping old areas”.

3. Clause 5 of the Urban Renewal Authority Bill (the White Bill) currently reads as follows:

“The purposes of the Authority are to –

- (a) replace the Land Development Corporation as the body corporate established by statute having the responsibility of improving the standard of housing and the built environment of Hong Kong by undertaking, encouraging, promoting and facilitating urban renewal;

- (b) improve the standard of housing and the built environment of Hong Kong and the layout of built-up areas by replacing old and run-down areas with new development which is properly planned and, where appropriate, provided with adequate transport and other infrastructure and community facilities;
- (c) achieve better utilization of land in the dilapidated areas of the built environment of Hong Kong and to make land available to meet various development needs;
- (d) avoid the decay of the built environment of Hong Kong by promoting the maintenance and improvement of individual buildings as regards their structural stability, integrity of external finishes and fire safety as well as the improvement of the physical appearance and conditions of that built environment; and

- (e) engage in such other activities, and to perform such other duties, as the Chief Executive may, after consultation with the Authority, permit or assign to it by order published in the Gazette.”

4. As it is now drafted, the preservation of buildings of historical, cultural or architectural interest is subsumed under Clause 5(d).

Public Views

5. It has been suggested to us that preserving our heritage should be clearly spelt out in Clause 5 of the Bill. We agree with this view.

Proposed Amendment

6. We propose to revise Clause 5 by adding a new sub-clause after Clause 5(d) which reads (tentatively) as follows:

- “(e) preserve buildings of historical, cultural or architectural interest; and”.

Planning, Environment and Lands Bureau

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