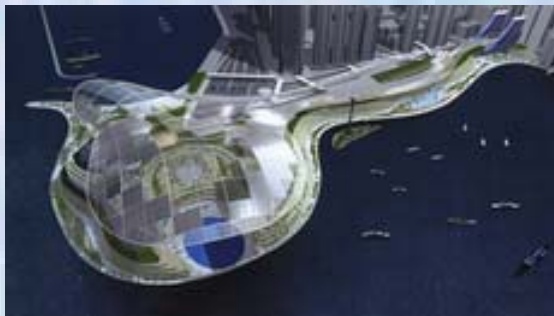


# Environmental Report 2003

## Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau (Planning and Lands Branch)



## Introduction

This report covers the environmental performance of the Planning and Lands Branch of the Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau. Upon the introduction of the Accountability System in July 2002, the former Housing Bureau and the former Planning and Lands Bureau were



amalgamated to form the Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau, comprising a Housing Branch and a Planning and Lands Branch. In January 2003, the Housing Branch and the Housing Department were reorganized into a single organization called the Housing Department. Environmental performance of the Housing Department is presented in a separate Report.

## Key Responsibilities

The Planning and Lands Branch, under the direction of the Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands and the Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (Planning and Lands), has policy responsibility for the Buildings, Lands and Planning programme area. The policy objective is to facilitate Hong Kong's continual development through a



steady and sufficient supply of land, effective planning and use of land, efficient registration of land, promoting and ensuring building safety and timely maintenance, and expediting urban renewal.

Policy responsibility on Buildings, Lands and Planning is grouped under four major areas –

### ***Land use planning***

We oversee the process of formulating development plans to achieve the optimum use of land, with the aim of making Hong Kong a better place to work and live.



### ***Land***

We are committed to providing an adequate supply of land to meet market demand and to facilitate infrastructural developments, which is essential to the long-term social and economic development of Hong Kong. We also seek to achieve the optimum use of land resources and maintain an effective land administration system.



### ***Building safety, maintenance and management***

Our vision is a safe and healthy built environment and an attractive city outlook worthy of a dynamic world-class city. We aim to achieve this through quality construction, proper building maintenance and management, clearance of illegal structures, public education and community participation in a culture of good building care.





## Urban renewal

We have put in place a holistic urban renewal policy comprising redevelopment, rehabilitation, revitalization and preservation to address the urban decay problem in order to improve the built environment of older urban areas and to improve the living condition of residents therein.



In addition to his policy responsibilities, the Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands oversees the operation of the Buildings Department, Lands Department, Planning Department, the former Territory Development Department and Land Registry. He also oversees part of the work of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, the former Civil Engineering Department, Electrical and Mechanical Services Department and Marine Department. (The Territory Development Department and the Civil Engineering Department merged to form the Civil Engineering and Development Department in July 2004.)

The Planning and Lands Branch and the Office of the Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands are located at Murray Building and the Central Government Offices respectively. We aim to ensure that all our staff are environmentally alert and operate in an environmentally responsible manner, particularly in relation to the consumption of electricity and paper and recycling of waste.

## Environmental Goal

Our goal is for all development in Hong Kong to be guided by principles of sustainability in order to balance social, economic and environmental needs, both for present and future generations.

## Environmental Policies and Objectives

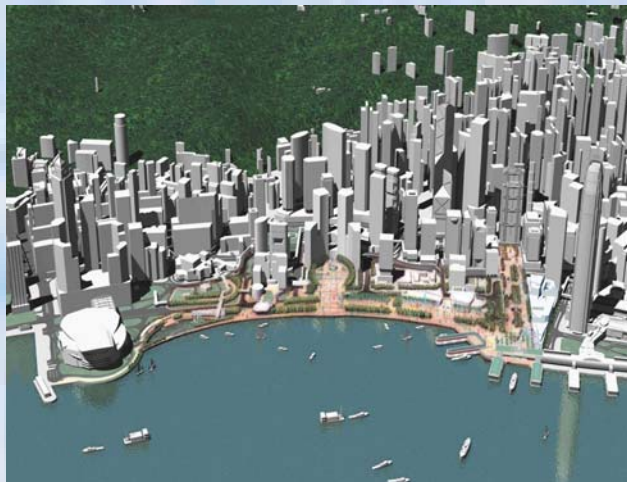
### *Land use planning*

We are committed to ensuring that the concept of sustainable development is incorporated into all our planning for the development of Hong Kong.

