

President's Corner 會長的話

Adaptive Re-Use of Buildings

While Hong Kong is well-known for its short building cycle, its urban character has traditionally been determined by the ability of older buildings, through their 'loose fit', to change and adapt. In this way the older street buildings are able to facilitate change and accommodate a mix of uses in close proximity in response to evolving economic needs, while new commercial and residential buildings tend to cater for one or other predominant purpose.

The conservation, re-use and adaptation of older buildings and even older urban infrastructure (such as Manhattan's hi-line walkway along the alignment of an old industrial rail alignment) are central to strengthening the city image, providing community benefits, urban diversity and a sense of place. But in a post-modern situation this also reflects the opportunity to establish a distinctive and identifiable relationship with the past.

The Public Affairs Committee of the HKIUD have recently examined the case of Lugard Road which underscores the problem facing conservation of heritage buildings in Hong Kong, and the issue of re-use. The owner of a Grade II historic building dating back to 1916 proposed to convert this to a boutique hotel. The original proposal was for 17 rooms, which raised the spectre of potential disruptions on several fronts to the large number of walkers along this path around the Peak, and the proposal received many objections. Having reduced the number of rooms and re-submitted the proposal to the Metro Planning Committee of the Town Planning Board, the application was approved but subject to ten conditions that were so restrictive that the project was deemed by the owner to be unviable. There now seems little that can be done to prevent the owner pulling down the old building and erecting new houses in its place – something they are fully entitled to do. Thus a "Win Win" opportunity ends up as "Lose Lose".

We seem to be therefore caught on the horns of a dilemma – if sensible conditions are not set for adaptive reuse, or are set but not acceptable to the owner / developer, there is nothing to stop the original building being pulled down and the site redeveloped. This is a 'black and white' way of looking at conservation – where does common sense and 'negotiation' then enter the picture?

The existing assessment mechanism under the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance and the Antiquities Advisory Board have little real power in conserving buildings in private ownership. Over the past 25 years many opportunities have been lost, and with them wider public benefits, visitors attractions, and opportunities to display the heritage and memory of the city. This does not befit a wealthy community with 'world city' pretensions.

In terms of heritage conservation in the public sector we are now seeing a number of successful examples, from the Police Married Quarters (PMQ) to the Tai O Hotel and the SCAD conversion and re-use of an old Magistrate's Court in Sham Shui Po. These have met with no public dissention or opposition. With graded buildings under private ownership, the main (and arguably the most justifiable) reason for limited public support is the potential public cost of compensation to owners, particularly in situations where new uses are not immediately obvious.

The potential for adaptive re-use of heritage buildings must be considered in relation to both graded designation and context. This should focus on both physical and intangible heritage particularly in relation to urban regeneration programmes, and the contribution these make to the perception of the city as a whole.

While it is doubtful if Government would set up a heritage fund to acquire all 'declared' private properties, unless all or the majority of costs could be recovered through adaptive re-use, other options need to be explored more vigorously such as site exchanges, additional development within the affected site, or even dismantlement and re-erection elsewhere. In Hong Kong's high priced environment, we need to discover the art of the possible. It is time to create a proper model that is fair to both sides, creates a platform for sensible consideration and negotiation, and offers an opportunity to establish suitable compensation measures of whatever kind.

Peter Cookson Smith

President

Recent Events and Meetings / 近期活動及會議

AIA Hong Kong - Young Architect Forum + YAG Cocktail Reception



Mr Charles Li, Vice President (External Affairs) was invited to attend the AIA Hong Kong - Young Architect Forum + YAG Cocktail Reception on 5 June 2015.



Mr Charles Li, Vice President (External Affairs) with Dr Sujata Govada, President and Mr Kenneth Hau, President - Elect of AIA Hong Kong.

HKGCC: Smart City • Smart Hong Kong



Prof. Bernard V. Lim, Immediate Past President was invited by the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce and Hong Kong Science and Technology Park as a speaker for Smart City Forum in June 2015. He talked about “Defining Smart Hong Kong- Where Do We Stand?” identifying the strengths and opportunities that drive Hong Kong towards a smart city.

[More](#)

Visit to the "Compact Smart City" Gallery at the Incheon Free Economic Zone



1. "Hanoi New City" - P&T Group
2. "Changing Paradigms of Urban Design Practices" - Dr. HUANG Jianxiang, The University of Hong Kong
3. "Revitalization Old Wanchai – A Community Based Urban Design Project" - Mr. Chris Law, The Oval Partnership

Moderator: Mr. Remo Riva, P&T Group

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) equivalent hours : **2 hours**

Free Admission. Space is limited and pre-registration is required. RSVPs will be accommodated on a first come first served basis.

For more details, please refer to the event attached poster. All members who are interested, please register via our Administrative Officer, Ms. Cherry Lau at 2530 8135 or e-mail to cherry.lau@hkiud.org on or before **9 July 2015(Thursday)**. Successful registration will be informed separately. Thank you.

HKIUD
香港城市設計學會
Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design

URBAN DESIGN DIALOGUE

PLACE-MAKING

A Sharing Session

The Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design cordially invites you to join the **Urban Design Dialogue** Sharing Session with the theme "**Place-Making**" on **16 July 2015 (Thursday)**. Event details as follows:

Date: 16 July 2015 (Thursday)
Time: 6:30pm Registration & Cocktail Reception
7:00 – 8:30 pm Sharing Session
Venue: P&T Group, 33/F 633 King's Road, North Point

Topics to share:

1. "Hanoi New City" - P&T Group
2. "Changing Paradigms of Urban Design Practices"
- Dr. HUANG Jianxiang, The University of Hong Kong
3. "Revitalization Old Wanchai - A Community Based Urban Design Project"
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BEAM Pro

Beam Professionals would like to invite HKIUD Members to the BEAM Society Limited 2015 Training Events for which HKIUD is a supporting organisation:

1. **29th BEAM Pro Training & Examination**, 30 July 2015 at HKCEC, Wan Chai
2. **4th BEAM Affiliate Training** on 8 October 2015 at HKPC Building, Kowloon Tong
3. **30th BEAM Pro Training & Examination**, 16 Nov 2015 at HKCEC, Wan Chai

To know more about the BEAM Pro Training, please visit HKGBC / BEAM Society Limited websites:

[http://www.hkgbc.org.hk/eng/beam-Professional.aspx /](http://www.hkgbc.org.hk/eng/beam-Professional.aspx/)

http://www.beamsociety.org.hk/en_professionals_1.php

[More](#)

Comprehensive Certificate Course for BEAM Plus on Indoor Environmental Quality (IEQ) 2015



BEAM Society Limited would like to invite HKIUD Members to the Comprehensive Certificate Course for BEAM Plus on Indoor Environmental Quality (IEQ) 2015 for which HKIUD is a supporting organization. Details are as follows:

Time: 7:00pm - 9:30pm (Every Monday and Wednesday, please refer to timetable)

Venue: BEC Auditorium, G/F, 77 Tat Chee Avenue, Kowloon Tong, Hong Kong

Language: Cantonese with English Terminology.

[More](#)

HKIS Annual Conference 2015 - Development for a Smarter World City: Hong Kong



The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors (HKIS) is organizing the Annual Conference with the theme “Development for a Smarter World City: Hong Kong” on **12th September 2015 (Saturday)** for which HKIUD is a supporting organisation.

[More](#)

HKIUD Meetings Calendar (July)

七月會議

Date	Time	Meetings	Venue
14/7 (Tue)	6:30 pm	Council Meeting	Immediate Past President's Office
29/6 (Wed)	6:30 pm	PAC Meeting	Vice President's Office

Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design Limited

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