

Purpose of Town Planning: Town planning aims at shaping a quality living and working environment, facilitating economic development, and promoting the health, safety, convenience and general welfare of the community by guiding and controlling development and the use of land. Based on the principle of sustainable development, town planning seeks to bring about an organised, efficient and desirable place for the community to live and work in. Given the limited land resources in Hong Kong, there is a need to strike a balance in land utilisation to meet the competing demand for housing, commerce, industry, transport, recreation, nature conservation, heritage preservation and other community needs.

Planning Organisations: The Planning and Lands Branch of the Development Bureau is in charge of the policy portfolios of planning, land use, buildings and urban renewal in Hong Kong. Taking directives from the Development Bureau, the Planning Department (PlanD) is responsible for formulating, monitoring and reviewing land uses at the territorial and district/local level. It also carries out topical studies and undertakes actions against unauthorised land uses.

The principal body responsible for statutory planning in Hong Kong is the Town Planning Board (TPB). It is formed under the Town Planning Ordinance (TPO) and served by PlanD. Comprising predominantly non-official members, the TPB oversees the preparation of draft statutory plans, considers representations to such draft plans and considers applications for planning permission and amendments to plans. There are two standing committees under the TPB, namely, the Metro Planning Committee and the Rural and New Town Planning Committee. Under the TPO, the TPB may also appoint a committee among its members to consider representations to draft statutory plans.

Planning System: Hong Kong's planning system comprises development strategies at the territorial level and various types of statutory and departmental plans at the district/local level. The preparation of these plans is taking into account the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines, relevant development-related policies and principles, and community views.

Territorial Development Strategy: The strategy aims at providing a broad planning framework to guide future development and provision of strategic infrastructure in Hong Kong. It also serves as a basis for the preparation of district plans. The Government's latest territorial development strategy, which is known as "Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030" ("Hong Kong 2030+"), was promulgated in October 2021. A people-centric, proactive, pragmatic and action-oriented approach has been adopted to draw up a robust development strategy to enhance Hong Kong to become a liveable, competitive and sustainable Asia's World City. To this end, a series of strategic directions under three building blocks, namely enhancing liveability in a compact high-density city, embracing new economic opportunities and challenges, and creating capacity for sustainable growth, and a conceptual spatial framework are formulated. On the basis of a multi-pronged and capacity

creating approach, a list of possible solution spaces including the Northern Metropolis and the Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands is suggested.

Statutory Plans: Two types of statutory plans are prepared and published by the TPB under the provisions of the TPO. In 2004, the TPO was amended to streamline the plan-making process and planning approval procedures, enhance the openness and transparency of the planning system as well as strengthen planning enforcement in the rural New Territories. The amended TPO took effect in 2005.

The first type is Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) which shows the land use zones, development restrictions and major road systems of an individual planning area. Areas covered by OZPs are in general zoned for uses such as residential, commercial, industrial, green belt, open space, government, institution or community uses, or other specified uses. Attached to each OZP is a Schedule of Notes showing the uses which are always permitted (Column 1 uses) in a particular zone and other uses for which prior permission from the TPB must be sought (Column 2 uses).

The second type is Development Permission Area (DPA) Plan. DPA Plans are prepared to provide interim planning control and development guidance for rural areas in the New Territories, pending the preparation of more detailed OZPs. DPA Plans indicate broad land use zones and are also accompanied by Schedules of Notes showing Column 1 and 2 uses. DPA Plans are effective for a period of three years and will be replaced by OZPs.

Information on statutory plans, planning applications, related guidelines and procedures as well as the agenda, meeting papers and decisions of the open meetings of the TPB and its Committees can be accessed online from the TPB website at <http://www.tpb.gov.hk/> and the Statutory Planning Portal 2 at <http://www.ozp.tpb.gov.hk/>. The public may also observe those open meetings in the Public Viewing Room located at 1/F, North Point Government Offices, 333 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong.

Departmental Plans: Outline Development Plans (ODP) and Layout Plans are administrative plans prepared within the framework of the statutory plans. With a much larger scale, these departmental plans show more detailed level planning parameters e.g. site boundaries, location of access points and footbridges, specific types of government or community uses to facilitate the coordination of public works, land sales and land reservation for specific uses.

Views from the public are essential considerations for the formulation of development strategies and preparation of plans. Public engagement in the form of public forums, workshops, exhibitions, etc. is a very important component of the planning process.

Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG):

It is a government manual of criteria for determining the scale, location and site requirements of various land uses and facilities. It serves to ensure that during the planning process, the Government will reserve adequate land to facilitate social and economic development and provide appropriate public facilities to meet the needs of the public. Various bureaux and departments will formulate, review and amend the planning standards and guidelines falling under their purview from time to time taking into account the latest policy considerations and initiatives. PlanD will assist bureaux and departments to incorporate updated or new standards and guidelines into the HKPSG for promulgation to the public.

Urban Renewal and Regeneration: The new Urban Renewal Strategy formulated by the Government adopted a “people first, district-based, public participatory” approach in undertaking urban renewal works in Hong Kong. PlanD works closely with the Urban Renewal Authority in planning various urban renewal projects and undertaking relevant statutory planning procedures. PlanD also provides planning advice to other redevelopment agencies on urban renewal matters including urban renewal studies. The implementation of urban renewal projects in old urban districts help address the problem of urban decay and improve the living environment in dilapidated urban areas.

Redevelopment, rehabilitation, preservation and revitalisation are the core business of urban renewal. The Kwun Tong Town Centre project is one of the largest redevelopment projects. The recently completed residential project and shopping mall at Yue Man Square are part of the Kwun Tong Town Centre development. The Lee Tung Street project in Wan Chai is another example of redevelopment project. On rehabilitation, various building rehabilitation subsidy schemes are available to facilitate owners to carry out repair and maintenance works more effectively. On preservation cum revitalisation, the Mallory Street/Burrows Street project as a hub for culture and creative industries is one of the pioneer projects, and the Central Market and 618 Shanghai Street projects are some recent projects in this realm.

New Town and New Development Areas: Large-scale new town development in the New Territories began in the early 1970s. PlanD has worked closely with the Civil Engineering and Development Department’s Development Offices to prepare plans and oversee the development of these new towns. At present, there are nine new towns, namely Tsuen Wan, Sha Tin, Tuen Mun, Tai Po, Yuen Long, Fanling/Sheung Shui, Tseung Kwan O, Tin Shui Wai and Tung Chung. A number of New Development/Growth Areas are under various stages of development or study. They comprise Tung Chung East and West, Kau Yi Chau Artificial Islands, Tseung Kwan O Area 137 and various planned/proposed developments within the Northern Metropolis including Kwu Tung North/Fanling North, Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen, Yuen Long South, San Tin/Lok Ma Chau Development Node, Lo Wu/Man Kam To Comprehensive Development Node, New Territories North New Town and Ngau Tam Mei.

Planning Enforcement: The TPO provides the Planning Authority with enforcement power against unauthorised developments (UDs) in areas covered by the DPA Plans or the replacement OZPs. Within these areas, all developments are unauthorised unless the development is either in existence before the gazettal of the DPA Plan, permitted under the relevant statutory plan or covered by valid planning permission.

PlanD’s Central Enforcement and Prosecution Section is responsible for undertaking enforcement and prosecution actions against UD. The Section investigates public complaints and referrals from other government departments, and carries out regular patrols to identify possible UD. Once a UD is confirmed, statutory enforcement and prosecution actions will be taken as appropriate.

Topical Studies: PlanD also carries out a wide range of topical studies. The Study on Existing Profile and Operations of Brownfield Sites in the New Territories, which captured a snapshot of the comprehensive profile including the nature, site characteristics and operational details of the brownfield sites as well as their spatial distribution in the New Territories, was completed in November 2019 and has identified brownfield sites that have relatively higher potential for public housing development. A number of follow-up engineering feasibility studies on the development potential of these brownfield sites are being undertaken.

To take on board the recommendations of Hong Kong 2030+, the Study on Active Design for Healthier Lifestyle – Feasibility Study commenced in February 2020. The study aims to explore how to incorporate “active design” in the planning and development process in promoting healthy lifestyle. Moreover, the Study on Reimagining Public Spaces in Hong Kong - Feasibility Study commenced in May 2020. The purpose is to reimagine the concept of open space and holistically enhance the quality and quantity of open space in Hong Kong as advocated in Hong Kong 2030+.

Planning Information: The City Gallery, located at 3 Edinburgh Place, Central, Hong Kong, showcases the achievements of Hong Kong’s planning and infrastructure development. It also acts as a platform for collaboration and exchange of planning ideas as well as public engagement in the planning process. For more information on town planning and the City Gallery, please visit the PlanD and City Gallery’s websites at <http://www.pland.gov.hk> and <http://www.citygallery.gov.hk> or visit the two Planning Enquiry Counters located at:

- 17/F, North Point Government Offices, 333 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong
- 14/F, Sha Tin Government Offices, 1 Sheung Wo Che Road, Sha Tin, New Territories

For enquiries, please call 2231 5000, fax to 2877 0389 or e-mail to enquire@pland.gov.hk.