We are developing a land use, transport and environment strategy under the Hong Kong 2030 Study to guide the long-term development of Hong Kong. We will solicit public views and pool our wisdom together to work out a development pattern most beneficial to the long-term development of Hong Kong.

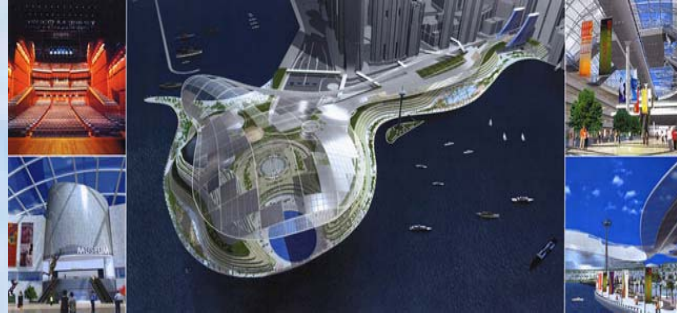
To tie in with the above development study, we will review the development intensity in public housing projects to enhance the living environment and cost-effectiveness within permitted plot ratio.

It is our aim to bring Victoria Harbour to the people. We will ensure that our planning and land use objectives are geared towards our mission to protect the Victoria Harbour and enhance it for the enjoyment of our residents and visitors alike.



We have set the blueprint for new developments on both sides of the harbour. Apart from Central, Wan Chai North and South East Kowloon, we will not undertake any further reclamation in the Harbour.

In respect of West Kowloon, we have formulated a comprehensive development package for an integrated arts, cultural and entertainment district, which will help enhance Hong Kong's status as Asia's premiere centre of arts, culture and entertainment.



### ***Land Supply***

Our aim is to make available sufficient land for activities that are essential for the sustainable development of Hong Kong.

To facilitate government and non-government agencies in their efforts to improve the environment of Hong Kong, we –

- keep the land administration system under review on an on-going basis with a view to facilitating the provision of land for activities that will improve the environment;
- devise appropriate land disposal policies for environmentally sensitive activities; and
- facilitate government and non-government bodies in optimizing the use of land for environmental improvement measures.





### ***Building safety, maintenance and management***

Our overall aim is to promote the development of sustainable buildings for Hong Kong. To achieve this we aim to upgrade the living environment in existing private buildings by improving the standards of safety and maintenance, and to promote the design and



construction of new buildings which take account of their maintainability, durability, manageability, energy-efficiency and environmental friendliness. We will also promote proper building management and maintenance of private buildings by property owners in order to sustain and prolong the useful life of buildings.

### ***Urban renewal***

We aim to improve the environment in older urban areas through the redevelopment of dilapidated buildings, the rehabilitation of older buildings in need of repair, the revitalization of the socio-economic and environmental fabric of older urban areas and the preservation of heritage buildings that are located within urban renewal projects. Urban renewal will also help to provide more open space and community facilities. Environmental and hygiene problems will also be improved. The urban renewal programme will help reduce the need for development in the New Territories and the pressure for reclamation, thus contributing towards preserving our natural environment.



## Performance and Targets

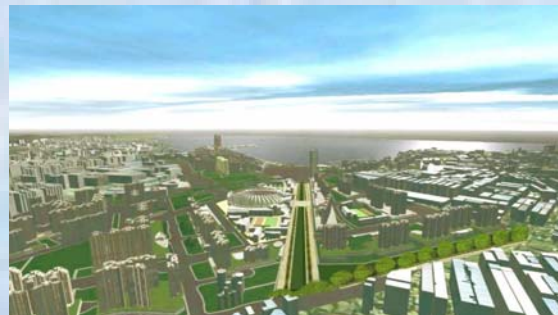
### *Land use planning*

- We completed a second round of public consultation on the key issues examined in the “Hong Kong 2030 : Planning Vision and Strategy” Study and launched a third round of large-scale public consultation exercise to gauge public views on the development options in the Study;
- We introduced the Town Planning (Amendment) Bill into the Legislative Council to streamline the planning process and enhance the transparency of the planning system; and
- We set up a high-level steering committee to co-ordinate the government’s input to the West Kowloon Cultural District project and invited proposals for the development of West Kowloon Cultural District.



