

# TOWN PLANNING PRACTICE

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CONTEXT, PROCEDURES AND STATISTICS FOR HONG KONG

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# **1** | **THE PRACTICAL NEED TO UNDERSTAND TOWN PLANNING FOR PROFESSIONAL PERSONS, DEVELOPERS AND INVESTORS**

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## **PROBLEMS WITH PLAN INTERPRETATION: SOME EXAMPLES**

Consider the following stories about town planning which could happen in real life.

### **STORY 1**

Mr Lee is a newly appointed solicitor trainee and an intended home-buyer for a new flat in a large private residential development with good sea-view. He has signed a non-binding preliminary sale and purchase agreement with the developer in a pre-sale under the consent scheme. His colleagues have heard rumours that the sea-view of his flat would soon be 'upgraded' by a panoramic view of the entire reclamation process and the future use of the reclamation is unknown. Besides, there would be a funeral parlour on a vacant site adjoining the development. Mr Chan has heard about town plans, but he does not remember the exact names of the relevant type of plans in English or Chinese.

Mr Lee goes immediately to the public inquiry section of the Planning Department where he is given an excellent reception. This reception begins with a simple form-filling exercise, followed by Mr Chan expressing his concerns and opinions about statutory protection of sea-views, while the officer at the reception keeps asking him courteously about the location of his property.

At last, they work out the relevant Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) in which his property is located. As time for a lawyer is precious, he requests for the purchase of a copy of the OZP, as he believes that it is a product of legislation and hence should be available to the public.

The officer at the Planning Department explains to him that their office does not sell plans but he can buy the OZP from the map sale office of Lands Development on a different floor of the Government Office Building. Mr Lee is a bit angry but nothing can be done about that. He then rushes to the map sale office on a different floor and tells the officer there that he wants to buy an OZP.

The officer attending the counter asks Mr Lee for the reference number of the OZP, which he forgets to jot down in a hurry. He utters the name of the area in which his property is located, trusting that this would help the officer locate the plan. The officer is very friendly and presents him an OZP bearing the district name he has just given. However, that plan does not look like the one he has just seen in the Planning Department. With the help of this officer, Mr Lee works out that the correct plan is the one which adjoins the wrong one.

On payment of the fee, Mr Lee obtains the OZP he needs. It is in fact a bundle of paper, consisting of a map and a set of A4-size bilingual documents, which are stapled together.

When Mr Lee reads the bundle, he checks the zoning of his property. He finds that the zone concerned is indicated as Residential (Group A) (R(A)) on the map in the stapled documents. Mr Lee feels assured as there is no indication of any future reclamation on the plan. However, he is disturbed when he finds that in the 'Notes' of the stapled documents, the item 'funeral parlour' appears in one of the columns for the Government/Institution/Community (G/IC) zone, adjoining the estate in which he is going to live.

Mr Lee wonders when the funeral parlour will be built. After reading the 'Explanatory Statement' attached to the 'Notes' (the former is expressly stated to be a 'part of the plan' and the latter is expressly stated not forming 'part of the plan'), Mr Lee is surprised to find that in another 'G/IC' zone that abuts a local access road, one secondary school and one primary school will be built 'upon full development'.

The questions are:

- (1) Will Mr Lee's unit lose any sea-view due to reclamation? (See Chapters 2 and 4.)
- (2) When will the funeral parlour be constructed? (See Chapters 2 and 4.)
- (3) When will the two primary schools be built? (See Chapters 2 and 4.)
- (4) What does it mean by 'upon full development'? (See Chapter 4.)

## STORY 2

Miss Wong, an accountant, has purchased a flat next to Mr Lee's flat. After moving into her flat, she realizes from a signpost that the developer is developing a 'promenade' along the coast and a small structure is being erected in a position right below the window of the master-room. After making inquiries with the property management, she realizes that the structure is a

public toilet which, upon completion, will be given with the promenade to the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (formerly the Urban Services Department). By checking the OZP borrowed from Mr Lee, her next-door neighbour, Miss Wong learns that the promenade is zoned 'Open Space' in the OZP.

