

1. Hong Kong 2030 : A Response to Meet Future Challenges and Development Needs

2. Hung Hom District Study

3. Planning Enforcement : Reinstatement of Unauthorised Development Sites

Environmental Performance

Social Performance

Appendix 1

Appendix 2

Appendix 3

二零零八年年報

<http://www.pland.gov.hk>

Annual Report 2008

PLANNING 規劃署
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

Vision, Mission and Values

Director's Message

Events in Brief

Focus

About Planning Department

Our Performance

Appendices

Contact Us



Home

Our Performance

Environmental Performance

OUR PERFORMANCE - Environmental Performance

Environmental Policy

We are committed to contributing to environmental sustainability and promoting a better environment for the community of Hong Kong through the formulation of planning policies and standards, the preparation and implementation of town plans as well as the promotion of green office practices in the Department.

To maintain a high standard of environmental performance, we will:

- take full account of the environmental implications of all planning activities;
- facilitate the achievement of a quality-built environment and the protection of natural environment; and encourage environmentally responsible development;

- enforce the Town Planning Ordinance against unauthorized developments which result in adverse environmental impacts;
- comply with the requirements of relevant environmental protection ordinances;
- promote public awareness on environmental sustainability issues;
- cultivate a clean, tidy, healthy and safe office environment; promote and implement green housekeeping measures; and raise staff awareness of their environmental responsibilities through training and publicity programmes; and
- regularly review the environmental aspects and impacts of our planning activities and office practices; and build up the Department's environmental management system.

Environmental Management System

The Department applies an Environmental Management System to undertake the planning, implementation and monitoring of the Department's environmental initiatives and programme in a co-ordinated way.

Environmental Management System of the Planning Department



- to monitor and undertake management review on the performance of the Department's environmental actions in the aspects of its business and office operations
- to assess and advise on training requirement on environmental awareness and practices
- to report the environmental performance of the Department
- to oversee the work of the Green Housekeeping Committee of the Department

Focus on green office management

Green Housekeeping Committee(Chaired by Chief Town Planner)

- to introduce and oversee the implementation of green housekeeping measures of the Department

Environmental Committees

- to share experience in green office practices among green executives in the same building and to report green office management matters of offices in the same building and propose green measures to the Green Housekeeping Committee
- to disseminate environmental information of the Green Housekeeping Committee

Green Housekeeping Measures

The Planning Department Green Housekeeping Committee continued its efforts in promoting and introducing new green initiatives in the office and enhancing staff's environmental awareness. The Committee organised a Green Web Design Competition between October and November 2007. Funded as a Staff Motivation Scheme activity, the competition was successful in raising staff's awareness in green issues. The winning entry was uploaded to the Planning Department Portal for colleagues' viewing.



Extract of a Web Page from Green Web Design Competition

As in the last five years, a Collect-for-Reuse Programme was organised in October 2007 to promote waste reduction and material reuse practices. Used clothes, toys, house ware, electrical appliances, computer equipment and CDs/VCDs/DVDs were collected from staff and channelled to relevant charity and recycling agents. The active participation of staff in helping the needy through the green activities was encouraging.



Old items collected for re-use

The green office management of the Department in terms of consumption of paper and envelopes in 2007 is indicated below:

- There was an increase of 16.4% in paper consumption in 2007 as compared to 2006. This was mainly due to the increase in the number of consultation exercises for planning studies undertaken in the year. The Green Housekeeping Committee will closely monitor paper consumption and remind colleagues to continue to be environmentally conscious and minimise paper usage as far as possible.

- There was a decrease of 3.8% in respect of consumption of envelopes as compared to 2006. We will upkeep our efforts in making continuous improvements.

