

**Confirmed Minutes of the 219th Meeting of
the Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE)
held on 12 December 2016 at 2:30 pm**

Present:

Prof Paul LAM, SBS, JP (Chairman)
Prof CHAU Kwai-cheong, BBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Ir Cary CHAN
Prof FUNG Tung
Dr Billy HAU
Dr HUNG Wing-tat, MH
Dr Michael LAU
Prof Albert LEE
Ir Prof Irene LO
Mr Anthony LOCK
Ir MA Lee-tak, SBS
Prof John NG
Miss Yolanda NG, MH
Prof Nora TAM, BBS, JP
Dr Eric TSANG
Dr Carrie WILLIS, SBS, JP
Ir Conrad WONG, BBS, JP
Mr Stanley WONG, SBS, JP
Mrs Alice CHEUNG, JP (Secretary)

Absent with Apologies:

Prof Jonathan WONG, MH, JP
Mr Luther WONG, JP
Ms Pansy YAU

In Attendance:

Mr Donald TONG	Permanent Secretary for the Environment / Director of Environmental Protection
Ms Lily YAM	Assistant Director of Planning / Technical Services, Planning Department (PlanD)
Mr Simon CHAN	Assistant Director (Conservation), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)
Miss Heidi LIU	Principal Information Officer, Environmental Protection Department (EPD)
Ms Becky LAM	Chief Executive Officer (CBD), EPD

Miss Dora CHU	Executive Officer (CBD) 1, EPD
Mr Alan CHUNG	Executive Manager (CBD), EPD
Miss Apple LEUNG	Executive Officer (CBD) 2, EPD

In Attendance for Item 3:

Mr W C MOK	Assistant Director (Air Policy), EPD
Mr Brian LAU	Principal Environmental Protection Officer (Air Policy), EPD

In Attendance for Item 4:

<i>Planning Department</i>	Ms Amy CHEUNG, Assistant Director of Planning / Territorial
	Miss Winnie LAU, Chief Town Planner / Strategic Planning
	Mr Patrick WONG, Senior Town Planner / Strategic Planning 1
	Miss Eva TAM, Town Planner / Strategic Planning 5
<i>Ove Arup & Partners</i>	Mr Franki CHIU, Director
	Miss Isis LAI, Consultant
<i>AEC Ltd.</i>	Mr Mike LEVEN, Director

Action

Due to urgent commitments of the Chairman, the Deputy Chairman informed the meeting that he would preside the meeting until the arrival of the Chairman. He informed Members that apologies of absence had been received from Prof Jonathan Wong, Mr Luther Wong and Ms Pansy Yau.

Item 1 : Confirmation of the draft minutes of the 218th meeting held on 14 November 2016

2. The Deputy Chairman informed that the draft minutes of the 218th ACE meeting held on 14 November 2016 was circulated to Members. The draft minutes were confirmed subject to the proposed amendment from a Member in paragraph 31 of the draft minutes.

Item 2 : Matters arising

3. There was no matter arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

Item 3 : Proposal to Control Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) in Fountain Solutions and Printing Machine Cleansing Agents
(ACE Paper 18/2016)

[The presentation team joined the meeting at this juncture.]

Presentation cum Question-and-Answer Session (Open Session)

4. With the aid of a powerpoint presentation, Mr W C Mok briefed Members on the background of the Air Pollution Control (Volatile Organic Compounds) Regulation (CAP.311w) (“VOC Regulation”), its major requirements and penalties, relevant studies of VOC reduction, and the proposal to amend the VOC Regulation.

Penalties

5. A Member expressed his support for the proposed amendment of the VOC Regulation. In order to enhance the effectiveness of the amended VOC Regulation, he opined that heavier penalty should be imposed.

6. Mr W C Mok advised that the proposed enhanced VOC control would be implemented under the existent legal framework of the VOC Regulation, including its offences and penalties provisions. He explained that the current provisions on penalties in relation to VOC were enacted having regard to (or with reference to) the deterrence effect and the maximum penalty on similar offences under the Air Pollution Control Ordinance (APCO). He added that the maximum penalties for parties convicted of exceeding the relevant prescribed limits of VOC content were a fine of \$200,000 and imprisonment for six months. The level of fine was consistent with the penalty stipulated by APCO in relation to the parties convicted of illegal handling of asbestos or asbestos containing material in premises. In addition, the level of fine for failure to display product information for regulated products containing VOC imported into or manufactured in Hong Kong for local sale or use was \$50,000.