Miss Wong is not pleased with the construction of a public toilet near a new residential development. She regards the toilet as being visually, environmentally and aesthetically intrusive, and it is incompatible with housing development. She also fears that the toilet will be a meeting place for socially undesirable people. Accordingly, she writes to the Secretary for Planning, Environment and Lands, the boss of the Director of Planning, complaining about the poor planning of the planners responsible.

The questions are:

- (5) Why is the developer so generous in constructing a toilet for the convenience of the public near his or her own development? (See Chapter 4.)
- (6) Who is responsible for the actual planning of a promenade as such? (See Chapter 4.)
- (7) What are the relevant planning law and policy issues involved in Miss Wong's complaint? (See Chapters 4 and 6.)

### STORY 3

Mr Man is an indigenous villager who runs a storage yard. He wishes to construct a 'small home' on a piece of ancestral land (the house site) given to him by his grandfather who has recently passed away. He intends to use the house as his matrimonial home. Advised by his uncle living in the same village, Mr Man goes to the District Land Office and discusses his plan with a Land Executive. The officer informs him that the house site is zoned 'Green Belt' in the OZP and a small house, being a house, is a land-use item that requires planning permission. Mr Man visits the Planning Department's public inquiry section and obtains the requisite application forms, a set of Town Planning Board Guidelines for development in Green Belts as well as guidance notes for application in the rural New Territories. All documents are free of charge.

Mr Man knows very little English. The documents he receives are written in both English and Chinese, but he does not quite understand the meaning of many sentences in Chinese as they are replete with technical terms.

Henry is a nephew of Mr Man's; he visits him and tells Mr Man how he has successfully applied for selling small houses by a developer, who has purchased the 'Small House Rights' of Henry and others. Henry tells Mr Man that he needs to instruct an architect to make the planning application, as there are too many types of technical assessment that must be carried out in order to support his application. Mr Man asks Henry about the fees involved.

Henry quotes a rough figure, which is almost as big as the estate duty paid for his grandfather's legacy.

The questions are :

- (8) Is there any need for Mr Man to instruct a professional to submit the planning application? (See Chapter 4.)
- (9) Is there any need for an applicant to submit any supporting document for the application? (See Chapter 4.)
- (10) What should be included in a supporting document? (See Chapter 4.)
- (11) If Mr Man would like to instruct an experienced professional to make the planning application, where can he find such a person? (See Chapter 4.)

#### **STORY 4**

While the same Mr Man in Story 3 is wondering how to proceed with his small home application, his mates at the storage yard tell him that some government officials who took photographs of his storage site a few weeks ago have come back and posted a bilingual notice on the gate.

There is a phone number from the Planning Department on the notice. Mr Man rings the Planning Department for further inquiries. An officer answers the phone and after 30 minutes of questioning, Mr Man fails to understand the problems with his site. So he makes an appointment with the Planning Department officer to see her in her office. The office is near the Kwai Fong MTR station. Outside the meeting-room, Mr Man sees some large government posters. On them are colourful photographs of storage sites in the New Territories. He thinks that they are promoting container trade in Hong Kong as he went to an exhibition about the port and airport project some years ago.

In the meeting, the officer is accompanied by another officer, who is quite busy writing notes on a note pad. They inform Mr Man that his site is an 'unauthorized use', which must be discontinued. Mr Man tells the officers that his income depends on the yard, and that his yard employs 25 otherwise unemployed migrants from the Mainland. Besides, his marriage also relies on this yard. The officers ignore his submission and point out clearly that they are duty-bound to prosecute those who unlawfully destroy the environment of the New Territories. They also tell him that the government has published this on the television and posters.

