

16 October 2023

LC Paper No. CB(4)900/2023(02)

Dear Hon. Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS, JP,

Re: Matters Relating to Typhoon Shelters and Sheltered Anchorages

Hong Kong is the largest pleasure boating area in Asia. Pleasure Vessels in Hong Kong are a multimillion dollar industry and give employment to tens of thousands of people. The industry in Hong Kong is represented by the Hong Kong Boating Industry Association (HKBIA). Our association, with 55 members, represents one of the fast-growing work-force sectors in Hong Kong. Our members include yacht brokers and manufacturers, bunkering suppliers, sail makers, parts suppliers, insurance companies, yacht clubs, training establishments, marinas, repair yards and surveyors, a very broad spectrum of the industry.

Hong Kong's extraordinary Harbour is the beating heart of our City and the Pleasure Vessel Industry exists to grow and develop access to the harbour and Hong Kong's spectacular and undeveloped cruising waters. However, the further development of the Pleasure Vessel industry is being hindered due to the lack of safe accessible mooring areas for safe mooring of boats.

The HKSAR Marine Department are tasked with ensuring that there is sheltered water space for all vessels registered in HK. Whilst there is indeed enough sheltered water space for all vessels the largest mooring area at 76.6 hectares is Hei Ling Chau (HLC) typhoon shelter. HLC has been available as a Typhoon Shelter, where Private Moorings for pleasure vessels can be laid, since 2018. And yet there are still less than ten (10) pleasure vessels actually use the mooring space on a regular basis. The reasons for this are,

- HLC is too far away from the city with no ferry to get there.
- There is no security in the area making theft easy.
- There is no fresh water supply for drinking or washing boats.
- There is no sewage disposal available.
- HLC, due to its physical size, is not very sheltered in typhoons from high winds although it is sheltered from the fetch and swell waves, now even more so with the installation of the floating breakwaters.
- The area has no infrastructure such as shops or catering establishments. All food and cleaning supplies therefore have to be carried to HLC by the boat crew.
- It is extremely difficult to find boat crew as they do not want to go to work there.



HLC is also slated to be closed upon the establishment of the Lantau Metropolis and therefore a replacement typhoon shelter will be required to moor the commercial vessels that use HLC at present.



Hei Ling Chau typhoon shelter - June 2023.

At 33.8 hectares Kung Tong Typhoon Shelter (KTTS) is an ideally suited for mooring of both commercial and pleasure vessels. However, with the policy of no moorings being allowed to be laid in the shelter, apart from Government moorings, the development of the shelter has been somewhat haphazard compared with Aberdeen South or Causeway Bay typhoon shelters where moorings are allowed to be laid. The Triad troubles when the KTTS began to get popular is an indication of what can happen when there is a lack of planning on typhoon shelter use.



Kung Tong TS - June 2023

Pleasure vessels and commercial vessels are not suited to mooring in the same area. The majority of commercial vessels are steel with black colour lorry tyre fendering. Mooring a pleasure vessel, which are predominantly white in colour and manufactured from Glass Reinforced Plastic, close to a commercial vessel will soon result in damage to the pleasure vessel. Therefore, commercial and pleasure vessels must be kept separate. KTTS could be better laid out where commercial and pleasure vessels are kept separated in the shelter all secured to fixed moorings. By allowing moorings to be laid this would also increase Government Revenue, regulate the position and size of vessels using the shelter and making the shelter safer for all users.

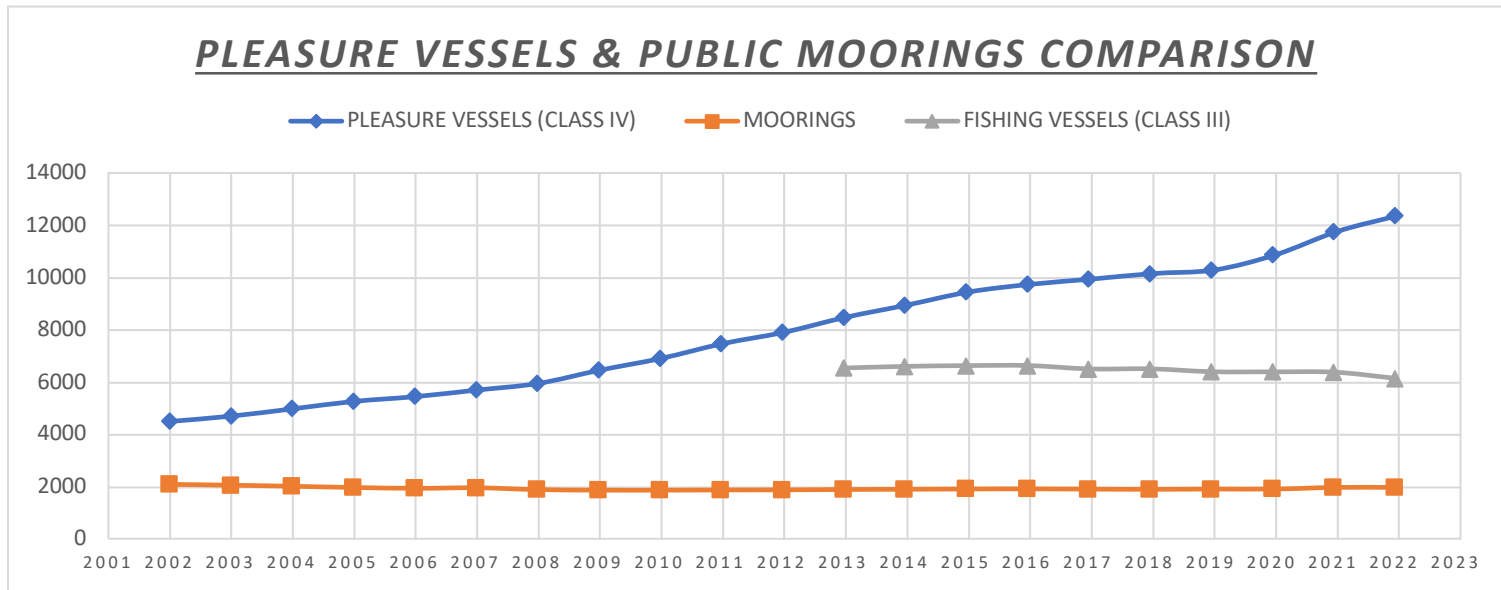
The recent fire in Aberdeen South Typhoon Shelter also raises questions regarding the layout and density of the existing typhoon shelters. Wider fairways, greater distances between boats on moorings would have alleviated some of the damage done in the fire. However, if the density of the existing typhoon shelters is to be reduced then new shelters, with dedicated moorings, are required for the boats that will be displaced.