Other green measures include :

- 11 415.5 kg of paper were collected for recycling;
- 22 boxes of used clothes, handbags, shoes, toys, 55 electrical appliances and 4 computer sets were collected for reuse by charitable organisations;
- Green activities to enhance staff's awareness in environmental protection were organised. Jointly organised with the Planning Department Staff Recreation Club, a day trip to an organic dairy farm in Sheung Shui was organised in July 2007. This activity was well received by the participants.
- Lighting sensors in cellular offices, which will automatically switch off the lighting when the offices are not in use, were installed.
- Government/departmental forms were uploaded onto the Intranet for staff's easy retrieval.



A Trip to an Organic Dairy Farm in Sheung Shui

To enhance staff's awareness in environmental protection, we organised the following office seminars in 2007 :

- Developments in Urban Heat Island Research and Their Application for Hong Kong
- Change in Environmental Conditions in Hong Kong.

In 2007, 127 staff members (17.0% of Department's establishment) attended environmental training

courses and seminars. The Green Housekeeping Committee will continue to conduct regular reviews on the Department's training needs in environmental management and to identify training opportunities to promote staff's participation in achieving green environment.

Conservation-related zones

The scarcity of land and increasing development pressure impose threats to our natural environment. Through zoning designation, we help safeguard our natural environment against undesirable development in areas of high conservation value.

As at end-2007, about 8 950 hectares (or 22%) of land in the New Territories fall within the following conservation-related zones on the relevant statutory plans : 'Conservation Area', 'Site of Special Scientific Interests', 'Country Park', 'Coastal Protection Area', and 'Other Specified Uses' annotated 'Comprehensive Development to include Wetland Restoration Area'; and 'Comprehensive Development and Wetland Enhancement Area'.

Planning Enforcement Against Unauthorised Development

Unauthorised developments (UDs) have led to environmental degradation in the rural areas causing nuisance to local communities and damage to the natural environment. They have also created problems like flooding, air and water pollution, traffic congestion, sometimes even posing a threat to life and property. Planning enforcement and prosecution of unauthorised developments are therefore essential in order to protect the rural environment from further degradation. [Appendix 3](#) is a summary of enforcement and prosecution work undertaken by the Planning Department in 2007. We have also carried out publicity campaign including broadcasting on television and radio, publication of pamphlets and posters, and undertaking outreach education programmes at secondary schools.



UD site before enforcement action





Site cleared after taking enforcement action

Computer Aided Sustainability Evaluation Tool (CASET)

A computerized decision support system known as CASET has been developed to assist the Government's evaluation of sustainability implications of major strategic policies and projects. The outputs of CASET would provide information on the effects of policies or projects across a number of sectors for decision makers to consider. CASET has also been employed by the Planning Department as one of the means to conduct sustainability assessment of town plans and major planning studies that may bring about significant or prolonged implications on the economic, social and environmental conditions of Hong Kong. In 2007, a total of 19 sustainability assessments were conducted.

[Home](#) | [Vision, Mission and Values](#) | [Director's Message](#) | [Events in Brief](#) | [Focus](#) |
[About Planning Department](#) | [Our Performance](#) | [Appendices](#) | [Contact Us](#)

二零零八年年報

<http://www.pland.gov.hk>

Annual Report 2008

PLANNING IG 規劃署

DEPARTMENT

Vision, Mission and Values

Director's Message

Events in Brief

Focus

About Planning Department

Our Performance

Appendices

Contact Us



Home 繁體 简体

Appendix

Appendix 3

Statistics of Enforcement and Prosecution actions undertaken in 2007

In 2007, the Central Enforcement and Prosecution Section of the Department investigated a total of 1 156 suspected unauthorised developments (UDs) in the New Territories. Among which, 421 were confirmed to be UD. After taking enforcement and prosecution actions, 304 UD (covering about 56 hectares of land) were discontinued. Moreover, a total of 70 UD cases (covering about 27 hectares of land) were regularised through the planning application system. Table 1 indicates the number of UD discontinued or regularised with land areas involved.