Mr Man becomes very angry and accuses the officers of sabotaging the economy of Hong Kong and adding problems to the Chief Executive's administration. The officers politely reply that this is a matter of law and that their notice does not mean 'the end of the world' to Mr Man because he can choose from one of the following possible solutions: (1) cease his present operation and revert the yard to farming, perhaps, which in any event is up to him; (2) apply for planning permission for his present use; (3) defend

himself rigorously in court, as Mr Man insists that he 'has done nothing wrong'.

Mr Man righteously says that he has operated the storage yard since the early 1980s, when certain government public works in the vicinity of the yard discontinued irrigation water supply from a stream. One of the officers reminds Mr Man to tell his story about the site to the judge. Mr Man leaves the meeting-room angrily.

Back home, Mr Man is very upset as he feels that his plan to build a matrimonial home and his business are both going to be ruined because of the Planning Department. He feels even angrier about the 'story' label attached to the true history of his site. He wonders why highly educated people can invent some legislation to punish a decent businessman who simply wants to make a living by engaging in works that university graduates would not do.

For those with legal training, this story raises the following questions:

- (13) What are the strong points of Mr Man's case if his site has really existed since the early 1980s, which can be proved? (See Chapter 5.)
- (14) What are the weak points of Mr Man's case? (See Chapter 5.)

We shall not deal with this part of Story 4 in this book, as a lay person will find it a most unfortunate event to run into the tax collector, the undertaker or the lawyer, and would try his or her very best to avoid them. This time it is the lawyer whom Mr Man may consider to instruct. As law in Hong Kong is very precious (expensive), Mr Man must be either resourceful enough to pay for legal service, or has to obtain legal aid.

To make life easier for Mr Man, let us assume that somehow Mr Man obtains a three-year planning permission to continue his operation.

The question then is:

- (15) What are the implications of this three-year permission? (See Chapter 5.)

## **STORY 5**

Mrs Tam buys a unit in a multi-storey factory building in East Kowloon through an estate agent who has told her that she can operate a manufacturing plant therein. After completion of the purchase, she rents the unit to a friend, Mrs Mo.

One day, Mrs Tam receives a letter from the Lands Department stating that (a) the use of her property is office use and it is in breach of the user condition of the lease; (b) she needs to discontinue the unauthorized use and pay a 'forbearance fee' until the unauthorized use is discontinued or a planning permission is obtained from the Town Planning Board.

Mrs Tam immediately consults her lawyers, contemplating the termination of the tenancy of her friend, who insists that 'there is nothing wrong with using some floor space as office'. The reason Mrs Tam relies on is that the tenancy agreement expressly states that the tenant should not carry out any unauthorized use that is in breach of the lease or any ordinance.



The questions are:

- (16) Why is planning permission mentioned in the Lands Department's letter? (See Chapter 5.)
- (17) What are the possible justifications on which her friend would rely to defend her rights? (See Chapter 5.)
- (18) What is the relationship between lease conditions and plans prepared by the Town Planning Board? (See Chapter 5.)

## **WHAT KIND OF PROFESSIONALS SHOULD A DEVELOPER CONSULT IN RESPECT OF TOWN PLANNING MATTERS?**

As a matter of prudence, the developer or his/her legal advisors should consult a Registered Professional Planner before instructing other professionals in respect of making planning applications and other general planning matters. This will not only save unnecessary and abortive costs, but will also help fulfil duties of due diligence owed to clients.

Inexperienced landowners often rely exclusively on their solicitors, architects or surveyors to explore planning matters. The reason is that they are the only professionals they are aware of or familiar with. Unless these solicitors or architects have experience with town planning, it is not unlikely that costs would be wasted on unnecessary or even counterproductive works.

Examples which the author have seen in practice include: (a) making inquiries as to whether a 'Column 1' use requires planning permission; (b) submitting a set of detailed building plans to the Town Planning Board; (c) making a deed poll for a premises when it is subject to lease enforcement; and (d) conducting a cadastral survey for land that is subject to planning enforcement.

