

EDITOR'S PREFACE BY WONG WAH SANG

What is particular of Hong Kong architecture and why is this book written?

High-rise buildings constructed next to each other are a common scene in Hong Kong. On the street level, buildings are uninterruptedly connected to the pedestrian pavement. Hence, there have been remarks that such have formed a concrete jungle. This is a result of limited space for the built environment to cater for millions of people to live. As one of the most densely populated modern cities in the world, the buildings in Hong Kong are controlled through legislation of buildings and land to allow reasonable living standards for habitants as well as a fair opportunity for private/commercial projects to develop relating to their context.

It is the purpose of this book to provide expertise knowledge even for those who are not professionals to understand how the design of buildings is regulated legally in Hong Kong. The building code does not stand alone and it actually relates closely to the real estate market. As one of the most expensive cities to live in caused mainly by the high cost of the housing market in Hong Kong, buildings are often manipulated within the various restrictions of the building code for the most effective outcome of real estate profit. Of course, the building code is not written for the real estate market. It has basic objective to make buildings designed to be healthy and safe. However, the code that we have now was initially created in the fifties. Though under many years of amendments and additions, the present regulations and other legal control in the code are getting over-complicated and may not respond efficiently well to cater for the modern city with advanced construction technology and modern way of living and working. It is the wish of the editors to reveal the legislative control behind buildings for everyone so the restraints of building design will be understood and eventually improved to be adaptable to modern living and the future generations.

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