7. As regards the measures to enforce the VOC Regulation, Mr W C Mok explained that EPD regularly collected and tested samples of regulated products from retailers and importers to ascertain the compliance with the prescribed VOC contents, examined annual sales reports submitted by importers, and conducted investigation of complaints against non-compliance products. In 2015, two complaints had been received and over 400 samples were collected and tested.

Among the 25 prosecutions instituted, there were 23 convicted cases.

VOC Regulation

8. In response to a Member's question on whether VOC species or total VOC (TVOC) was regulated, Mr W C Mok replied that TVOC was regulated in accordance with the proposed prescribed VOC content limits with reference to the limits of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), California, USA. Non-reactive compounds would be excluded in the determination of VOC content and this approach was conducive to setting a more stringent standard for VOC content.

9. To allow for a more efficient and accurate approach in the regulation of harmful VOC emissions, a Member suggested that the VOC Regulation should target at the species that were more harmful to health or more reactive chemically.

10. Mr W C Mok explained that regulating TVOC but excluding species of low reactivity was more effective than targeting specific VOC species for control. The major shortcoming of targeting specific VOC species was that it could not regulate new VOC species that had strong ozone formation potential until the law was changed.

Sampling size

11. A Member opined that sampling size for TVOC or specific compounds should be enlarged for the purpose of deterrence. In response, Mr W C Mok said that over 400 samples were tested this year. With the introduction of the proposed control, more samples including those newly regulated products would be collected for compliance check. As for the testing method, the list of exempted VOC compounds would be measured individually.

VOC Content Limits

12. A Member supported the proposal to control VOC but enquired the reason for not complying with the SCAQMD which tightened the VOC limits for fountain solutions and printing machine cleansing agents to 50 g/l and 100g/l respectively.

13. Mr W C Mok explained that some local printing factories continued to use old printing machines, which did not produce satisfactory printing results when

using fountain solutions with a VOC content below 50 g/l. In the three trials conducted, two of them could only achieve satisfactory printing performance with VOC contents above 50 g/l, namely at 54 g/l and 68 g/l respectively. As such, the proposed limit for VOC contents was set as 80 g/l. As for the testing of printing machine cleansing agents, it was found that the cleansing power of all three low-VOC printing machine cleansing agents was not acceptable given that stains could not be removed even after 10 swipes, as compared to only one to two swipes that were needed when conventional printing machine cleansing agent was used. Having consulted the printing industry, it was agreed that capping the VOC content at 500 g/l was considered acceptable. After all, setting the VOC content limits for fountain solutions and printing machine cleansing agent at 80 g/l and 500 g/l was considered as a pragmatic approach to kick start the relevant legislative procedures, and EPD could revisit the limits set in the future if and where necessary.

14. A Member enquired about the obstacles which made Hong Kong lagged behind the prevailing SCAQMD limit. She further enquired if a limit between the range of 68 g/l and 80g/l was considered during the consultation period, given that trial results indicated a 20-year-old printing machine could achieve satisfactory printing performance at 68 g/l.

15. Mr W C Mok explained that at the time when the feasibility study was conducted, reference was made to the VOC content limit of SCAQMD, which was 80g/l. He added that while setting a lower VOC content was feasible for new printing machines, old printing machines remained in use in local printing factories and could prevail pending their replacement. As such, he said the limit was set at 80 g/l with a view to forging mutual consensus with the industry for early implementation of the proposed control.

16. In response to the Deputy Chairman's question on the review of the relevant legislation in future, Mr W C Mok said that there was no definite timetable but EPD would take into account amongst other factors the need to improve air quality and the practicability of tightening the VOC limits.

Cooperation with the Mainland

17. A Member recognized the impact of ozone on the air quality of the whole Pearl River Delta (PRD) region and considered that measures should be enhanced to foster co-operation with Guangdong Province and cities over the PRD. Mr W C Mok re-affirmed that both the Governments of Hong Kong and Guangdong

Province agreed to an emission reduction plan for the PRD region up to 2020, which set specific emission reduction targets for 2015 and emission reduction ranges for 2020 for four major air pollutants, namely sulphur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), respirable suspended particulates (RSP) and VOC. Currently, a mid-term review was being conducted jointly by both sides to ascertain the attainment of the emission reduction targets for 2015 and finalize the emission reduction targets for 2020. At this stage, he considered that the emission reduction target for VOC would likely be achieved and the mid-term review would be completed by the first quarter of 2017. He added that there were some initial signs of improvement in the ozone level of the PRD region. However, meteorology could influence air quality and hence longer observation was needed to ascertain the improvement trend.

