

Summary of Items Discussed in APSEC Discussion Forum on 3 August 2012

	Items proposed by Convenors for Discussion	Summary of Discussion and BD's Responses (under preparation)
	<u>Items raised by HKIA</u>	
1.	<p><u>GFA of Entrance Lobby/Lift Shaft</u> APP-2 para 15 (viii): the second sentence should be read in conjunction with the first sentence, i.e. any entrance lobby/lift shaft ABOVE GROUND which serves the development as well as the underground carpark should be fully accountable for GFA. It should not be interpreted as lift shaft which serves the development as well as the underground carpark AT THE CARPARKING FLOOR LEVEL should be accountable for GFA; it has been an established practice that lift shaft passing through a fully carparking floor is exempted from GFA. Please also refer to Appendix A.</p>	<p>Regarding the second sentence of PNAP APP-2 para 15 (vii) – “Any entrance lift/lift shaft which serves the development as well as the underground carpark(s) should be fully accountable for GFA.”, BD confirmed that “accountable for GFA” referred to those floors other than the underground carparking floors.</p>
2.	<p><u>Accountable GFA of Staircase</u> Staircase travelling from one floor to the next should be accountable only once for GFA calculation irrespective of the number of flights; it is again an established practice.</p>	<p>BD confirmed that area of the staircase would be measured at each floor level for the purpose of GFA calculation irrespective of the number of flights between the floors of two adjoining storeys as long as such staircase travelled within the same staircase shaft.</p>
3.	<p><u>Protective Barrier in Staircase Landings</u> It has been discussed and agreed in Oct 2010 Forum that protective barrier in staircase landings is not required but there are recent cases which is contradictory to what has been agreed; please clarify. Please also refer to App B.</p>	<p>BD's reconfirmed that staircases and landings were areas where congregation of people were not expected in the application of horizontal imposed loads on protective barriers. BD also confirmed that B(C)R 8(3) did not apply to staircases and staircase landings.</p>

4.	<p><u>Ventilation Plant Room</u></p> <p>Should Ventilation Plant Room providing Ventilation to Underground Carpark be considered as Essential Plant Room: if the carpark is required to be provided under lease and exempted from GFA since fully underground and ventilation to carpark is required under Environmental regulations (ProPECC PN 2/96), the plant room for same should be considered as essential plant room as well and not subject to the overall cap of 10% of total GFA.</p>	<p>BD confirmed that plant rooms, of reasonable size, housing fans and associated equipment for the purpose of improving air quality in underground carparks would be considered as essential / mandatory plant rooms not subject to the overall cap of 10% of total GFA under PNAP APP-151.</p>
5.	<p><u>FRR for Raised Floor</u></p> <p>APP-83: it has been discussed in previous Forum and we have been advised that raised floor higher than 600 mm may be exempted from FRR requirement if it satisfies certain F.S. requirements although consideration by F.S. Committee would be required; response from fellow members reflects the contrary; please advise.</p>	<p>BD reconfirmed that raised floor systems higher than 600mm might be accepted without adequate FRR subject to submission of justification for the raised floor system and provision of FSIs to the satisfaction of the FSD. (Submission of a fire engineering report to the FS Committee was not necessary unless the project proponent intended to adopt fire engineering approach).</p>
6.	<p><u>Structural level or finishes level for 15 m Measurement for Site Coverage/ Plot Ratio</u></p> <p>It has been a long established practice that dimensions stated in Buildings Ordinance and Regulations normally refer to structure, the 15 m measurement for site coverage/plot ratio should not have any difference from the norm, yet there is recent case that it has to be measured to finishes; please clarify.</p>	<p>BD confirmed that the height of a building for the purpose of site coverage and plot ratio calculations should be measured to the structural level.</p>

