

# Guidelines for a Sustainable Hong Kong Harbour

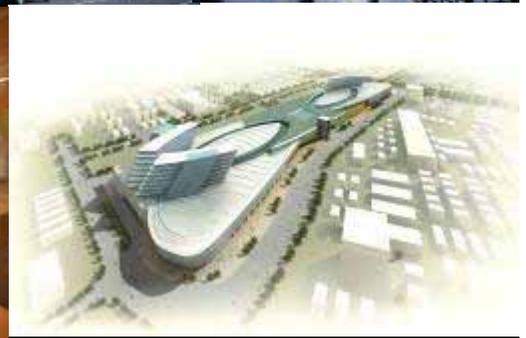


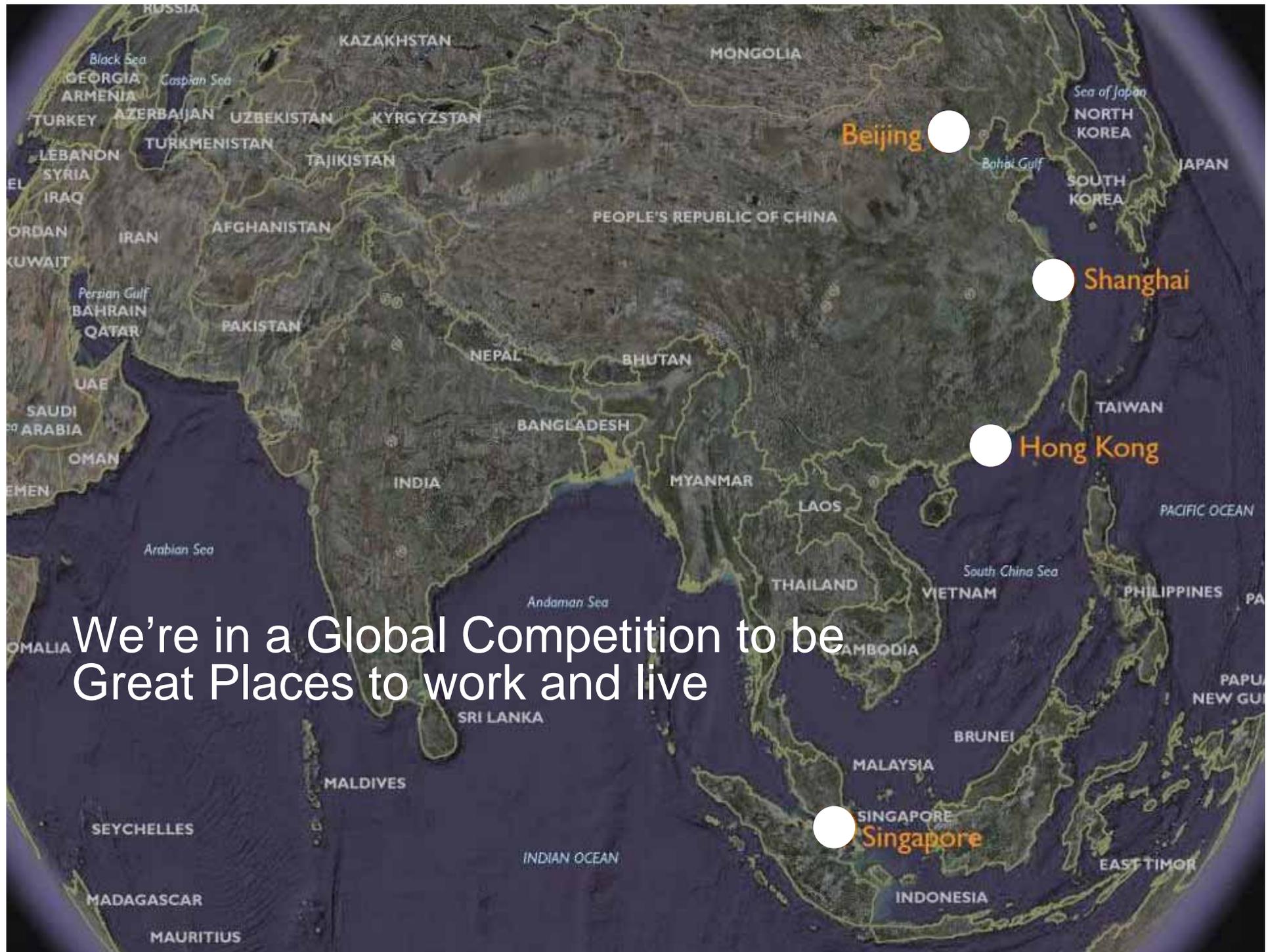
Harbour Enhancement Committee  
Harbourwide Design Guidelines

Harbour Business Forum  
Sustainable Guidelines

↑  
source of ideas  
to complement  
HEC process

Tangible, sustainable urban design recommendations from the perspective of the business community looking at the big picture of the Harbour to avoid piecemeal planning and design decisions and bolster Hong Kong's competitive advantage





We're in a Global Competition to be Great Places to work and live



Dizzying Growth

# Competition For Identity





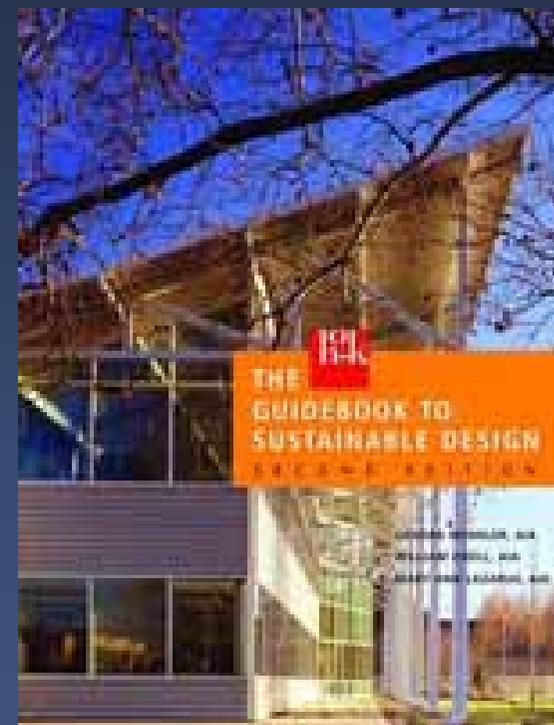
Loss Of Heritage and  
Environment

# HOK Sustainable Design

Planning, design, and delivery strategies



HOK is committed to building  
a better world.



