

## Summary of Items Discussed in 5/2013 APSEC Discussion Forum on 18 October 2013

	<b>Items proposed by Convenors for Discussion</b>	<b>Summary of Discussion and BD's Responses</b>
	<b>Items raised by HKIA</b>	
1.	<p><u>Circular Letter dated 29 July 2013 – Proof of Ownership of Land</u></p> <p>In BD's circular letter issued on 29 July 2013, there is a new requirement to consider A&amp;A works with additional storeys or horizontal extension resulting in additional floor area as constituting a new building, and the areas concerned require an OP before being occupied.</p> <p>Please confirm that this requirement applies only to A&amp;A projects with works not yet commenced but not to A&amp;A projects for which it has been previously understood to use BA14 to report completion.</p>	<p>(a) The BD advised that for projects with Form BA14 about to be submitted before the circular letter date, the BD might adopt a flexible approach to handle. In this connection, APs might discuss with the case-officers or, if necessary, their seniors for submission of Form BA14 for special circumstances.</p> <p>(b) For the replacement of windows of a building, BD noted that such works might contribute to the superficial areas of main walls to be rebuilt. On the other hand, such works could be carried out under the simplified requirements of the Minor Works Control System.</p> <p>(c) It was raised that for A&amp;A works involving wholesale conversion of an existing industrial building and vertical / horizontal extension requiring the issue of OP, it would render such projects not qualified under the current special waiver policy of LandsD which required an existing industrial building should have an OP issued for not less than 15 years (LandsD's LAO Practice Note Issue No. 1/2010 refers). HKIS also shared similar concern.</p>

<p>2.</p>	<p><u>GFA Calculation for Voids</u></p> <p>Under PNAP ADM-2, Appendix G, item 24, <b>high headroom and void</b> in front of cinema, shopping arcade <b>etc. in non-domestic developments</b> can be excluded in GFA calculation (no need to be within the 10% cap) and under PNAP APP-2, paragraph 2(e), large void in auditoria, sporting halls (including squash courts), school halls and religious institutions can be excluded from GFA.</p> <p>In view that voids above a foyer / library / circulation area providing high headroom in a school or university (a non-domestic development) are a common design feature that enhances the users’ experience, it is reasonable that these voids can be excluded from GFA calculations. Please review if such exclusion is acceptable on application for modification of B(P)R23(3)(a).</p>	<p>Appendix B of PNAP APP-2 had provided a list of items subject to the new GFA concessions policy. According to Note 8 for Item 24 of the list regarding high headroom and void in front of a cinema, shopping arcade, etc, in a non-domestic development, high headroom and void in school hall having operational justifications might be disregarded from GFA. Therefore, whether the GFA concessions could be granted for other items in a school or university would depend on individual merits of the case. Large void purely serving visual or aesthetic functions would be critically assessed by the BD balancing the claimed benefits against increase of the building bulk and the likelihood of abuse.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p><u>Code of Practice for Fire Safety in Buildings 2011 (FS Code)</u></p> <p>(a) <u>Matter relating to Exit Route</u></p> <p>With reference to the definition of “Special hazard” in Section 3 (p.18) of the CoP for Fire Safety in Buildings 2011 (FS Code), “special hazard areas include transformer rooms, electrical plant rooms, central A/C plant rooms, lift machine rooms, main switch rooms, generator room, boiler rooms and the like.” And in Clause B5.4 of the FS Code, “any opening from such area of special hazard into <u>any exit route</u> should be provided with a protected lobby”.</p>	<p>(a) The BD advised that the concerned phrase “any exit route” included both protected and unprotected exit route and explained that those rooms mentioned in the definition of “Special Hazard” were usually of higher risks than other common building services plant rooms such as water meter room which would not require the provision of a lobby. HKIA would prepare a list of those other common building services plant rooms which could not fall within the “Special Hazard” category in the definition clause under Section 3 of the Fire Code (p.18) for BD’s consideration.</p>

Please advise if “any exit route” refers to any internal area in the building, including unprotected corridors, or does it refer to just protected parts of an exit route.

(b) Matter relating to Fire Barriers

With reference to Clause C8.1 of the FS Code, “openings should not be formed at fire barriers forming part of a fire compartment as described in Clause C3.1 unless such openings are protected by fire rated doors or fire shutters having an FRR of not less than that of such fire barriers”, meaning that fire rated doors can function as fire barriers. However, with reference to Clause C10.3 (a) regarding an atrium in a sprinkler protected building, “the fire barrier can be formed by fire rated walls, fire shutters, fire curtains or fire rated glazings”, wherein fire rated doors are not mentioned.

Please clarify whether fire barriers can be formed by fire rated doors.

(c) Smoke Seal Lobby for Lift Doors at the Basement

Clause C9.1(d) of the FS Code requires that where “a lift connects basement with storeys above the ground storey, the lift doors at the basement should be protected by a **smoke seal lobby** complying with Part E”. Our understanding is that such smoke seal lobby (including the door of such lobby) does not need to be of FRR construction, and only the lift well and the lift door are required to have FRR as per Clause C9.1(a) to (c). Please advise if this understanding is correct.