The reality is that town planning is often ignored, underplayed or diluted in the professional education of lawyers, architects and surveyors. Of course, the reverse may be said about the education of planners.

## **WHY MUST A SURVEYOR KNOW ABOUT TOWN PLANNING?**

An estate surveyor must understand town planning because of at least six reasons:

- (a) In a *valuation* exercise, there is a need to interpret not only the user and building covenants in the lease, but also the effects of the provisions of statutory plans on the covenants and various types of notices issued under the *Town Planning Ordinance*.
- (b) In ascertaining the possibility for *lease modification* or short-term waiver, there is a need to interpret not only the user and building covenants in the lease, but also the effects of the provisions of statutory plans on the covenants as well as the implications of administrative zoning.

- (c) A surveyor can make planning applications. In processing a planning application, review or appeal to a *change in use*, there is a need to understand the provisions of the *Town Planning Ordinance*.
- (d) In negotiating *compensation* payment in resumption, there is a need to consider any relevant development plan.
- (e) In processing conveyancing matters for property in the rural New Territories, there is a need to appreciate the nature and implications of *enforcement notices* under the *Town Planning Ordinance* as encumbrances.
- (f) In processing *lease enforcement* matters of a site, there is a need to appreciate the legal and valuation implications of statutory plans applicable to the site.

### WHY DOES A LAWYER NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TOWN PLANNING?

A lawyer — either a solicitor or barrister — needs to know about town planning because of the following reasons:

- (a) In the *conveyancing of units* in a property, there is a need for a solicitor to check the *user* and this involves the interpretation of 'lease conditions', i.e., covenants in government leases and conditions in grant, exchange, etc., and the Deed of Mutual Covenants (DMC) in the light of any statutory town plans and planning conditions (such as the requirements and stipulations of a Master Layout Plan (MLP), which may or may not be incorporated as part of the lease or the DMC) affecting the building and its environment (e.g. reclamation/highway/drainage channel projects).
- (b) In the *conveyancing of a site* there is a need for a solicitor to check the *user*. This involves the interpretation of lease conditions and the DMC in the light of any statutory town plans and planning conditions (such as the requirements for a Master Layout Plan (MLP), which may or may not be incorporated as part of the lease; an Environmental Impact Assessment; and other impact assessments) affecting the building and its environment (e.g. reclamation/highway/drainage channel projects). The solicitor also needs to check the site classification and plot ratios for the site under the *Buildings Ordinance* as may be affected by a statutory town plan.
- (c) In processing *conveyancing matters for property in the rural New Territories* subject to a past or present Interim Development Permission Area Plans, there is a need for a solicitor to appreciate the nature and implications of *enforcement notices* under the *Town Planning Ordinance* as encumbrances.
- (d) In handling litigation involving *defeasibility of titles* in conveyancing, a solicitor/barrister should appreciate the implications of the non-fulfilment or breach of the provisions of the *Town Planning Ordinance* or planning conditions.
- (e) In negotiating *compensation* payment in resumption, there is a need for a lawyer to consider any relevant development plan.
- (f) In processing *lease enforcement* matters of a site, there is a need for a

lawyer to appreciate the legal implications of statutory plans applicable to the site.

- (g) A solicitor can help lodge in planning applications, or be involved in matters arising from them. In processing a planning application, review or appeal to a *change in use*, there is a need to understand the provisions of the *Town Planning Ordinance*.
- (h) A solicitor acting for a conveyancing purchaser in exercising due diligence regarding latent defects of the property needs to visit the property before completion with the relevant experts and documents. The documents should include the applicable statutory town plans, occupation permits and approved building plans.
- (i) In exercising due diligence for a client in the acquisition of a company holding land assets, a solicitor needs to understand the effects of amendment to the zoning of the applicable statutory town plans and/or results of planning applications upon the value of the land assets.
- (j) A barrister may be instructed to represent parties to (i) a *planning appeal* before the Appeal Board (and further appeals to the court); (ii) an enforcement action under the *Town Planning Ordinance* and/or magistracy appeals (and further appeals to the court); or (iii) a building appeal which involves issues of the contravention of statutory town plans.