# Complete Sustainability

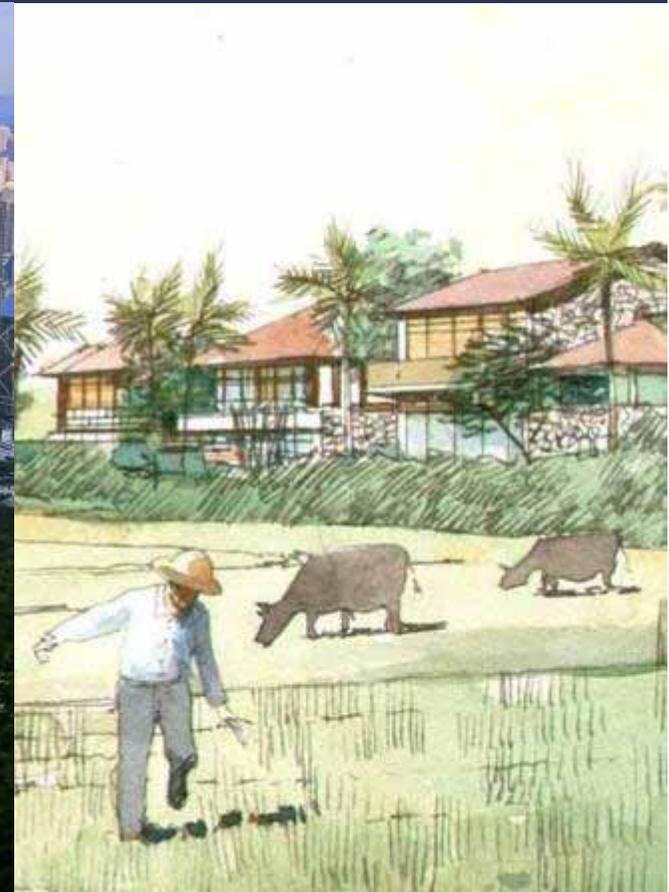
Value from Natural  
and Built Heritage



Economic Flexibility  
and Competitiveness



Social Ownership and  
Cultural Sensitivity



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graph TD; A[Harbour Enhancement Committee Harbourwide Design Guidelines] --- B[Harbour Business Forum Sustainable Guidelines]; B --> C((Interviews & Focus Groups)); B --> D((Harbour Case Studies)); B --> E((General Member Meetings)); B --> F((Global Precedents)); B --> G((Harbour Surveys & Analysis));
```

Harbour Enhancement Committee  
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Harbour Business Forum  
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Interviews &  
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Analysis



Guidelines for a Sustainable Hong Kong Harbour

June 2007



## The Dilemma of Design Guidelines

A statutory limbo, especially in the cherished freedom of development choice in Hong Kong.



What to Achieve

How to Achieve

Why to Achieve



### **Diverse and Accessible Waterfront**

Create a diverse and accessible pedestrianised waterfront that enhances Hong Kong people's quality of life.

#### **A1 Enable Access**

Prioritize waterfront access to pedestrians via clear corridors and land and marine-based public transportation.

#### **A2 Open to all Users**

Make the harbour usable for all people by creating a variety of activities that provide a sense of enjoyment, a sense of place.

#### **A3 Connect Promenade**

Create memorable experiences along a continuous waterfront promenade that invites the public back for more.



### **Business and Economic Opportunities**

Create a business and economic framework that captures the value of the harbour's global competitive advantage.

#### **B1 Leverage Waterfront**

Promote business and commercial uses that benefit from direct access to the harbour and uniquely contribute to harbour activity.

#### **B2 Build Harbour Brand**

Protect, increase and capitalise upon the real estate value, prestige of address, and brand identity imparted by the waterfront and skyline.

#### **B3 Diversify & Synergize**

Encourage synergies that come from diverse economic activity across the whole harbour.



### **Enhance Hong Kong's Key Environmental Asset**

Enhance and preserve the harbour's cultural and environmental heritage.

#### **E1 Celebrate Heritage**

Enrich the many parts of the waterfront by reflecting the heritage and culture of its shoreline and interior neighbourhoods.

#### **E2 Reduce Infrastructure**

Enhance the harbour's natural environment by reducing the dominance of roadways, logistic, industrial and utilitarian activities at the waterfront.

#### **E3 Improve Breatheability**

Enable circulation of air and waterfront senses to and from the harbour and the city.



# A



Diverse and  
Accessible  
Waterfront

*Create a diverse and accessible pedestrianised waterfront  
that enhances Hong Kong people's quality of life*

# A



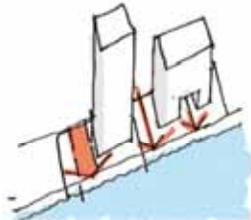
## Diverse and Accessible Waterfront

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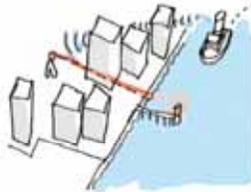
*Prioritize waterfront access to pedestrians via clear corridors and land and marine-based public transportation.*

The following guidelines can enhance the development value of the harbour by enabling greater pedestrian traffic and activities on the waterfront and reducing navigational barriers to harbour-front-located commerce.



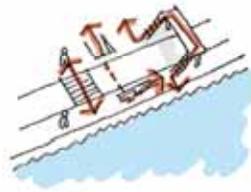
**A1.1 Provide Public Access through All Corridors**

Ensure safe, inviting public access through all new developments leading to the harbour. Convert private access corridors to public access and remove barriers that discourage public uses.



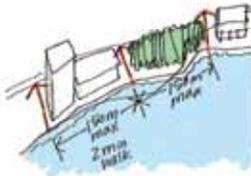
**A1.4 Visual Anchors to Guide Pedestrians to the Waterfront**

The harbour serves as an important point of reference for pedestrians, whether they are on the water's edge or deep in the city. Whenever possible, waterfront landmarks, signage and visual or sound cues should be preserved to intuitively lead pedestrians to the waterfront and to make the spatial layout of the city more understandable as a whole.



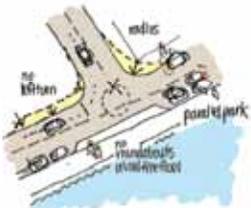
**A1.2 Promote Pedestrian Choice of Access especially At-Grade Crossings**

Street level crossing to the harbour should be a priority, offering the most direct and clear access. Platforms, bridges, subway tunnels, passages through buildings – provide additional choice, but should not replace at-grade, public crossings as they do not create the same confidence of belonging and ownership for pedestrians.



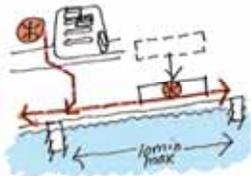
**A1.5 Ensure High Frequency of Access Corridors along Waterfront**

Access corridors to the waterfront from inland should occur regularly and frequently. Direct pedestrian access to the harbour should be not more than a four minute walking distance from any district destination. The waterfront should have a public access inland to the nearest public roadway at intervals of no more than 2 mins walks, about 150m maximum.



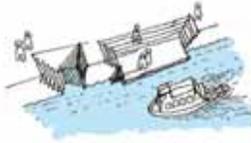
**A1.3 Accommodate Slow, Calm Vehicular Access to Waterfront**

Design of the harbour-front should provide access opportunities for the physically challenged, the elderly and families. In providing this access, a slow, calm vehicular environment is essential, which can be achieved through features like on-street drop-offs, parallel street parking, minimized radii for roadway geometry, minimal numbers of lanes, junctions requiring full stops for vehicles and elimination of dedicated turn lanes.