VOC emission from non-combustion sources

18. A Member observed that the VOC emission from non-combustion sources was reduced by 45% from 2007 to 2014, during which key VOC control measures were introduced in phases. However, the reduction rate of VOC emission in future was projected at 2.4% only after the proposed amendment to VOC Regulation.

19. Mr W C Mok advised that the efforts to reduce local VOC emissions started with major emission sources and commenced much earlier than 2007. Compared to 1997 when the Government introduced a series of control measures to tighten vehicle emission standards and require vapour recovery at petrol filling stations, the overall VOC emissions had indeed been reduced by 65%. As for non-combustion sources alone, the VOC emissions had been reduced by 45% since 2007, when the VOC Regulation took effect in phases. In addition, efforts would continue to be made to keep abreast of the latest technological advancement with a view to strengthening the VOC emission control. In that regard, further reducing the VOC content of architectural paints was being examined.

Public awareness

20. A Member suggested that the Government should explore ways to promote the proposal and further raise the public awareness on the importance of using products with low VOC content and its associated impacts on human health and air quality. She noted that additional printing cost incurred in using products with VOC content within the proposed prescribed limits was relatively low i.e. less

than 1%. She suggested that publicity campaign should be enhanced to educate the public about the beneficiaries arising from this proposal (e.g. factory workers), and inform the consumers that the resultant cost increase in production was only minimal. Mr W C Mok undertook to consider the suggestions.

[The presentation team left the meeting at this juncture.]

Internal Discussion Session (Closed Session)

21. A Member expressed his support for the proposed tightening of VOC limits. He suggested that the proposal should be implemented as soon as possible, given the minimal cost incurred in total production cost for printing as well as the insignificant impact on the trade and the industry. Additionally, he opined that the Government should consider adopting a cumulative approach in the imposition of a penalty for repeated offenders so as to strengthen deterrence.

22. The Deputy Chairman concluded that Members were generally in support of the proposal for the proposed amendments to the VOC Regulation for fountain solutions and printing machine cleansing agents.

Item 4 : Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030

(ACE Paper 19/2016)

23. The Deputy Chairman informed that the paper sought Members' views on the key findings and recommendations of the "Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030" (Hong Kong 2030+). The discussion would be divided into the Presentation cum Question-and-Answer Session and the Internal Discussion Session.

24. On the invitation of the Deputy Chairman, a Member declared that she was a member of the Expert Advisory Panel of Hong Kong 2030+. The meeting agreed that the Member could stay on and continue to participate in the discussion.

[The presentation team joined the meeting at this juncture.]

Presentation cum Question-and-Answer Session (Open Session)

25. By way of a powerpoint presentation, Miss Winnie Lau briefed Members

on the background, vision and overarching planning goal of the Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030 (Hong Kong 2030+). She also introduced the three Building Blocks and the conceptual spatial framework for achieving the vision and overarching planning goal of Hong Kong 2030+, as well as the proposed institutional setup for taking forward Hong Kong 2030+. Ms Amy Cheung supplemented that various technical assessments were being conducted. These included a “Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for Hong Kong 2030+” which aimed to identify environmental issues in the early planning stage. At the moment, only broad evaluation had been conducted, and quantitative assessments would be carried out after the six-month public engagement.

[The Chairman joined the meeting at this juncture.]

26. A Member said that as Hong Kong 2030+ was still at a preliminary planning stage, Members should focus on the vision and the broad policies and strategies instead of going into the detailed measures.

The need to review the immigration policies

27. A Member expressed concerns over the sustainability of resources in Hong Kong, including housing and employment opportunities, to cater for Mainland migrants to Hong Kong bearing in mind a daily maximum of 150 Mainlanders could be admitted into Hong Kong under the one-way permit system. He considered that the Government should review this policy with the Mainland authorities. Ms Amy Cheung advised that Hong Kong 2030+ had made reference to the baseline population projection compiled by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD). Based on the recent trends, the projection had assumed that the number of One-way Permit Holders (OWPHs) would gradually decline to around 100 per day. Considering that the number of cross-boundary marriages had maintained at around 20,000 to 27,000 per year, Ms Cheung said that the room for further shrinking the OWPH quota was relatively small given that there was a need to foster family reunion.