To minimize the chance for making negligent statements, it is advisable for solicitors to consult a Registered Professional Planner before offering advice in respect of planning matters.

## **WHY MUST AN AUTHORIZED PERSON KNOW ABOUT TOWN PLANNING?**

An Authorized Person (AP), who may be an architect, a structural engineer or a building surveyor, must understand planning for at least three reasons:

- (a) An AP can make planning applications, or be involved in matters arising from *planning applications*. In processing a planning application, review or appeal to a *change in use*, there is a need to understand not only fundamental planning principles, but also the provisions of the *Town Planning Ordinance*.
- (b) In the preparation of a building submission to the Building Authority, there is a need for the AP to ascertain the *user* and this involves the interpretation of lease conditions in the light of any statutory town plans and planning conditions — assuming that planning permission has been granted (such as the requirements for a Master Layout Plan (MLP), which may or may not be incorporated as part of the lease; an Environmental Impact Assessment; and other impact assessments) affecting the building and its environment (e.g. reclamation/highway/drainage channel projects).

- (c) In the preparation of a building submission to the Building Authority, there is a need for the AP to ascertain the site classification and plot ratios for the site under the *Buildings Ordinance* as they may be affected by a statutory town plan.

### **WHY DOES A PERSON CONCERNED WITH ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PLANNING?**

A person who is keen on environmental protection and ecology must understand town planning because various types of town plans have different environmental protection implications in terms of either forward planning or development control (notably planning applications and impositions of planning conditions), which may or may not reinforce the environmental protection clauses in the lease and/or specific environmental legislation.

### **WHY DOES A HOME-BUYER OR INVESTOR NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TOWN PLANNING?**

A home-buyer or a property investor needs to know more about town planning before making a purchase decision because of any of the reasons below:

- (a) A home-buyer must be able to *interpret various types of town plans* and their interrelationships so as to ascertain the *present and future environment* of the property. The common types of questions are: Would present sea-views or 'garden views' be protected in future? What exactly will be built by the government in the 'Government/Institution and Community' (G/IC) zones? Would there be a funeral parlour or a church be built? When exactly will such facilities be built? What would happen to 'Unspecified' zones?
- (b) A home-buyer or investor must understand the town planning system and procedures in order to make a *proposal* or an *objection* to various types of town plans to protect or further his or her interest.
- (c) An indigenous villager who wishes to erect a *small house* or use land for any other *higher-value use* must understand the provisions of any statutory town plans, especially those originated from Interim Development Permission Area Plans.
- (d) A property investor who is interested in buying or has already acquired land in the New Territories must understand the provisions of any statutory town plans, especially those originated from Interim Development Permission Area Plans.

It should be noted that the *Sales Descriptions of Uncompleted Residential Properties Bill* (April 2000) proposes that the sale brochure must contain the reference numbers of the latest building plans and town plans prepared under

the *Buildings Ordinance* and the *Town Planning Ordinance* respectively, and that these plans are available for free inspection at the developer's office and sale office.

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*Development in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Centre of Urban Studies and Environmental Management, 1999.

## RELEVANT LAW CASES

*Lam Kwok Leung v AG* [1978] HKLR 145

[Construction of a latrine in the adjoining land does not amount to a breach of the covenant; it is not to derogate from grant by the government.]

## RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

*Building Management Ordinance*, Chapter 344, Laws of Hong Kong.

*Conveyancing and Property Ordinance*, Chapter 219, Laws of Hong Kong.

*Hill District Reservation Ordinance*, Ordinance No. 4 of 1904.