**A1.6 Ensure Connectivity to Public Transportation**

Waterfront corridors should have uninterrupted links to MTR stations, bus termini and ferry piers. Prioritize new MTR stations directly on the waterfront to improve ease of public access, particularly at points of commercially active waterfront uses. Create more public and private ferry landings, at least one every ten minutes walking distance along the harbour-front.

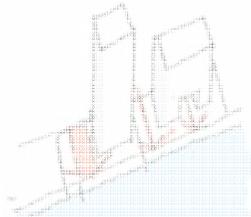


**A1.7 Improve Access from the Sea**

Create more informal landings and steps to the harbour to enable passenger loading and unloading from sea craft and pleasure boats.

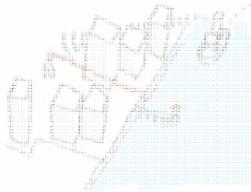


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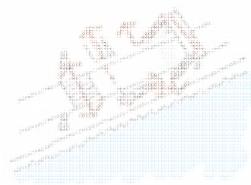
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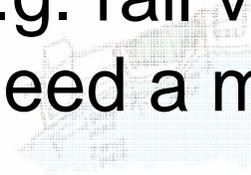
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A1.2 Promote Pedestrian Access

Is it intuitive? e.g. rail vs. bus  
"Oh you don't need a map..."

Street level crossing to the harbour should be a priority. The most direct and clear access to the waterfront should be provided. Platform crossings should replace at-grade public crossings as they do not create the same confidence of belonging and ownership for pedestrians.



A1.3 High Frequency of Access Corridors along Waterfront

Access corridors to the waterfront from inland should occur regularly and frequently. Direct pedestrian access should be not more than a four minute walking distance from any district destination. The waterfront should have a public access inland to the nearest public roadway at intervals of no more than 2 mins walks, about 150m maximum.



A1.5 Waterfront

Waterfront corridors should have uninterrupted links to the waterfront to improve ease of access, particularly at points of commercial activity. Create more direct links from the Sea



A1.6 Public Transportation

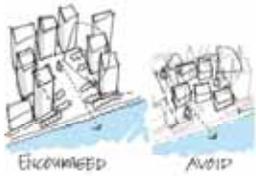
Waterfront corridors should have uninterrupted links to the waterfront to improve ease of access, particularly at points of commercial activity. Create more direct links from the Sea

Is there a perceived convenience barrier?  
"Can I squeeze it in to my busy schedule?"  
"I've got kids, ma and stuff, but I won't find parking..."  
"Which bus line gets me close again?"



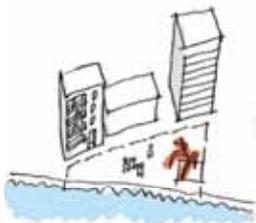
*Make the harbour usable for all people by creating a variety of activities that provide a sense of enjoyment, a sense of place.*

Once at the waterfront the public should feel welcome to experience the waterfront at any time of day, at any age, in any social situation. Access comprises not only the ability to get to the waterfront, but also the peace of mind and sense of belonging to stay and enjoy it time and again.



**A2.1 Take Advantage of Openness for Waterfront Activities**

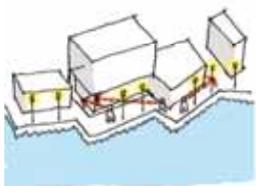
Activate wide open waterfront spaces with recreational uses that encourage interaction with the water. Create these "breathing rooms" at the ground level. Maximize natural landscaping and amenities to create a sense of the harbour environment extending into the districts.



**A2.2 Encourage Uses that Maintain Activity throughout Day and Evening**

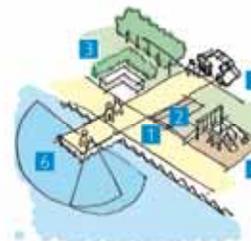
Carefully balance the uses in each area so that activity can be maintained throughout the day and evening. This can be achieved through a mix of commercial, residential, hotel, and cultural destinations.

Create a sense of ownership and pride in the harbour by ensuring opportunities for public art and exhibitions.



**A2.3 Ensure a Sense of Security**

Ensure that paths and passages away from the waterfront to nearby streets are clearly visible from every public part of the waterfront, and are no more than three minutes walk from any point on the waterfront. Provide sufficient pedestrian lighting and mobile phone coverage along such areas.



**A2.4 Ensure Access for all User Groups**

The following elements are essential along the waterfront to accommodate the needs of specific user groups.

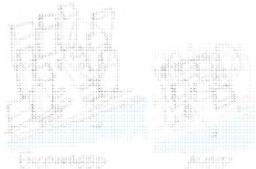
1. Unobstructed pathways	Elderly Handicapped Athletes Prams
2. Facilities for pets	Pet owners
3. Private corners and nooks in the shade	Couples Small groups
4. Safety designed activity areas	Families School children Teenagers
5. Easy drop-off / pick up	Business people and travellers Shift workers
6. Vantage points	Leisure tourists





Make the harbour usable for all people by creating a variety of activities that provide a sense of enjoyment, a sense of place.

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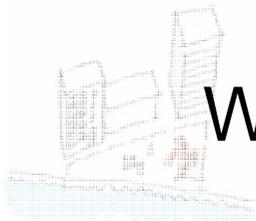


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Is it comfortable to be there?

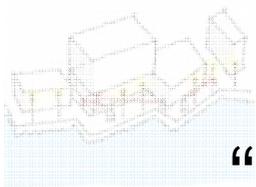


**A2.2 Encourage Uses that Maintain Activity throughout Day and Evening**  
Carefully balance the uses in each area so that activity can be maintained throughout the day and evening. Create a mix of residential, commercial, and recreational uses.

Will users think, "I'd better stay closer to places that meet my needs?"



- 1. Landmarks and pathways
  - 2. Facilities for pets
  - 3. Private corners and nooks in the shade
  - 4. Drop-off / pick up
  - 5. Vantage points
- Elderly
  - Handicapped
  - Athletes
  - Prans
  - Pet owners
  - Couples
  - Small groups
  - Families
  - School children
  - Teenagers
  - Business people and travellers
  - Shift workers
  - Leisure
  - tourists



**A2.3 Ensure a Sense of Security**  
Ensure that paths and passages away from the waterfront to nearby streets are clearly visible. Make every public part of the waterfront accessible in less than three minutes walk from any point on the waterfront. Provide sufficient pedestrian lighting and signage.

