

26 January 2004

By fax & by mail

Clerk to Bills Committee
Legislative Council
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road
Central
Hong Kong

Attn : Mr S C Tsang

Dear Mr Tsang

Bills Committee on Town Planning (Amendment) Bill 2003

Thank you for your letter of 8 January enclosing a proposed further revised plan making system for comment.

In principle we would support a two-stage representation consideration process recognising the need for proper public consultation at the plan making (as opposed to plan implementing) stage.

In particular, we support:

1. the retention of the current plan publication period for new plans and amendments to approved plans at two months;
2. the proposed two month period for amendments to draft plans, although we hope that the intention is for plans to be approved at the earliest opportunity;
3. a two-stage representation consideration process including a second hearing to consider any objections and related representations from any affected persons with landed interest. We are of the view that only persons with landed interests affected by proposed changes should have a right to attend the second-stage hearing, and
4. the decision to retain the status quo regarding the CE in C's powers to approve or refuse to approve a draft plan such that the CE in C cannot approve some amendments only submitted by the TPB.

Our principal concerns over the need for an independent chairman and secretariat to the Board and the need for a level playing field in the treatment of planning applications for column 2 uses to implement an approved plan have not yet been addressed. It should therefore be noted that our foregoing support for these latest proposals is conditional upon our agreement to the contents and timing of the stage 2 amendments to the Town Planning Ordinance.

Yours sincerely

Louis Loong
Secretary General