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*Land Registration Ordinance*, Chapter 128, Laws of Hong Kong.

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*Sales Descriptions of Uncompleted Residential Properties Bill*.

## STUDY AND RESEARCH GUIDES

As regards the history, system and procedures on 'town planning' (the meaning of town planning is discussed in Chapters 2 and 3) in Hong Kong, there are a few useful doorknockers.

It is highly recommended for beginners to skip through the official publication *Planning Hong Kong: 50th Anniversary 1947–1997* (The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government Planning Department, 1998), provided that they can still obtain copies from the government or public libraries. This work states the vision and mission statement of the Planning Department, a brief review of town planning in Hong Kong from the post-World War II years to the date of publication, matters concerning implementation of town plans, achievements of planners, and issues for shaping the future development of Hong Kong.

In 1947, Sir Patrick Abercrombie visited Hong Kong in order to write a planning report for Hong Kong. This report, referred as the *Abercrombie*

*Report* (Abercrombie in fact is the author of a number of major planning reports for the UK and Commonwealth countries) henceforth, was commissioned by the Colonial Office under the Colonial Development and Welfare Scheme of 1945. Government town planning in Hong Kong today is still heavily influenced by the mentality set out in the Abercrombie report, and the vocabulary used in it (Lai, 1999a).

The origin of town planning in Hong Kong in a modern sense in fact went back to 1842 (see Appendix), although the first ordinance bearing the name 'Town Planning' was only introduced in 1939. Sixteen years after the introduction of the *Town Planning Ordinance* in 1939, the first statutory town plan was published in the gazette. The plan was for Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon. This does not mean that there had been no planning activities in the colony prior to this plan. In fact, town planning was initially and mainly governed by covenants in Crown leases and was further restricted by building laws. The first allocation of leased land took place in 1842. The overlapping of functions of the land, buildings and planning authorities regarding planning is an important and practical dimension of valuation and development in Hong Kong (Lai and Ho, 2000). Administrative town planning often precedes statutory town planning (Bristow, 1984; Lai, 1998a). The implication of various types of administrative and statutory town plans within a context of leasehold land tenure is another important dimension that the practitioner must understand. Chapters 4 and 5 address these issues.

For a historical study of planning in Hong Kong from 1842 to 1984, see Bristow's *Land-Use Planning in Hong Kong* (1984) and Pryor's *Housing in Hong Kong* (1984). Although Bristow's book was published more than 15 years ago and is therefore outdated,<sup>1</sup> it remains an authoritative work in the local planning literature as it documents the evolution of the planning system in Hong Kong up until the early 1980s. Bristow's work has been out of print since the late 1980s. It is incumbent on local academicians in the planning arena to produce an updated work of comparable quality to plug the gap in the history of planning in Hong Kong for the last two decades. This gap has only been partially filled by occasional official publications. Good examples of these publications are *Town Planning in Hong Kong* (Hong Kong Government Buildings and Lands Department, 1988); *Town Planning in Hong Kong: A Quick Reference* (Hong Kong Government Planning Department, 1995) and *Planning Hong Kong: 50th Anniversary 1947-1997* (The SAR Government Planning Department, 1998). The first two books are now out of print. Of these two publications, the second is more colourful in presentation, but it does not give as much information as its predecessor regarding either development control by government leases or sufficient details of town plans.

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1. Professor Bristow's book is now under revision.

An economic analysis of the nature of zoning in Hong Kong can be found in *Zoning and Property Rights: A Hong Kong Case Study* (Lai, 1998b). Note that zoning in Hong Kong has the origin of racial segregation, now universally condemned, in the name of 'Reservation' or 'Residence' ordinances. The relevant legislation was all repealed in 1946, with the return of the British administration to Hong Kong after the surrender of Japan. Such legislation and the reasons involved have seldom been mentioned in Chinese or English publications on the history, politics or public administration of Hong Kong, not to mention town planning.