The planning of the Core Business Districts

28. With reference to the conceptual planning framework for Hong Kong 2030+, a Member was concerned that the planning of the Core Business Districts (CBDs) in Hong Kong 2030+ would exacerbate the concentration of employment

in the urban areas and add further pressure on the already overloaded transportation system. While self-containment in terms of employment had been aimed for many new towns (e.g. Tuen Mun and Tung Chung), the Member said that he had yet to witness any success and suggested that the Government should review its tactics and policies. He opined that another CBD should be established, possibly near the Hung Shui Kiu and Kam Tin new towns which would become a transportation hub after the commissioning of the Tuen Mun - Chek Lap Kok Link and the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor. Considering that the relocation of offices of the Planning Department (PlanD) and the Lands Department to North Point had helped increase employment opportunities and facilitated development in the area, he suggested that the Government should consider relocating its other offices and facilities as a tool to stimulate growth in the new CBD.

29. A Member concurred with another Member's opinion and suggested that offices of Government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) in close relation with the social welfare, education and labour could be relocated to the Northwest New Territories with a view to addressing youth problems and drug issues and creating employment opportunities in the areas concerned. He also remarked that more community health clinics instead of large hospitals should be set-up. A Member added that the Government could consider relocating the headquarters of the Government to a more remote area with the aim of dispersing economic activities outside the CBD.

30. Ms Amy Cheung agreed with a Member that the advantageous location of Hung Shui Kiu suggested a good potential for commercial developments, and adequate gross floor area would be assigned for the development of various industries. She however mentioned that the high-end professional services and commercial sector would rely on the critical mass of the CBD to strengthen interactions and benefit from business synergies. It was therefore proposed to develop a new CBD in East Lantau Metropolis (ELM), which was only four km away from the traditional CBD, to meet the demand for gross floor area and create synergy. She agreed with the Member that the relocation of Government offices and/or facilities could help drive the economy and facilitate the formation of key economic nodes.

Environmental protection and nature conservation

31. Given that an SEA had commenced to assess the preliminary environmental impacts of the Hong Kong 2030+, a Member enquired and Ms Amy

Cheung affirmed that proactive measures were proposed to protect the environment as well as conserve and enhance the biodiversity of Hong Kong. Ms Cheung advised that under Building Block 3 (i.e. creating capacity for sustainable growth), a conceptual planning framework for environmental protection and nature conservation had been devised with the aim of creating, enhancing and regenerating the environmental capacity.

32. A Member supported the incorporation of a healthy city concept in Hong Kong 2030+. He remarked that detailed studies should be conducted before devising actual plans to implement the concept. On top of going green, clean and hygienic, the plans should also take into account various aspects including the neighbourhood, connectivity, biodiversity, heritage, accessibility to essential services, harmony, safety and security, etc. He further suggested that the Government could make reference to the Hong Kong Declaration for Healthy Cities as well as the Shanghai Healthy Cities Mayors' Consensus. Regarding the building of an age-friendly city, the Member opined that apart from catering for the needs of the aging population, the Government should also strive to increase the birth rate.

33. In order to reinforce the healthy city concept, Ms Amy Cheung said that Hong Kong 2030+ advocated the “active design” concept to promote physical activities and healthy lifestyles, such as by providing pedestrian walkways and cycling tracks. She agreed that further studies would be required for the formulation of implementation strategies and plans. In reply to a Member's request for further clarification concerning the Eastern Knowledge and Technology Corridor (EKTC), Ms Cheung explained that it was a conceptual axis comprising six universities alongside other innovative and technology related uses. While the development of high-technology and knowledge-based industries would not be limited to the EKTC, more concentrated development of these industries along the EKTC could help strengthen interactions and create synergy.

34. A Member expressed his appreciation towards the incorporation of conservation elements in the Plan. He remarked that food supply was an important issue which had not been addressed in the Plan, and enquired about the vision regarding the development of the agricultural sector. Drawing Members' attention to the inefficient use of large patches of land reserved for “Village Type Development” (V-zone), he suggested the Government initiate public discussion with regard to the New Territories Small House Policy and explore the feasibility of building residential flats in lieu of small houses with a view to releasing more

land for other uses. He was concerned that due to the lack of land, country parks would be rezoned for residential use, and sought further information from PlanD on this matter.

35. In reply to a Member's enquiry concerning Figure 23 in the Public Engagement Booklet, Miss Winnie Lau advised that the white areas were neither challenging and sensitive areas nor built-up areas. She however said that as not all limitations and challenges were fully explored and reflected in the figure, some white areas might not be suitable for development. She advised that Hong Kong 2030+ had taken on board the New Agricultural Policy with initiatives including establishing an Agricultural Park and identifying agricultural priority areas through a separate Government study. On top of providing food supply, Hong Kong 2030+ also acknowledged the conservation and ecological value of some farmlands. She mentioned that there were around 200 hectares of active farmlands in the New Territories North, and these would be preserved as far as possible. Ms Amy Cheung acknowledged the important role of country parks in carbon sequestration, functioning as water catchment area, and serving the purposes of outdoor recreation and education, and that there was no plan for the designation of country parks for residential or other developments under Hong Kong 2030+.