Due to the lack of sheltered moorings many boats are now using illegal moorings that are unregulated by the HKSAR Marine Department. These unregulated illegal moorings are causing a nuisance and obstruction to other legal mooring holders, are depriving the Government of revenue, and are a danger in typhoon conditions. This was clearly seen during the passage on Typhoon Mangkhut when boats on illegal moorings were driven ashore in Pak Sha Wan.



For many years, the Pleasure Boat Industry and boat owners has been asking for more sheltered water mooring space to be made available for pleasure vessel use in HK. From 2002 to 2022, the number of Pleasure Vessels (Class IV) has almost tripled from 4,515 to 12,378. However, over the same period, the number of moorings remained similar with no new marina developments – causing a bottleneck for the Pleasure Boat Industry. *The lack of sheltered water mooring spaces in relation to the increased number of Pleasure Vessels (Class IV) is one of the reasons why some of the typhoon shelters are so crowded today.*

The chart below shows how the sheltered water moorings have lagged behind the number of registered pleasure vessels in HK:



(Data extracted from Marine Department – Port of Hong Kong Statistical Tables 2002 to 2022)

We applaud the news that the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter is to be expanded and we hope the sub-committee could explore more ways to provide designated sheltered water moorings for pleasure vessels in future coastline developments or typhoon shelter improvement plans. There are opportunities to provide such facilities for new developments in the Junk Bay and Ma Liu Shui areas (Appendix A). We also attach some visuals of how we could expand existing Typhoon Shelters or add breakwaters to create more sheltered water moorings (Appendix B).

On behalf of the Pleasure Vessel Industry, we would like to call for more sheltered water mooring spaces and water access for the Pleasure Boat Industry.

Yours truly,



Lawrence Chow
Chair
Hong Kong Boating Industry Association

APPENDIX A

There are a few new developments planned in various waterfront areas in Hong Kong. However, typhoon shelters / marinas are currently absent from plans for reclamation at Tolo Harbour and Junk Bay. Both waters lack safe mooring facilities. *A Typhoon shelter or a Marina could act as buffers from severe storm surges or typhoons that could impact the coastline.*



Junk Bay Development



Tolo Harbour Development

APPENDIX B

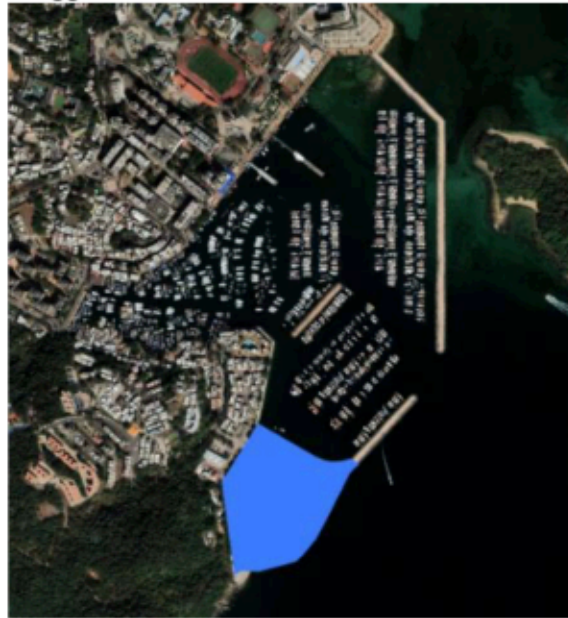
Sai Kung Town.

The planned extension of the Sai Kung mooring area could be given longer breakwaters to give more shelter to the area with a corresponding increase in the number of boats offered sheltered water moorings.

Proposed



Suggested



Approximately an extra 420 moorings.

Marina Cove & Hebe Haven – Sheltered Water Protection

To protect the waters in Hebe Haven that are prone to typhoons and storm surges, a breakwater could be installed to provide more sheltered water moorings.

Before



Existing: 1560+ Boats

Typhoon Shelter Protection



Potential: 1800+ Boats