or will they think

"I don't know what to do today with my mother-in-law in town, I'm sure the waterfront will have something?"



*Create memorable experiences along a continuous waterfront promenade that invites the public back for more.*

The promenade is a place where people can feel connected to the waterfront and feel the context of the city. Pedestrians will also be able to connect from one part of the city to the next via the promenade.



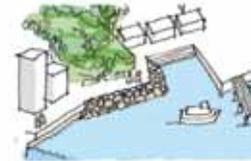
### A3.1 Ensure a Connected Promenade

A connected promenade should circle the harbour at the water's edge. Where this is infeasible, the promenade can depart from the water's edge but should remain unbroken. Pedestrian, retail and dining activity may extend over the water's edge to help make this happen.



The promenade should be wide enough to safely accommodate pedestrians, bicycles, skateboarders, dog walkers, seating and emergency vehicular traffic, along with provisions for prams, handicapped and elderly. Bicycles and higher speed traffic should have a dedicated right of way where possible. The number of vehicular crossings should be minimized, and traffic calming measures be implemented to prioritize pedestrians.

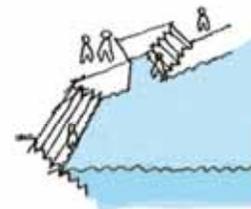
Where the width that is adjacent to the water's edge becomes too narrow to accommodate both pedestrian and bicycle traffic, the bicycle route should pull away but remain continuous and well marked. Future provision for a tramway should be retained where possible, sharing right-of-way with bicycles if necessary.



### A3.2 Provide Diversity of Promenade Character

The physical treatment of the waterfront edge should be consistent with a district's identity and character; and accommodate desired waterfront activities. This may include careful placement of seawalls at pier/boarding locations, rip raps, steps to access the water, and gravel and sand beaches.

To avoid a monotonous experience, the promenade should not extend for more than three minutes walk without an interruption in its character.



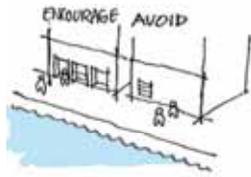
### A3.3 Encourage Access to the Water

The ability to touch the water is a fundamental part of any complete waterfront experience. Fishing is accessible from some locations today, and more should be created through steps leading into the water, piers and beaches. Although today's water quality may not be inviting to many people, the harbour's edge should accommodate improvements over time.



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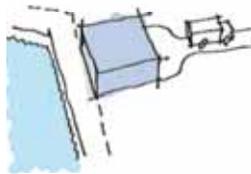


#### A3.4 Activate Promenade Edges

Entrances and pedestrian openings to harbour-front development should face the water edge. Building facades on the water side should have no length greater than ten meters without openings or fenestrations that enhance the pedestrian promenade experience.

Smaller buildings of 1-2 storey heights allow permeability and more interesting pedestrian spaces, protect views from corridors and existing users, and can follow an articulated water edge, creating more opportunities for diversity and vibrancy.

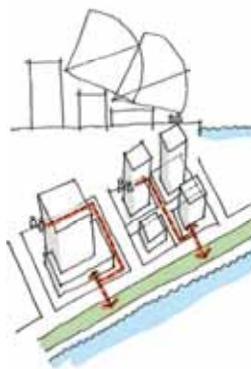
Larger buildings block ventilation to the interior, and cut off views and access, requiring pedestrians to walk around buildings and often have less variety of route.



#### A3.5 Avoid Interruptions to the Promenade

To prevent utilities and services from negatively impacting the pedestrian experience on the promenade, all regular service entries should be placed off the waterfront address and the promenade. Utility facilities should be carefully placed to prevent obstructing public access.

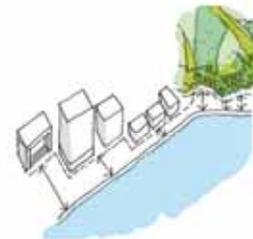
Lower building heights closer to the water so as to provide views to the harbour for as many users as possible, even from points well inland. This also fosters small scale harbour-front development, and minimizes the sense of buildings hanging over pedestrians enjoying the waterfront.



#### A3.6 Protect Human Scale of the Waterfront Experience

The scale of the waterfront needs to be sensitive to the users. This requires design guidelines specifically addressing setbacks and heights of the buildings, shadowing, and the width of sidewalks and roadways.

New developments on the harbour-front should be of smaller scale to provide for multiple pedestrian access points at ground level, between low scaled buildings to a variety of waterfront open spaces and the harbour.



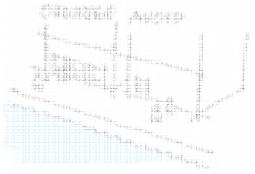
#### A3.7 Vary Setback of Buildings According to Uses

A minimum waterfront setback should be maintained for a continuous pedestrian promenade. Setbacks should widen and narrow at various locations to enhance the diversity and character and create a sense of procession from one discreet waterfront district to the next. These setbacks should be consistent with the district identities and generously accommodate desired waterfront activities.



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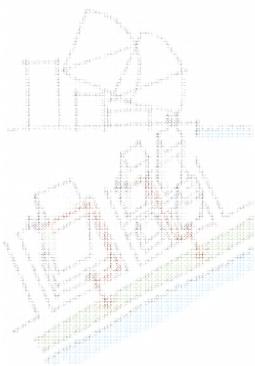


**A3.5 Avoid Interruptions to the Promenade**

To prevent utilities and services from negatively impacting the pedestrian experience on the promenade, utility and service lines should be placed underground. Utility facilities should be carefully placed to prevent obstructing public access.

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# Can we guarantee the waterfront as a viable destination?



**A3.6 Protect Human Scale of the Waterfront Experience**

The scale of the waterfront needs to be sensitive to the users. This requires carefully addressing setbacks, building heights, shadows, shading and the width of sidewalks and roadways.