36. A Member welcomed Hong Kong 2030+ and expressed his appreciation in particular towards the vision of the plan and the Building Blocks 1 and 3. He pointed out that the global liveability rankings varied significantly in the Global Liveability Ranking compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit, Mercer Quality of Living Survey and Monocle's Quality of Life Survey as they had employed different parameters and ratios. With a view to assessing the effectiveness of the strategies and policies, he remarked that it was important to develop a set of benchmark and standards suitable for Hong Kong for measuring both quantitative and qualitative improvements in liveability, sustainability and environmental capacity. He said that a set of assessment criteria was also required for evaluating the effectiveness of the urban design in achieving the planning goals. In view that the building stock in Hong Kong would be rapidly aging, the Member said that improving the conditions of the existing built environment, especially in developed urban areas such as the Sham Shui Po and Yau Tsim Mong districts, could directly help enhance the liveability of the city. He opined that the retrofitting approach should be supported by policy and a clear action plan. He further suggested that active methods should be deployed to increase the environmental capacity and to slow down the depreciation of the green-blue assets.

The need to enhance living environment

37. While expressing support towards Hong Kong 2030+, a Member was of the view that the plan should transcend 2030 and existing frameworks and should incorporate more innovative ideas. With reference to the 2013 Policy Address, he recalled that it was one of the Government's aspirations to improve the general living space in Hong Kong in addition to providing additional housing units. However, he pointed out that the average size of both private and public housing units had been decreasing, meaning that the living space area per capita was actually on a decline. While it was difficult to increase the living space area per capita, the Member opined that the Government should strive to enhance the living environment in Hong Kong, such as by improving or increasing the space for social and leisure activities. He suggested that this could be done by freeing up the ground area by making better use of the higher altitudes to accommodate more housing units, as well as optimizing the use of blue-green assets by enhancing the accessibility. He also suggested converting land uses and relocating some of the existing facilities such as country parks and military sites to facilitate better use of land resources. The Member and another Member were concerned about the danger of using a conceptual spatial framework which if adhered to rigidly, might result in the misuse of land resources.

38. Ms Amy Cheung said that a multi-pronged approach would be adopted to release land for better uses, such as by relocating existing facilities/buildings to caverns. She agreed with a Member that it was important to provide a quality living environment for the residents in Hong Kong. As one of the targets, the open space per capita standard of 2 m² per person would increase to 2.5 m² per person. Hong Kong 2030+ also sought to improve the government, institution and community (GIC) facility provisions.

39. A Member followed that in addition to increasing the open space per capita standard, the quality of public space should be enhanced. He also mentioned that the public space should be located as close to the housing areas as possible to facilitate their utilization. Considering that railway would be the backbone of the public transport system, the Member suggested that some of the unused roads in the vicinity of housing areas could be converted into public space or other uses. He also suggested that Hong Kong 2030+ should include strategies to discourage the use of private cars.

40. Ms Amy Cheung agreed that the quality of public space was equally or even more important than the quantity. Regarding the accessibility, she advised that a conceptual framework of accessibility to promote easy access to public transport, public amenities, neighbourhood facilities, the nature, etc. would be pursued, especially in the new development areas (NDAs).

41. In the planning for supporting infrastructure, Mr Patrick Wong advised that waste-to-energy facilities like the T-PARK was the strategic direction for infrastructure development pursued under Hong Kong 2030+. Study on Planning of Future Environmental Infrastructure Facilities for Waste Treatment and Transfer in Hong Kong was also in progress to address the needs for waste treatment infrastructure. Miss Winnie Lau supplemented that a Smart, Green and Resilient City Strategy had been put forward in Hong Kong 2030+, which aimed to devise an integrated infrastructure system to address multiple environmental issues and reap multiple benefits.

42. Given that the Plan would guide the development of Hong Kong beyond 2030, a Member echoed the views of another Member that more innovative ideas and concepts as well as current trends such as globalization, political situations and emergence of new industries around the world should be explored. In view that technology had enabled knowledge sharing and collaboration at a high level between universities and institutions in different cities or even countries, he agreed with another Member that the significance of spatial allocation was very low. He opined that the relationship between Hong Kong and other Mainland cities, including the relative competitiveness and opportunities for cooperation, should be looked into. He opined that the Plan should also cater for the needs of the retired population, for instance, sustaining their living standards and unleashing their potentials, etc.