(b) The BD confirmed that fire rated doors were acceptable for protection of openings formed in fire barriers under Clause C10.3(a) of the FS Code for the purpose of separating the atrium from other spaces. In response to a query, the BD further clarified that there was no requirement on smoke seal performance for the fire rated door provided under Clause C8.1 of the FS Code.

(c) The BD confirmed that the smoke seal lobby concerned did not require to have any specific FRR. However, its construction should be able to perform its function as a smoke seal lobby under the relevant criteria of the testing standard. In addition, if the subject lift was a fireman’s lift, the lobby and lobby doors should have the required FRR in accordance with Clause D11.1 of the FS Code.

4.	<p><u>GFA and SC Calculations for Curtain Walls</u>  PNAP APP-2 para. 6(b) requires that “a <u>dwarf perimeter wall</u> not less than 300mm high measured from the floor level” is needed for disregarding the curtain wall from GFA/SC calculation. Please advise if such dwarf perimeter wall can be of solid block work construction.</p>	<p>One of the criteria for granting GFA concessions for curtain wall was that the curtain wall system should not result in any additional floor area at a floor level by providing a dwarf perimeter wall not less than 300mm high measure from the floor level. The provision of solid block work construction as dwarf perimeter wall does not fulfill the above requirement and was not acceptable.</p>
	<p><b>Item raised by HKIE</b></p>	
5.	<p><u>Arrangement for Site Inspection</u>  Recently, it is noted that it takes more than 3 weeks for BD to arrange for site inspection for witnessing test piles, loading test and test installation etc. As it would have great implication to the development program, we would like to seek BD’s kind assistance to reduce the waiting time within 2 weeks.</p>	<p>It was noted that there was a case in which the time taken to carry out site inspection on foundation work had been exceeding 2 weeks only by few days. The BD explained that the slight delay was due to heavy workload and scheduling of the BD officer concerned, and the case was only an isolated one. The BD agreed to remind staff to arrange site inspections for witnessing foundation works within 2 weeks as far as possible to ensure that the construction programmes would not be adversely affected.</p>
	<p><b>Item raised by HKIS</b></p>	
6.	<p><u>Acknowledgment of Form BA14</u>  Some members raised concern on the serious delay for issuance of BA14 acknowledgement letter. Pursuant to PNAP APP-13, the Buildings Department will generally provide a reply to Form BA14 within 28 days advising the acceptance of the completed works or the outstanding issues to be rectified. However, some members reported</p>	<p>The BD explained the persistent heavy workload currently encountered by staff and envisaged that after the proposed streamlining in the processing of drainage plans, resources could be redirected to handle Form BA14 submissions. In the meantime, APs could, if necessary, approach case-officers or their seniors for</p>

	that the acknowledgement letter for some A&A projects were left unattended for over 3 months. It imposes great influence to the owners because most tenants request to see BD's acknowledgement letter before signing a tenancy agreement. Also it affects consultant's and contractor's stage payment. We would like to seek BD's kind assistance to review the situation.	assistance for individual cases. On the other hand, the BD reminded AP/RSE that all required supporting documents and test reports should be submitted together with the Form BA14 to facilitate the processing. For those Forms BA14 pending for the issue of acknowledgement letters, quite a number of them were due to outstanding documents from the AP/RSE.
	<b>AOB Items</b>	
7.	<p><u>Review of Sustainable Building Design Guidelines</u> (Item raised by HKIA) HKIA enquired about the review progress of the Sustainable Building Design Guidelines.</p>	<p>(a) HKIA highlighted that pursuant to the Circular Letter dated 29 July 2013 on A&amp;A works involving erection of a new building, there had been uncertainty and ambiguity as to how SBDG should be applied to such works. Similar problem also existed in partial redevelopment of a site where parts of the existing premises were to be retained. The current PNAP APP-152 had not addressed the above situations, and it was not well-defined as to how the existing portion of the building(s) should be assessed under the SBDG. The BD was asked to review and address the above situations as soon as possible.</p> <p>(b) The BD stated that the SBDG were issued 2 years ago and were being updated based on experience gained. In the meantime, APs should justify their individual cases with genuine difficulties for such “new” buildings not complying SBDG.</p>
8.	<u>Consent &amp; Form BD103 for GI, Foundation and ELS Works</u>	