Introduced at a time when ghettos for Jews could be found in many 'civilized countries' in Europe and when a few states in the United States also passed zoning legislation to keep Chinese immigrants out, such zoning measures were commonly found in British colonies (Home, 1997). However, they were not made during the rule of Sir Frederick J. D. Lugard, Governor of Hong Kong (July 1907 to March 1912) and the founder of the University of Hong Kong as 'the Oxford and Cambridge of the Far East', though Lugard himself was a champion of racial segregation in Nigeria where he also served as governor (Home, 1997).

The point about segregation is not 'nationalism' or 'human rights' *per se*. Racial segregation and prejudice is part of the history of Hong Kong, and is an interesting research area. It is theoretically interesting as discriminatory laws were removed without involving mass violence or protracted political agitation.

As regards the actual operation of the statutory planning, the Town Planning Board has published annual reports since 1990, and the Appeal Board has also published 18 of its decisions. Proposed legal reforms are contained in three important documents, namely *Comprehensive Review of the Town Planning Ordinance* (Hong Kong Government Planning, Environment and Lands Branch, 1991); *Consultation Paper on the Town Planning Bill* (Hong Kong Government Planning, Environment and Lands Branch, 1996) and *Town Planning Bill* (2000). [Read these three documents carefully and see if and how they throw light on the stories in this chapter.] Peter Cookson Smith's *Town Planning Procedures* (1997) is also a convenient starting point.

A critical analysis of statutory planning can be found in *Town Planning in Hong Kong: A Critical Review* (Lai, 1999c) and a comparative analysis of 50 unreported planning appeal cases in *Town Planning in Hong Kong: A Review of Planning Appeal Decisions* (Lai, 1999d). The former is policy-oriented from the stance of laissez-faire economics and property rights while the latter is an analysis of the decision rules of appeal cases. For the practitioner, the latter is the only available work dedicated to planning appeal, and indeed key planning application decisions in Hong Kong.

In addition to the works cited above, the reader may find the journal of the Hong Kong Institute of Planners (HKIP), *Planning and Development*, a useful source of ideas, issues and facts about planning in Hong Kong and in general. Contact the editors of the journal for subscription (PO Box 98341 Tsim Sha Tsui).



Researchers should also consult major planning journals, such as *Progress in Planning*, *Town Planning Review* and *Environment and Planning* for academic and practice papers about town planning in Hong Kong. These publications can be found in libraries of most universities in Hong Kong.

There is no systematic work on planning practice in Hong Kong other than the Chinese publication of Lo and Chan (1998), which has a number of self-imposed limitations. This book is a modest attempt to provide alternative starting points specifically for practitioners and students who aspire to become practitioners using an international language.

The reader is also urged to consult the bibliography section in *Socio-Economic Development and Urban Development in Hong Kong*, edited by Anthony Gar-on Yeh (1999). It provides systematic starting points for locating research materials on various dimensions of town planning in Hong Kong. The reader should also use electronic resources of universities to attain more updated research outputs of the active researchers identified.

The sole tertiary education of town planners in Hong Kong for accreditation by the HKIP is provided by the Centre of Urban Planning and Environmental Management at the University of Hong Kong. Planning graduates from other countries need to pass requisite examinations to become a member of the HKIP. Members of the HKIP may be statutorily registered as Registered Professional Planners (RPP) by the Planners Registration Board. Members of the HKIP are entitled to vote as members of a functional constituency in Legislative Council elections.

## QUESTIONS

The following questions require no prior background in town planning. Try to answer them quickly according to your best judgement and revise your answers, if necessary, after you have finished reading this book and reference materials.

- (1) What are the functions of government town planning in Hong Kong? Name four.
- (2) What are the benefits of town planning? Name five.
- (3) Discuss whether government town planning in Hong Kong is successful.
- (4) What are the educational and professional qualifications required to practise town planning in Hong Kong?



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