43. Ms Amy Cheung advised that due attention had been paid to the regional development context under Hong Kong 2030+ and a topical paper focusing on this aspect would be uploaded to the website of Hong Kong 2030+ for public information shortly. Acknowledging the many uncertainties in the long term, she said that while the proposed vision and strategies were devised based on the current situation and foreseeable changes, flexibility had been provided in the Plan and there would be a monitoring mechanism to ensure that the strategy would keep pace with changes.

44. A Member concurred with another Member that long-term projections should not be made based on the current frameworks and existing industries. While understanding that there were many uncertainties, he said that major/global trends, such as moving to a low carbon economy to address the issue of climate change, should be explored as they might have implications/impacts on the local economy, businesses and industries. In view that Hong Kong had been creating a large ecological footprint, he remarked that it was inevitable for Hong Kong people to adopt a low-carbon and sustainable lifestyle and this should be taken into account in the Plan. With rapid technological development and innovation, he opined that new solutions could be explored for dealing with the limitations and challenges faced by Hong Kong and possibly other cities.

Review on population projections

45. Given that the peak population was projected to reach 8.22 million by 2043 and would thereafter gradually fall, a Member questioned whether it would be too aggressive to build in a 10% buffer, i.e. a population of 9 million, when projecting the housing needs. He said this was particularly the case since it was speculated that the development of the East Lantau Metropolis would require public expenditure amounting to \$4,000 billion. He opined that the need for the development should be based on more realistic and updated population projections.

46. As regards the population projections, Ms Amy Cheung clarified that the 10% buffer could serve to reserve capacity for any unexpected increase in the population and/or could be translated into manoeuvring space for expanding the housing area per capita and/or public space/facilities. A Member concurred with another Member that the population projections might be overstated, and remarked that various factors should be taken into consideration, including the life expectancy of the existing population, discovery of new diseases and the change of living quality over time.

47. A Member drew Members' attention to the lack of public space and poor management of densely developed areas, especially at pencil towers, and suggested PlanD to adopt a district-based approach to improve the situation. While the Government had offered vacant land from time to time for temporary leases, the Member pointed out that the size of many land lots were too small for undertaking major developments.

48. Ms Amy Cheung said that the urban fabric could be rejuvenated via redevelopment and would provide opportunities for enhancing public space. A Member pointed out that the acquisition of residential buildings by private developers for redevelopment created problems for the residents and could take a number of years, and requested the Government to seek urban improvements simultaneously. She also opined that the development of pencil towers should be avoided as far as possible in the future.

The concept of a smart, green and resilient city

49. Ms Amy Cheung advised that the smart, green and resilient city concept had been introduced to tackle problems like climate change through several approaches. While expressing his support for the plan, a Member pointed out that more studies should be conducted with regard to the concept of a smart, green and resilient city such that it could be integrated in the context of Hong Kong. In particular for the building of a smart city, planning should take into account new technologies as well as technology under development, for instance, auto-drive cars, as the introduction of new technology could have implications or impacts on the city design. He also considered that the compact urban form supported by the railway system and pedestrian footbridges could help reduce carbon footprint, improve efficiency, and create synergy by bringing people together.

The concept of integrated approach

50. Using the example of a waste-to-energy incinerator in Denmark with a rooftop that was turned into a ski slope, a Member opined that instead of addressing each issue separately, an integrated approach could help create synergy.

51. In order to facilitate the implementation of the strategies and developments outlined in Hong Kong 2030+, a Member suggested that the Government should plan forward and kick start any necessary administrative procedures and legislative amendments as early as possible. He supported the suggestion of another Member that the establishment of mix-used developments with innovative elements should be considered. He further raised the following comments/suggestions:

- (i) Hong Kong could be more aggressive in setting targets with the aim of becoming one of the model cities of China;
- (ii) the liveability of Hong Kong people should be enhanced via expanding

the living space, which could not be compensated by an increase in the public space;

- (iii) PlanD should consider about the cost efficiency as well as carbon footprint when constructing new developments or renewing existing ones; and
- (iv) given that the existing CBD was established over a long period of time, more thought should be given as to how to create, differentiate and vitalize the planned core business districts in the NDAs, and in turn attract employment and development of private housings;

He concurred with another Member on his views regarding the development of small houses, and pointed out that the Public Engagement document had made no mention about this matter. With strict building height restrictions at military sites such as the Shek Kong Barracks, he supported another Member's suggestion for rezoning these lots for other uses.

