



## **The Hong Kong Institute of Planners**

### **Views on Central Reclamation Phase III and Wanchai Development Phase**

#### **II**

We fully agree that Victoria Harbour is a precious natural asset and should be protected and preserved. We also firmly believe that the waterfront should be of high quality design and vibrant, and should be easily accessible by the public – a feature that will surely contribute to Hong Kong’s aspiration to become Asia’s world city. This should lead to the need of improving the water quality of the harbour and proper control of developments around the harbour so as not to obstruct views from major vantage points.

We are very concerned about ramifications of the judgement on the future planning of waterfront around the harbour in High Court’s view of the stringent “compelling, overriding and present need test”. We consider that it will be easier for roads, utilities and other infrastructure that can be justified by quantifiable data, to satisfy the three tests. On the other hand, good planning intention, good urban design and good-quality public space to cater for activities that are conducive to fostering the vibrancy of the waterfront are inherently subjective and “unquantifiable”. They would hence be extremely difficult to pass the tests. However, they are of utmost importance to the well-being of the community. It is not hard to imagine the future waterfront featuring mostly roads, utilities and infrastructure and opportunities to improve the existing waterfront along North Point and Quarry Bay, which is dominated by the Island Eastern Corridor, will be severely curtailed.

We believe that the general public’s views would be an appropriate test on the “need”. If the public is able to submit positive representations on new planning proposals in addition to lodging objections, the Town Planning Board would be in a better position to judge whether the proposed harbour reclamation is indeed meeting the community's aspiration. In giving precedence to Protection of the Harbour Ordinance, the Town Planning Board should then abandon any proposed harbour reclamation if there are substantial objections relative to support.

*Public Affairs Committee*

*Hong Kong Institute of Planners*