7.	<p><u>Chiller Plant and AHU Plant Rooms</u></p> <p>Currently, chiller plant not exceeding 1% of the served area and AHU plants not exceeding 4% of the served area are considered to be reasonable; such figures of 4% and 1% are often found to be inadequate especially when good maintenance is taken into consideration; recently, exemption of areas larger than 4% and 1% as the case may be is usually rejected even though EMSD have confirmed that the proposed sizes are reasonable which results in the undesirable option to expose the chiller plants and even the AHU plants to weather which is environmentally unfriendly both in terms of noise and visual impact; BD is requesting to review the basic restriction of 4% and 1% or take a more lenient view towards cases with valid reasons.</p>	<p>It was agreed that HKIA would prepare a report to demonstrate on the reasonable space requirements for accommodating chiller plants and AHU plants under different scenarios for BD to review on the current criteria for disregarding such floor space from GFA calculation.</p>
8.	<p><u>Undesignated Space in Carpark</u></p> <p>Due to various reasons such as necessity to align basement wall, allowance of turning space for cars, allowance of space for getting off against blank wall, there are undesignated spaces in carpark which are difficult to avoid; BD are requested to allow exemption from GFA for such space provided they are block off by bollards and designated as common area in the DMC.</p>	<p>BD responded that reasonable and genuine undesignated space in carpark would be acceptable in a carpark to be disregarded from the GFA calculation. However, excessive and uncalled for undesignated space would render the entire carpark not acceptable to be disregarded from the GFA calculation. To avoid misuse of the undesignated space, provision of a raised platform, bollards or other appropriate measures might be considered on case basis.</p>
9.	<p><u>Change of interpretation of regulations</u></p> <p>It has been discussed in last Forum on 18-5-12, unfortunately, this is still a general phenomenon especially</p>	<p>BD asked HKIA to collect examples of change of interpretation of regulation on approved GBP during processing of GBP amendments. BD also advised that its staff had been reminded to seek CBS's endorsement if there was a need</p>

	<p>when there is a change in the vetting officer; this ends up in a general fear that whatever approved in respect of aspects not expressed in writing in the regulations or practice notes, cannot be taken as approved. The implication of this cannot be overemphasized.</p>	<p>to request AP to amend plans showing building works which had already been approved previously.</p>
10.	<p><u>Requirement of Refuge Floor under new FS Code 2011</u> Fire Code B8.2(c): the new Fire Code requires both the refuge floor and the roof to be used for interchange between staircases; understood it has been discussed before but view from fellow members is that the new requirement imposes design restrictions that may lead to unnecessary increase in height of building to enable refuge floor to be non accountable for GFA.</p>	<p>BD considered that since there were alternatives for complying with the requirement of interchange between staircases, provision of refuge floor, if not mandatory by itself, would be GFA accountable. However, provision of sky garden cum refuge floor to comply with the aforesaid requirement might be exempted from GFA if the design complied with the acceptance criteria stipulated under the relevant JPN / PNAP.</p>
11.	<p><u>Covered Landscaped Area</u> Covered landscaped area of maximum 5% of total domestic GFA is exempted in accordance with PNAP APP-42 regarding Amenity Features. There are cases that deep internal part of covered landscape area is considered not acceptable for GFA exemption due to lack of direct sunlight and plants cannot grow. Landscaped area can be hard landscape or soft landscape. There are some planting which can grow without direct sunlight. Furthermore, hard landscape such as paving area and water features does not require sunlight. Please also refer to Appendix C.</p>	<p>BD considered that 5% cap was a reasonable provision and it would not be practical to provide a sliding scale corresponding to the building height. If there were specific circumstances that might warrant a higher percentage, application for deviation from this cap could be submitted for consideration. It should be noted that in accordance with PNAP APP-104, the covered landscaped area should be provided under the footprint of the domestic tower. Hence, covered landscaped area under a transfer plate that was excessively large thereby creating flat roofs adjoining domestic floors, would not be acceptable.</p>

12.	<p><u>Height of G/F Covered Landscaped Area</u> Permeability of buildings and increasing extent of greenery are encouraged under PNAP APP-152 for Sustainable Building Design Guidelines. For G/F covered landscape area with higher headroom while keeping the building height capped, the air ventilation is better at pedestrian level and more sunlight can reach the vegetation. BD stated that maximum 4.5 m floor-to-floor height for G/F to 1/F is permitted in the internal guidelines to control building bulk and building height. This is contradictory to the aim of Sustainable Building Design Guidelines to achieve better permeability, air ventilation and encourage growth of covered vegetation.</p>	<p>BD advised that normally 5m floor to floor height would be acceptable for covered landscaped areas. While application for higher height for improvement of ventilation purpose might be considered case by case, restriction on the height of the entrance lobby might dictate the height of the covered landscaped areas.</p>
13.	<p><u>Exit Door and landing</u> Please refer to Appendix D.</p>	<p>BD advised that the scenarios as shown in the attached drawings were acceptable under Clause B13.3 and B14.3 of the Fire Safety Code. However, HKIA were required to consider whether the scenarios as shown could comply with the requirements stipulated in the Design Manual : Barrier Free Access.</p>
14.	<p><u>Void at Upper Part of Sports Hall within Residential Recreational Facilities</u> Please refer to Appendix E.</p>	<p>With reference to PNAP APP-2 and APP-104, BD confirmed that void at upper part of the sports hall forming part of the residential recreational facilities (RRF) would not be subject to the overall 10% cap nor the relevant cap for RRF. .</p>
15.	<p><u>Excavation for Carpark to be Considered Underground</u> Follow-up and related issue pursuant to A.O.B. item 22(c) regarding "Excavation for Carpark to be Considered Underground (Item raised by HKIA)" of the Discussion</p>	<p>BD advised that the criteria for determining whether any carpark would be acceptable as an underground carpark had been adequately spelt out in PNAP APP-2.</p>