52. A Member pointed out that the expansion of many tertiary institutions was subject to spatial limitations. While the development of tertiary institutions at Queen's Hill had been called off, he supported the idea to provide land for existing tertiary institutions to establish satellite campuses. He opined that the development of a satellite university hub could have multiple benefits, including vacating urban land for other uses, driving the formation of a culture, facilitating employment and increasing vibrancy to the nearby residential areas. Using Sha Tin New Town as an example, he shared the concern of another Member that a vibrant core business district could take many years to establish. He aspired for Hong Kong 2030+ to set the foundation for healthy living in all the districts in Hong Kong.

53. A Member support the integrated approach suggested by another Member. He pointed out that better way should be explored to reflect the land uses in a compact high-density city with mix-used developments rather than using a 2-dimensional map, and opined that public and community space could be integrated in 3-dimensional layers.

54. Ms Amy Cheung thanked Members for their comments and suggestions and said that the feedback collected during the public engagement would be taken into account during the review of Hong Kong 2030+. The Chairman concluded that Members were supportive of the plan and thanked the presentation team for their presentation and clarifications.

[The presentation team left the meeting at this juncture.]

Item 5 : Report of the 136th and 137th Environmental Impact Assessment Subcommittee Meetings

(ACE Papers 20/2016 and 21/2016)

55. A Member declared that he was commissioned to a research contract by the Drainage Services Department (DSD) to review the potential of all DSD facilities in promoting urban biodiversity. As the research had no direct relationship with the two EIA reports to be discussed, the meeting agreed that the Member could stay on and continue participating in the discussion.

56. The Chairperson of the Environmental Impact Assessment Subcommittee (EIASC) reported that ACE Papers 20/2016 and 21/2016 had summarized the discussion and recommendations of the EIASC meetings on 18 and 21 November 2016 on three EIA reports, namely “Proposed Low-rise and Low-density Residential Development at Various Lots and their Adjoining Government Land in D.D. 104, East of Kam Pok Road, Mai Po, Yuen Long, New Territories”, “Expansion of Sha Tau Kok Sewage Treatment Works” and “Port Shelter Sewerage, Stage 3 - Sewerage Works at Po Toi O”.

57. Having regard to the findings of the EIA reports, EIASC recommended the full Council to endorse the EIA report on “Proposed Low-rise and Low-density Residential Development at Various Lots and their Adjoining Government Land in D.D. 104, East of Kam Pok Road, Mai Po, Yuen Long, New Territories” with two conditions and four recommendations, the EIA report on “Expansion of Sha Tau Kok Sewage Treatment Works” with two conditions and five recommendations, and the EIA report on “Port Shelter Sewerage, Stage 3 - Sewerage Works at Po Toi O” with two conditions and one recommendation. With no further comments from Members, the Chairman concluded that the meeting agreed to recommend the Director of Environmental Protection (DEP) to endorse the EIA reports with the conditions and recommendations as set out in paragraph 9 of the ACE Paper 20/2016 and in paragraph 11 of the ACE Paper 21/2016.

Item 6 : Any other business

BEAM Plus Bespoke

58. A Member reported that as regards the discussion of the EIA reports on “Expansion of Sha Tau Kok Sewage Treatment Works” and “Port Shelter Sewerage Stage 3 - Sewerage Works at Po Toi O”, the project proponent i.e. the Drainage Services Department (DSD) endeavoured to adopt the principle and spirit of BEAM Plus at the Gold rating in the design and construction of the projects. Given the fact that BEAM Plus assessment tool (with four gradings of Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze) was applicable to general building types and less to sewage treatment plants (STPs), the EIASC opined that DSD should consider “BEAM Plus Bespoke” that was applicable to special building types.

59. A Member suggested that the full Council should be consulted to devising a set of internal guidelines and standards in considering the use of BEAM Plus Bespoke which allowed projects of special building types to apply for BEAM Plus assessment and achieve “Gold” or above rating in future.

60. A Member declared that he was the Director of the Hong Kong Green Building Council (HKGBC) Limited, the Chairman of its Green Labelling Committee, and the Chairperson of BEAM Society Limited. He pointed out that HKGBC and BEAM Society Limited were established as non-profit industry-based organizations that promulgated the Hong Kong’s recognized green building labeling scheme “BEAM Plus” for green building certification.