**Variable Setback of Buildings** According to Urban Design Guidelines, a minimum waterfront setback should be maintained for a continuous pedestrian promenade. Setbacks should widen and narrow at various locations to enhance the diversity and character and create a sense of procession from one discreet waterfront district to the next. These setbacks should be consistent with the district identities and generously accommodate desired waterfront activities.

New developments on the harbour-front should be of smaller scale to provide for multiple pedestrian access points at ground level, between low scaled buildings to a variety of waterfront open spaces and the harbour.

# Can we erase doubt?



# B

## Business and Economic Opportunities

*Create a business and economic framework that captures  
the value of the harbour's global competitive advantage*



B

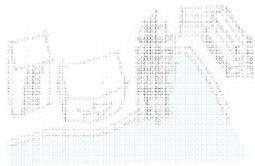
## Business and Economic Opportunities

*Create a business and economic framework that captures  
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Promote business and commercial uses that benefit from direct access to the harbour and uniquely contribute to harbour activity.

The waterfront is a limited brand and resource. The following guidelines help the city make the most of its waterfront and not waste it on activities that could be located anywhere else.



**B1.1 Encourage Activities Derive Special Value from Such Contact**

Such activities may include, but not be limited to:

- open amphitheatre
- aquarium
- maritime uses
- commercial uses that have thematic or topic relationship with water, maritime activity, views and nature, or other harbour references
- residential uses that capture visual and physical access to the waterfront and allow public access at the water's edge
- temporary uses and events that enjoy the backdrop of the Harbour and its public access, like carnival.



**B1.4 Create Visual Stimulation on Waterfront**

Disguise vehicular and service access points, ventilation grilles, and other clearly utilitarian facades of offending uses. Locate facilities away from the water's edge at a distance that accommodates the promenade to protect visitor experience of the waterfront.

Move cargo warehousing and industrial uses that create excessive noise, pollution and debris pose threats to public safety. Activities that pose little threat to public safety are encouraged to create a lively & diverse atmosphere.



**B1.2 Provide Public-Orientated Infrastructure that Supports Activities**

Such elements include lighting, new public facilities such as toilets, swimming pools that face the harbour, exercise areas.



**B1.5 Ensure Water Related Uses Maintain Access to the Water's Edge**

Some maritime, commercial and institutional uses generate activity and destination, but have operational and security requirements that may restrict public access to the water. Such uses should be located at a less significant point on the waterfront in terms of public access, geographic significance, cultural or natural heritage, or open vista. Public access should be guaranteed for as much of the day and year as possible.

Are users making the most of being on the waterfront?

Are they allowing the public to do the same?

**B1.3 Prioritize Waterfront Land Uses**

Land uses and activities that can function while located away from the waterfront should take less priority, including but not limited to, stacks and arenas, internally focused uses like indoor cinemas, private institutions and warehouse and industrial uses.



Protect, increase and capitalise upon the real estate value, prestige of address, and brand identity imparted by the waterfront and skyline.

Through careful planning and thoughtful consideration, Hong Kong harbour should be able to strike a fine balancing act that accommodates businesses, residents, and tourists. Accomplishing a well planned and functioning harbour will further enhance the brand of Hong Kong.

**B2.1 Reinforce Hong Kong's Competitive Advantage**

A beautiful harbour environment can be a key factor in attracting talented profession to H.K.

It is important to provide a variety of residential types and densities along the harbour's edge to help Hong Kong compete with other cities in providing a vibrant waterfront.

The visual composition of Hong Kong's skyline changes continuously with the rising dominance of vertical elements (skyscrapers). The postcard image of Hong Kong can gain depth and scale with a foreground layer of waterfront elements. These elements emphasize the mountains in the background.

**B2.2 Enhance the Harbour**

New developments affecting the skyline should complement Hong Kong's signature skyline.

**B2.3 Retain the Sense of Connection from Hills to Water**

The building free zone below the ridgeline should be enforced to preserve these views. Though subjective in nature, the measure of view protection can be made from historically important vista locations, including Victoria Park, West Kowloon Point, the tip of Kai Tak runway, Tsim Sha Tsui waterfront, HKCEC, and the Star Ferry terminal.

**B2.4 Reflect District's Identity with Compatible Waterfront**

Development in each area should be compatible with the primary economic and community identity of each district and respond to the needs and types of activities that enhance the district's identity.

**B2.5 Create Unique Waterfront Addresses**

Create conditions that demand high quality design by establishing high value waterfront street addresses. This is achievable with:

- Alignments that follow the contours of the waterfront thereby creating shorter stretches of streets, giving addresses feel part of a bigger picture.
- Reduce traffic flow with narrow widths and fewer lanes.