	Forum dated 16 March 2012. Please also refer to Appendix F.	
	<u>Items raised by HKIE</u>	
16.	<p><u>Capacity of Socketed H Pile</u></p> <p>When we calculate the allowable compression force between the grout and the pile, can we use the entire length of the pile instead of the "rock socket" portion?</p>	Due to lack of reliable justifications on the effectiveness of confinement provided by surrounding soil, the bond strength between the steel H-pile and grout above the rock socket should not be taken into account in determining the load-carrying capacity of socketed steel H-piles.
17.	<p><u>Cap Consent Rest on Rock</u></p> <p>BD/GEO imposes the consent condition that the rock joint mapping for the footing has to be submitted before footing consent application. That means one has to complete all excavation work and finish the rock joint mapping and then wait for another 28 days before we can start the footing work.</p>	It is understood that the condition for the submission of rock joint mapping before the application of consent for the commencement of footing works is not a common and usual requirement for sites with normal ground conditions. The special requirement is imposed to an individual site with special ground conditions.
18.	<p><u>APP-37 (PNAP 106) for Windows</u></p> <p>A) Under para. 4(ii), submission is required if window least dimension > 1.8m "or" opening area > 6 sq m. Before the PNAP is revised on May 2012, the criteria for submission are satisfying both but not either one. The PNAP is effective immediately and it does interrupt our construction progress because windows do not require BD submission previously are, ready for installation. We then have to wait the construction to go through the submission process. Is it possible that in the future, change of submission rules will</p>	<p>For (A): There could be a misunderstanding of the revision made to APP-137 on the criteria for requiring formal submission of windows or window wall system. In fact, there is no change in the requirements/conditions for plans to be submitted for approval.</p> <p>For (B): The supervision of heat soak process should cover a minimum of 30% of the total glass panes (not for each size). The supervision requirement will not be applicable to the Minor Works.</p>

	<p>only be applicable for GBPs with consent not yet grant?</p> <p>B) Under para.21 for the RSE supervision frequency for heat soak process, it specifies min. 30% of the tempered glass panes used in the project. Does it mean 30% of total number of pieces of glass panes, disregarding the variation in type and size and different manufacturer? And excluding the failure pieces? Will it be applicable for works under the MWCS?</p>	
	<u>AOB</u>	
19.	<p>Friendly Reminder on Preparation of Building Plans and Application for Occupation Permit (Friendly Reminder) (Item raised by BD)</p>	<p>The BD had identified some frequently encountered problems during the processing of plans and applications. To facilitate early approval of plans, reduce the amount of amendments required on plans at the BD's office prior to approval, and to generally reduce abortive work, the BD had compiled a "Friendly Reminder on Preparation of Building Plans and Occupation Permit" for use by APs. Members were requested to convey the Friendly Reminder, as attached, to members of their organizations.</p>
20.	<p>Validity Period of Modification/Exemption (Item raised by BD)</p>	<p>If there were genuine technical difficulties to commence building works within the time limit specified in the permit (Form BD106) granted under section 42 of the Buildings Ordinance, the AP could submit an application for extension of the time limit (EOT). BD advised that genuine technical difficulties should be related to the construction works e.g. difficult site constraints, complicated or large scale site formation or foundation works, or conditions/ requirements imposed by other government departments leading to delays that were beyond the control of the applicant, etc.</p>

		Members were reminded to provide document proofs to substantiate their applications. The applications should be submitted not more than 6 months before the expiration of the time limit of the Form BD106.
21.	Briefing on Unauthorized Building Works (Item raised by BD)	The BD would organize a briefing session for building professionals on better understanding of unauthorized building works. The briefing session was tentatively scheduled in the afternoon on 10.9.2012 at Space Museum. Flyers and tickets would be provided to convenors in due course for them to encourage fellow members of their respective organizations to attend the briefing.
22.	Matters arising from item 22(b) of the meeting on 16.3.2012 and item 21 of the meeting on 18.5.2012 regarding softcopy of Record Plans for R&VD in AutoCAD or Microstation format. (Item raised by BD)	BD reminded members to convey the message to members of their organizations and to provide their response to such request to BD.