	<p>(Item raised by HKIE)</p> <p>Matters arising from Item 9 of the APSEC Discussion Forum on 10 May 2013 regarding the dispatch arrangement for consent and Form BD 103 for GI, Foundation and ELS Works.</p>	<p>The BD agreed to further remind their Sectional Registry to directly despatch the consent letter together with Form BD103 for GI, Foundation and ELS works to RSE or RGE who submit the Form BA 8 for consent application.</p>
9.	<p><u>AP / RSE / RGE to Present at BC / SEC Meetings</u></p> <p>(Item raised by HKIE)</p> <p>HKIE would like BD to clarify if AP / RSE / RGE were not allowed to present at BC / SEC Meeting anymore.</p>	<p>The BD explained that the case CBS / CSE of New Buildings Division, being a member of the internal BC / SEC respectively would present the case for the BC / SEC's consideration. However, there would not be objection that for complicated cases, the project AP/RSE/RGE might be requested to standby and invited to join the BC / SEC meeting to respond for technical enquiries and provide additional information on their submissions when necessary.</p>
10.	<p><u>FS Code Subsection E13 – Internal Wall and Ceiling Linings and Decorative Finishes</u></p> <p>(Item raised by AAP)</p> <p>Pursuant to FS Code Subsection E13, all decorative finishes and linings are required to be tested for their non-combustibility. AAP expressed that these decorative finishes and linings could achieve a surface spread of flame characteristic of not worse than Class 1 or 2 determined in accordance with BS 476 Part 7, but difficult to achieve “non-combustible” for test in accordance with BS 476 Part 4. AAP would like BD to review the need of fulfillment of BS 476 Part 4 standard for these decorative finishes and linings.</p>	<p>The BD would study the background of the requirements on non-combustible materials for linings and decorative finishes within protected exits under FS Code Clause E13 and conduct a review if necessary.</p>

11.	<p><u>Provision of Refuse Storage and Material Recovery Chambers / Material Recovery Chambers / Latrines at the Staircase Landings of the Required Staircases</u></p> <p>(Item raised by AAP and HKIS)</p> <p>AAP and HKIS raised concern about the disapproval of plans in respect of the non-provision of 2 exits for refuse storage and material recovery chambers / material recovery chambers / latrines at the staircase landings of the required staircase.</p>	<p>The BD explained that, in general, ancillary plant rooms (such as refuse storage and material recovery chambers / material recovery chambers) / lavatories without designated population might be located at the protected lobby of a required staircase subject to their reason size and function and the provision of fire rated door with adequate FRR.</p>
12.	<p><u>Flue Aperture for Bathroom</u></p> <p>(Item raised by HKIA)</p> <p>HKIA enquired about the progress of discussion between BD and EMSD on the provision of flue aperture for bathroom.</p>	<p>(a) The BD confirmed that for situation in case electrical heater would be provided in a domestic unit in lieu of a gas heater, an application for modification to just provide one standard size gas flue aperture to serve all bathrooms would be favourably considered, subject to that a viable schematic design to be submitted illustrating how a single gas heater can be installed in future to serve the various hot water points within the premises to the satisfaction of the Water Authority and in compliance with the Waterworks Regulation 19 (Cap 102).</p> <p>(b) HKIA raised that for open kitchen design supported by a fire engineering report, among others, on a condition of the non-provision of gas supply to the premises, an application for</p>

		<p>exempting the provision of a gas flue aperture (i.e. non-provision of gas flue aperture to the premises) should be favourably considered. The BD advised that they might favourably consider the proposed non-provision of gas flue aperture under such special circumstances subject to no objection from the EMSD.</p>
13.	<p><u>Scope of Works of RGBC and RSC(D) at the Demolition Stage</u> (Item raised by HKIS)</p> <p>Noting that RSC(D) may be required for the demolition works in an extensive A&amp;A submission, HKIS would like to know the different scopes of works of a RGBC and a RSC(D) in this regard.</p>	<p>The BD advised that the Building (Demolition Works) Regulations and CoP for Site Supervision had provided an interpretation for significant and substantial demolition works, which served as a basis of differentiating the scope of works to be carried out by a RGBC or a RSC(D). The BD further reminded that the scope and extent of works to be carried out by a RGBC / RSC(D) should be demarcated clearly on the plan.</p>
14.	<p><u>Checking of Drainage Plan and Completed Drainage Works</u> (Item raised by BD)</p> <p>Matters arising from Item 11 of the APSEC Discussion Forum on 2 August 2013 regarding the curtailed checking of drainage plans.</p>	<p>The BD introduced the refined curtailed checking system for drainage plans as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) in order to improve the efficiency in processing drainage plans, a checklist for drainage submissions would be provided to the stakeholders for incorporating into the plans;</li> <li>(b) to avoid unnecessary cross referrals within BD, AP and RSE</li> </ul>

		<p>should arrange the structural details of a new submission, resubmission, amendment or major revision of drainage plans should form a separate submission for New Buildings Division 2's processing. More information on the scope and types of structural details to be incorporated in the structural submission would be provided in due course;</p> <p>(c) the items of fundamental issues to be checked would be curtailed and only a specified percentage of the proposed drainage works in the drainage plan submissions would be randomly checked by the BD; and</p> <p>(d) only a specified percentage of the completed drainage works would be randomly checked in the OP inspection by the BD.</p> <p>In the interim, the BD would accept and process voluntary separate submission of structural details of proposed drainage works.</p> <p>The BD stressed that it was the APs' statutory duties and responsibility to ensure their submissions were in compliance with the Buildings Ordinance.</p>
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