**B2.6 Balance Vertical Views with Unifying Horizontal Foreground Layer**

Use a mix of varying heights to create a foreground of lower developments on the waterfront, and taller developments located inland.

**B2.7 Encourage Uses and Developments that Embody Sustainable Design**

Encourage uses and development that illustrate, exemplify and educate Hong Kong's leadership in responsible landuse. Prioritize use of HKBEAM and other measures of sustainable planning and design.

Is the Harbour deriving value from the user as much as the user is deriving value from the Harbour?

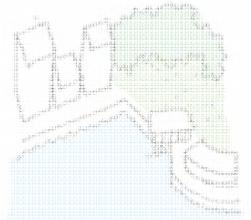
Are roadways positioned as Addresses instead of merely infrastructure?

Do projects build Harbour reputation?



Encourage synergies that come from diverse economic activity across the whole harbour.

Projects and developments should be considered in the context of the whole harbour, not just one site or even one district. These guidelines illustrate a holistic approach that puts the right uses in the right places when the harbour is viewed as one dynamic, non-competing whole.

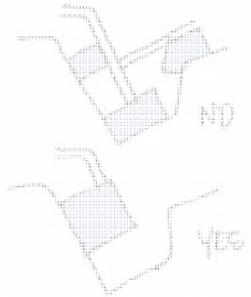


**B3.1 Creating Multi-Visit Destinations**  
A diversity of destinations and activities across the entire waterfront encourages a broad spectrum of visitors. In addition to active uses, certain spaces should be reserved for low intensity activities. Avoid concentrating singular uses all in one area. Implementing a different type of shopping experience such as a farmers market, and building different types of residential units should be considered.



**B3.2 Balance the Identity of Districts Around the Harbour with Each Other**  
A district identity with a distinct character should not be replicated in too many places across the harbour.

For example, if every destination across the harbour offered a mix of retail pavilions there would be little reason to visit new parts of the harbour; and districts would become homogenized. On the other hand, limiting a particular activity to one or two locations around the harbour reduces interdistrict competition for visits.



**B3.3 Locate Special Uses Efficiently**  
**Required Infrastructure**  
**Effects**  
Where particularly heavy infrastructure is already present, uses should share utilities and infrastructure as to minimize the total need for large infrastructure. For example, locate cruise ship terminals adjacent to other heavy demand uses. Avoiding over-distribution of roadways and infrastructure will help generate economic of scale and minimize impacts of unrelated uses. Locate uses that require large open spaces adjacent to other uses that emit industrial noise, assembly activities, or institutional functions.

Provide multiple layers of attractions, enticing visitors to travel from one area of the harbour to another. Provide:  
• Safe environments for families, with wide visual command of open space for children to play safely  
• Hidden coves and perches for romantic rendezvous  
• Multiple seating configurations to accommodate a wide range of group sizes: families, school groups, tour groups, domestic helpers  
• Some flexible spaces that allow seasonal use for markets, exhibitions, media events, gatherings and corporate or institutional functions

Are uses complementing district roles?  
Are uses efficiently using resources to enable complementary types of uses requiring other land needs?



# E

## Hong Kong's Key Environmental Asset

*Enhance and preserve the harbour's cultural  
and environmental heritage*



E

## Hong Kong's Key Environmental Asset

*Enhance and preserve the harbour's cultural  
and environmental heritage*



*Enrich the many parts of the waterfront by reflecting the heritage and culture of its shoreline and interior neighbourhoods.*

As the harbour has shrunk over the years, a sense of connection and history has been lost between the new shoreline and the districts inland. Every part of the waterfront should provide a window into the heritage of the city behind.



#### E1.1 Demand High Quality Design for a Heritage Harbour

The harbour-front must not only be continuous, but it should offer moments of extraordinary experience. Invest in high quality design of the harbour-front for the creation of a future heritage. The value of great design is long lasting and engenders a sense of pride and ownership among all users.



#### E1.2 Distinguish Districts with Focal Landmarks on the Waterfront

Each district should offer a different experience across the entire harbour. Tall landmarks help mark clusters of skyscrapers, but should be tempered where the surrounding heights of buildings are low. Low, horizontal landmarks help distinguish district destinations lost in a sea of tall structures and provide a more human scale to the waterfront.

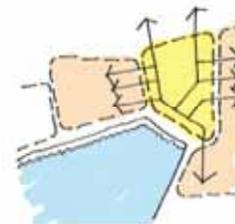


#### E1.3 Capture and Enhance "Geographic Heritage"

District identities should be strongly influenced by their geographic heritage, whether natural or constructed. For example the linear extension of the Kai Tak runway into the harbour is an important element in the story of Hong Kong's development.

Other examples include but are not limited to:

- The sheltering cove of Yau Tong Bay/Lei Yue Mun
- The formal, urban living room of Central reaching to the Star Ferry, framed by the illustrious guards from multiple eras: LegCo, the old Bank of China, HSBC headquarters, Prince's Building, the Mandarin, Jardine House and City Hall
- The capes of West Kowloon/Tsim Sha Tsui
- The Marine Police Station hill at Tsim Sha Tsui.



#### E1.4 Complement Neighbouring Districts

Districts across the harbour can benefit from each other. Complementary developments in neighbouring districts can serve as a catalyst for improvement and economic growth throughout the area. Multiple street connections between districts encourage continuous traffic between district destinations. New developments should respect key views and take utmost caution to avoid negative impacts of infrastructure on neighbouring districts.