61. A Member understood that projects proposed by the Government would make reference to a Technical Circular which provided guidelines on the requirement to achieve BEAM Plus at the Gold rating or above. He pointed out that it would be difficult to apply the said BEAM Plus assessment tool to STPs constructed by DSD given their unique design in operation and construction phases; rather, the DSD had planned and constructed their projects based on the principle of green buildings. He explained that the use of BEAM Plus assessment method was intended to be developed and promoted as an assessment method for benchmarking. As such, HKGBC and the BEAM society had introduced the “BEAM Plus Bespoke” to provide avenue for assessment to the special building types which were not covered under the current BEAM Plus tools, so as to raise environmental performance in special building types such as STPs.

62. A Member said according to his experience, DSD had expressed support in the BEAM Plus green building labeling scheme and achieving the best possible building environmental performance as far as practicable. He added that the “BEAM Plus Bespoke” was a distinctive assessment method that should be developed in collaboration with the industry and relevant stakeholders, such that the “BEAM Plus Bespoke” could be tailored to be applicable to the specific design of a STP and the achievement of best practice criteria under relevant key performance categories including the reduction of energy, water and resources consumption and carbon footprint could be followed.

63. Mr Donald Tong pointed out that EPD provided guidance on the criteria and standards that project proponents were required to comply with when undertaking statutory EIA studies. DSD, as the project proponent, would perform the role of as EPD’s works agent in the construction and operation of the sewerage projects. Mr Tong noted that the DSD aimed to adhere to the spirit of the BEAM Plus best practice as there were no specific requirements to suit Bespoke building type in question at the moment. EPD would continue to communicate with DSD and explore whether a set of objective standards under Bespoke could be developed with reference to existing BEAM Plus credit requirements having regard to resource availability.

64. A Member said that different ratings would be awarded corresponding to the marks given to the best practice criteria under the BEAM Plus assessment method. As such, he suggested that BEAM Plus Bespoke could be considered, and the concern on resource might not be an issue.

65. In addition to adhering to the BEAM Plus best practice, a Member pointed out the concept of turning sludge into energy had become the spirit and future direction in the upgrade of existing STPs and in the design of future STPS internationally. She hoped that future STPs could align with the international development and be energy efficient.

66. As regards the concept of “waste-to-energy”, Mr Donald Tong supplemented that the Sludge Treatment Facility (T·PARK) with a maximum capacity of handling 2,000 tonnes per day of sludge were commissioned since 2015 and at present about 1,200 tonnes of sludge from the STPs were treated at T-Park each day, thus substantially reducing the amount of waste being dumped in

landfills. In addition, the Government was considering co-digestion of food waste with sludge in a sewage treatment plant.

67. A Member recognized that the EPD would carry out a full scale food waste/sewage sludge co-digestion pilot trial at Tai Po STW. She opined the Government should also consider explore ways for recovering energy during the treatment of wastewater (e.g. anaerobic digestion of wastewater) which had become the broad direction for sewage treatment internationally. She was of the view that Hong Kong was lagging behind in this respect and suggested that this broad direction should be accomplished in future STPs constructed by DSD.

EIA Report not selected by EIASC for submission to ACE

68. The Chairperson of the EIASC informed the meeting that the EIA report on “A Rooftop Helipad at the Proposed New Block of Queen Mary Hospital” was not selected by the Subcommittee for discussion. She reported that Members considered that there was no adverse environmental impact associated with the report, subject to any public comments received upon expiry of the public inspection period.

End of the current term of the Council

69. As this was the last meeting of the current term, the Chairman took the opportunity to thank Members for their valuable contributions to ACE in the past two years, especially the Chairperson and Members of the EIASC for their deliberation of the EIA reports. He expressed appreciation that the ACE provided a platform for a free flow of discussion and thanked the Secretariat for the support provided to ACE. A Member thanked the Chairman for steering the discussion of many controversial topics over the years.

70. On behalf of the Environment Bureau and the Environmental Protection Department, Mr Donald Tong expressed his gratitude towards the Chairman, Deputy Chairman, and all Members for their dedication and support to ACE. He added that there would be changes in the membership of ACE and the Government would later make separate announcement. He also mentioned that the Secretary for the Environment (SEN) would host a luncheon for Members and hoped they could join.

[Post-meeting notes: The farewell-cum-welcome lunch hosted by SEN would be held on 13 February 2017.]

71. The Chairman closed the meeting by wishing all Members a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous and Green 2017.

Item 6 : Date of next meeting

72. The first ACE meeting of the new term was scheduled on 13 February 2017 (Monday). Members would be advised on the agenda in due course.

ACE Secretariat
February 2017