

**Category: Green Building Award**

**Subject: Suggestions to Improve the Sustainable-built Environment in Hong Kong**

As Hong Kong has a limited supply of developable land but a tremendous demand for accommodation and economic activities, some problematic phenomena arise. I will discuss two of the most significant ones and provide suggestions to improve them.

The first major problem is walled buildings. Since developers are profit-maximizers, they will construct as many flats as possible by adopting a screen wall design. The wall effect raises air temperature and blocks sunlight, thus increasing the need for extra air-conditioning and illumination, which all require energy consumption. Therefore, walled buildings intensify the problem of energy shortage, harming the needs and well-being of our future generation.

To avoid walled buildings in Hong Kong being exceedingly commonplace, I suggest the government set up regulation to make the release of architectural plans of buildings compulsory. This should then be followed by public consultations, where different stakeholders negotiate with the developers on the architectonic of the buildings as well as bringing up their concerns on wall effects. These discussions can potentially alleviate wall effects, as most developers are willing to bear their corporate social responsibilities. This consequently improves the lighting and temperature of the city, thus reducing the consumption of energy. In short, the government may consider regulating the construction of walled buildings to eradicate this phenomenon.

The second problem that should not be overlooked is street canyon. Dense blocks of buildings are found flanking many streets in Hong Kong. The narrow street in-between the tall buildings on both sides creates a street canyon. Regarding the social impact, the street canyon worsens air quality and accumulates detrimental air pollutants like suspended particulates. These air pollutants heighten the risk of respiratory diseases and hence, worsening citizens' health.

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