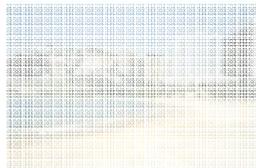


*Enrich the many parts of the waterfront by reflecting the heritage and culture of its shoreline and interior neighbourhoods.*

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**E1.3 Infuse Historic Preservation and Reuse into New Harbour Vision**  
Preserve cultural and heritage structures on the harbourfront. Enhance the presence of existing cultural landmarks and propose creative, new uses for heritage structures to lend character and integrate them into waterfront developments.



**E1.4 Rehabilitate Natural and Native Shoreline**  
A natural shoreline creates opportunities for habitat regeneration, adding to the diversity of environments along the harbour and providing a natural backdrop for waterfront developments. Encourage the use of native vegetation to encourage a healthy local landscape.

**E1.7 Encourage Green Development on the Harbour**  
To strive for a cleaner harbour environment, new developments on the waterfront should be "green," utilizing sustainable site planning, landscape and building design. Sustainable strategies should include measures to reduce traffic, indoor and outdoor pollution, energy and water consumption, and impacts from storm and wastewater, to minimize construction impacts, and be a model for other developments across Hong Kong.

**E1.8 Protect Harbour from Runoff Impacts from Land Development**  
Use parks, trees, sediment traps, and other tools to intercept stormwater runoff from waterfront development sites and public land and roads. This will protect the harbour from pollution by surface contaminants, grease, oil, and rubbish.

**E1.9 Reduce Stormwater into the Ground**  
Use permeable pavement and other measures to reduce runoff and improve water quality.

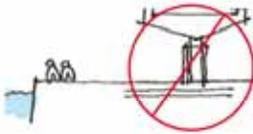
# Are uses protecting the Harbour?

# Are we nurturing tomorrow's heritage?



Enhance the harbour's natural environment by reducing the dominance of roadways, logistic, industrial and utilitarian activities at the waterfront.

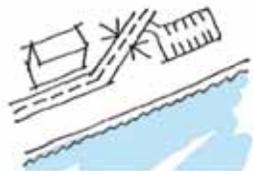
Ensure a variety of diverse and publicly accessible waterfront experiences across the harbour by providing pedestrian-orientated uses on the waterfront instead of impact-generating infrastructure.



#### E2.1 Minimize Infrastructure and Utilities on the Waterfront

The waterfront should be free of major infrastructure, including but not limited to major roadways and expressways, drainage reserve land, sewerage treatment plants, and exposed electrical substations.

Orientate and reposition ventilation, carparking and service access for utilities away from the waterfront edge to minimize disruptions to the public experience.



#### E2.2 Reduce Vehicular Traffic at the Waterfront

Significantly reduce roadways and carparking provision on the waterfront, thereby slowing vehicular speed for pedestrian comfort and safety. The reduced convenience for passenger cars may even make public transportation a more preferred means of accessing the harbour.

Interpret minimum car parking provisions per planning standards as maximums for new and retrofitted developments, or even reduce provisions. Provide preferred carparking and access for alternative fuel vehicles, and other incentives for public transportation. Provide bicycle parking and locker facilities.



#### E2.3 Encourage Narrow Roadway Designs

Reduce number of lanes and turning radii at corners to reduce the speed of vehicular traffic at the water's edge, enhancing pedestrian safety and comfort. Other mechanisms include parallel parking, narrower lane widths and traffic calming devices. Eliminate through-connections for waterfront addressing streets to reduce traffic that may use these environments as traffic bypasses.

Take advantage of opportunities to share harbour views with the public through creating safe viewing points - accessible day and night.



#### E2.4 Decrease the Proportion of Hardscape on the Waterfront

By using fewer elements of hard pavement and dark stone, the landscape design of the waterfront can reduce heat gain and the heat-island effect, thereby increasing the sense of cooling at the harbour. Vegetation, water, and heat reflective surfaces help to accentuate the sense of relief from the urban built environment.



Enhance the harbour's natural environment by reducing the dominance of roadways, logistic, industrial and utilitarian activities at the waterfront.

Ensure a variety of diverse and publicly accessible waterfront experiences across the harbour by providing pedestrian-orientated uses on the waterfront instead of impact-generating infrastructure.

Can congestion become acceptable,  
not something to fear? i.e. slower is safer

“I’ll use another route since I’m only passing through...”

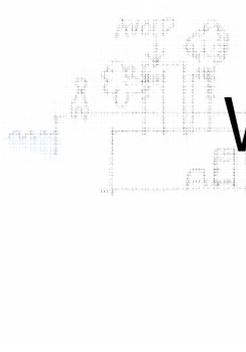
Will utilities, roads, and lowest common  
denominator design ever take  
a backseat to pedestrians?



**E2.5 Downplay the Built Environment at the Water's Edge**  
The cacophony of buildings should become secondary to a unifying natural environment that celebrates the unique presence of the harbour. Large built elements may seem to create striking landmarks when viewed from a distance. However, they also contribute to the clutter of the waterfront. The can create overshadowing, relentless glare, and an oppressive scale.



**E2.7 Hide Visual Blight**  
Where roadway infrastructure, utilities, or other unsightly elements are a temporarily unavoidable part of the waterfront, disguise the edge facing the waterfront to emphasize a pedestrian-friendly nature. Widen pedestrian paths to create more distance, especially as waterfront edge is close.