Table 1 Number of Unauthorised Developments Discontinued or Regularised in 2007 after Enforcement Actions by Geographical District

Geographical District	No. of Discontinued Cases (ha)	No. of Regularised Cases (ha)
North West New Territories	239 (45.90)	66 (25.53)
North East New Territories	57 (9.45)	4 (1.52)
Sai Kung	5 (0.54)	0 (0)
Islands	3 (0.11)	0 (0)
Total	304 (56.00)	70 (27.05)

As at December 31, 2007, enforcement actions were being taken on 462 UD. The geographical distribution of these UD (with land area involved) by type is shown in Table 2 while Table 3 indicates the percentage of UD by type.

Table 2 Number of Unauthorised Developments (with Land Area involved) by Geographical District and Type as at December 31, 2007

Geographical District	General Open Storage (ha)	Filling of Land / Pond (ha)	Container Storage / Container Trailer Park (ha)	Car Park (ha)	Workshop (ha)	Others (ha)	Total(ha)
North West New Territories	154 (23.9)	19 (4.2)	43 (32.0)	33 (7.6)	30 (3.5)	48 (11.7)	327 (82.9)
North East New Territories	67 (9.6)	26 (10.7)	1 (0.2)	8 (1.1)	5 (1.2)	9 (6.0)	116 (28.8)
Sai Kung	5 (0.3)	9 (4.1)	---	---	---	2 (0.9)	16 (5.3)
Islands	2 (0.06)	1 (0.04)	---	---	---	---	3 (0.1)
Total	228 (33.9)	55 (19.0)	44 (32.2)	41 (8.7)	35 (4.7)	59 (18.6)	462 (117.1)

Table 3 Distribution of Unauthorised Developments by Type as at December 31, 2007

Type	Percentage
General Open Storage	49%
Filling of Land / Pond	12%
Container Storage / Container Trailer Park	10%
Car Park	9%
Workshop	8%
Others	12%
Total	100%

In 2007, 3 788 warning letters/reminders, 2 150 enforcement notices, 234 reinstatement notices, 10 stop notices and 1 668 compliance notices were issued to responsible persons of UDs. Table 4 shows the number of warning letters/reminders and notices issued in different districts.

Table 4 Number of Warning Letters / Reminders and Notices by Geographical District Issued in 2007

Geographical District	Warning Letter/Reminder (No. of Cases)	Enforcement Notice (No. of Cases)	Reinstatement Notice (No. of Cases)	Stop Notice (No. of Cases)	Compliance Notice (No. of Cases)
North West New Territories	3 069 (514)	1 623 (255)	103 (14)	7 (1)	1 480 (212)
North East New Territories	651 (136)	448 (84)	82 (14)	2 (1)	138 (30)
Sai Kung	44 (13)	61 (8)	47 (6)	1 (1)	30 (4)
Islands	24 (8)	18 (5)	2 (1)	---	20 (3)
Total	3 788 (671)	2 150 (352)	234 (35)	10 (3)	1 668 (249)

On prosecution action, 190 summonses in respect of 43 cases were laid in 2007. 146 defendants in respect of 32 cases were

convicted under section 23(6) of the Town Planning Ordinance (the Ordinance) for non-compliance with notices issued by the Planning Authority. 11 defendants in respect of 11 cases were convicted under sections 20(7) and 20(8) of the Ordinance for undertaking/continuing UD's. Table 5 gives a summary of the number of defendants convicted with fines in 2007.

Table 5 Number of Defendants Convicted with Fines in 2007

Convicted Under	No. of Defendants Convicted	No. of Cases	Range of Fine Per Defendant	Average Fine Per Defendant
s.23(6)	146	32	\$1,500 - \$400,000	\$14,893
s.20(7) & s.20(8)	11	11	\$7,500 - \$25,000	\$15,227
Total	157	43	---	---



[Home](#) | [Vision, Mission and Values](#) | [Director's Message](#) | [Events in Brief](#) | [Focus](#) | [About Planning Department](#) | [Our Performance](#) | [Appendices](#) | [Contact Us](#)

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