Our main targets for 2004 are to –

- conduct comprehensive reviews of the proposed reclamation projects in Wan Chai North and Southeast Kowloon to ensure that these projects are in compliance with the court ruling;





- continue to service the Steering Committee for Development of West Kowloon Cultural District and in particular co-ordinate the assessment of proposals;
- continue to process the Town Planning (Amendment) Bill through the Legislative Council; and
- maintain close liaison with the Guangdong authorities on planning matters under the auspices of the Hong Kong-Guangdong Joint Conference.

Our longer-term target is to produce a long-term planning framework for developing Hong Kong into a better place to live and work in the next 30 years.

### ***Land Supply***

- We announced in November 2002 a statement on housing policies and some measures to stabilise the property market, including the stoppage of scheduled land auctions and suspension of the application List until the end of 2003;
- We disposed of a total of 224.5 hectares of land (113 hectares in 2001, 95.7 hectares in 2002 and 15.8 hectares in 2003) through various means, including auctions, tenders, grants and land exchanges, for the continuous development of Hong Kong;
- We conducted a comprehensive review of the Pre-Sale Consent Scheme in mid-2003 and formulated a number of new improvement measures for implementation in 2004; and



- We introduced the Land Titles Bill into the Legislative Council in December 2002 with a view to promoting a title registration system to give greater security to interests in land and property and to simplify conveyancing.

Our main targets for 2004 are to –

- resume the Application List System, as from January 2004, for the healthy and stable development of the property market;
- monitor the property market conditions and arrange the sale of land through the Application List system to facilitate the continuous development of Hong Kong; and
- continue to process the Land Titles Bill through the Legislative Council.



### ***Building safety, maintenance and management***

- We completed a review of the Buildings Ordinance and relevant subsidiary legislation and introduced the Buildings (Amendment) Bill 2003 into the Legislative Council to enhance building safety and ensure more effective control of building works;
- We oversaw the implementation of the recommendations in “A Comprehensive Strategy for Building Safety and Timely Maintenance” promulgated in April 2001;
- We ensured that enforcement actions were taken against unauthorised and dangerous building works;



- We continued to promote community awareness of building owners' responsibility for ensuring building safety and timely maintenance;
- We oversaw the launching of the pilot Co-ordinated Maintenance of Buildings Scheme;
- We oversaw the implementation of the Comprehensive Building Safety Improvement Loan Scheme; and
- We launched in December 2003 a public consultation exercise on the broad policy direction to promote proper building management and maintenance by property owners, with a view to building a general community consensus on a long term sustainable solution to the building neglect problem.



Our main targets for 2004 are to –

- continue to process the Buildings (Amendment) Bill 2003 through the Legislative Council;
- continue to review the Buildings Ordinance for updating and improvement purpose;
- keep under review enforcement efforts against unauthorised building works;



- conduct a review on the progress and effectiveness of the Co-ordinated Maintenance of Buildings Scheme and propose the way forward to continue support measures for building maintenance;
- oversee the implementation of measures to rectify building defects which have caused environmental hygiene problems in private buildings; and
- analyze the views received during the public consultation on building management and maintenance, and map out the way forward for a long-term sustainable solution to arrest the building neglect problem.

### *Urban renewal*

- We set up the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) in May 2001 to replace the Land Development Corporation to undertake urban renewal;
- We put in place a financial support package for the URA to enable it to launch the urban renewal programme on a sound financial footing;
- We promulgated the Urban Renewal Strategy after wide public consultation, setting out the policy guidelines for the URA's urban renewal work; and



- We facilitated and supported the URA to adopt a holistic approach to urban renewal, including the redevelopment of dilapidated buildings; revitalization of local areas; rehabilitation of older buildings and preservation of heritage buildings.

Our main targets for 2004 are to –

- continue to provide the necessary support and facilitation to the URA's urban renewal work to improve the built environment of older urban areas; and
- study various options and promote discussion in the community on how to speed up urban renewal.



**Housing, Planning and Lands Bureau  
(Planning and Lands Branch)**

9<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 17 and 18<sup>th</sup> Floors, Murray Building,  
Garden Road, Hong Kong

Fax No.: 2845 3489

E-mail Address : [enquiry@hplb.gov.hk](mailto:enquiry@hplb.gov.hk)

Website : <http://www.hplb.gov.hk>