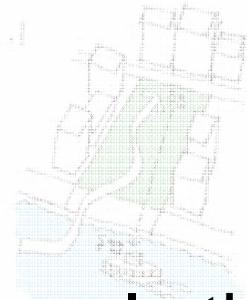


**E2.4 Avoid Elevated Roads, Tunnels that Ventilate onto the Water, and Elevated Pathways within 10m of the Waterfront Edge**  
Dust, noise, and metals, noise and air pollution from elevated roads and tunnels can be particularly problematic. The enclosed spaces of elevated roads and tunnel spaces also destroy waterfront views. Although pedestrian links to the waterfront are important, such connections should be at ground level or otherwise designed to enhance pedestrian experience.

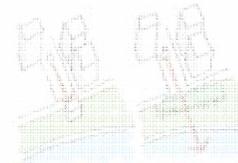


Enable circulation of air and waterfront senses to and from the harbour and the city.

One of the city's greatest challenges today is achieving a sense of clean air and a clear relationship with the harbour. Even low buildings can block sensory connection to the waterfront, accelerating the loss of orientation and ventilation throughout the urban fabric.



**E3.1 Extend Sense of Harbour into Districts**  
Sensory connections include water borne breezes, visual cues of maritime activity and the sounds of shipping and harbour activity. Encourage an awareness of the openness of the harbour-front with the feeling of harbour breezes deep in the city through open breezeways that connect the streets and plazas in each district to the waterfront with generous spaces between buildings, including at the ground level to enhance ventilation and sensory connections to the harbour. Ensure each district has at least one such major "breathing room", ideally connected to the waterfront where reclamation has occurred.

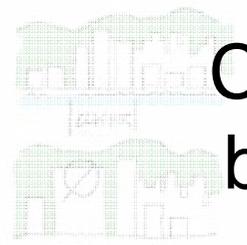


**E3.4 Protect Existing Views of Open Water for line District / Neighbourhood Users**  
Protect water views that create value for both business and residents through height limits and maintaining clear view corridors. Trees and canopies are preferable to built structures to provide a permeable ground level view deep into the city fabric.



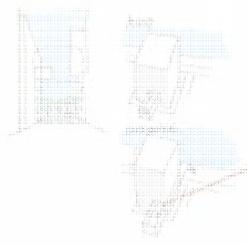
**E3.5 Openness and Sense of Escape**  
The harbour waterfront is a place that defines the balance of life in Hong Kong – a high-density city that also affords a sense of openness and escape. It is a place for relaxation, enjoyment and reflection. Ensure a large visual access to the sky from harbour's edge when looking in any direction.

Is there a sensory connection to the Harbour?



**E3.2 Concentrate Buildings of Similar Heights in Clusters**  
Avoid monolithic, impenetrable and monotonous building forms and development that obscure the waterfront and development that are not well integrated with the surrounding urban fabric and present a cluttered skyline.

Can the feeling of cleanliness and space be felt even out of sight of the Harbour?



**E3.3 Ensure Frequent & Spacious Street Level Views**  
Streets leading to the harbour provide a permeable view corridor from the city to the waterfront. Signage and other obstructions along these sightlines that may interfere with harbour views should be minimized.

or is the Harbour forgettable?

Pedestrian connections to the waterfront should be located along block edges rather than through development blocks, such that continuous views and orientation to the harbour are preserved.

## Districts

- Role and heritage of Districts Harbourwide
- Lateral connections, not just to the water

## The Edge

- Intuitive and doubt-free promenade
- Two to three minute thresholds
- Visual and sensory connections
- Not the same objective across the Harbour

## Roadways

- Slow engineering
- Multiple choice, but especially ground level
- Value of the waterfront address
- Consolidate infrastructure

## Catalysts

- Active ground level regardless of use
- Let people self-program, and discreetly support
- Waterfront buildings are Guardians of the Harbour



### **Diverse and Accessible Waterfront**

Create a diverse and accessible pedestrianised waterfront that enhances Hong Kong people's quality of life.

#### **A1 Enable Access**

Prioritize waterfront access to pedestrians via clear corridors and land and marine-based public transportation.

#### **A2 Open to all Users**

Make the harbour usable for all people by creating a variety of activities that provide a sense of enjoyment, a sense of place.

#### **A3 Connect Promenade**

Create memorable experiences along a continuous waterfront promenade that invites the public back for more.



### **Business and Economic Opportunities**

Create a business and economic framework that captures the value of the harbour's global competitive advantage.

#### **B1 Leverage Waterfront**

Promote business and commercial uses that benefit from direct access to the harbour and uniquely contribute to harbour activity.

#### **B2 Build Harbour Brand**

Protect, increase and capitalise upon the real estate value, prestige of address, and brand identity imparted by the waterfront and skyline.

#### **B3 Diversify & Synergize**

Encourage synergies that come from diverse economic activity across the whole harbour.



### **Enhance Hong Kong's Key Environmental Asset**

Enhance and preserve the harbour's cultural and environmental heritage.

#### **E1 Celebrate Heritage**

Enrich the many parts of the waterfront by reflecting the heritage and culture of its shoreline and interior neighbourhoods.

#### **E2 Reduce Infrastructure**

Enhance the harbour's natural environment by reducing the dominance of roadways, logistic, industrial and utilitarian activities at the waterfront.

#### **E3 Improve Breatheability**

Enable circulation of air and waterfront senses to and from the harbour and the city.



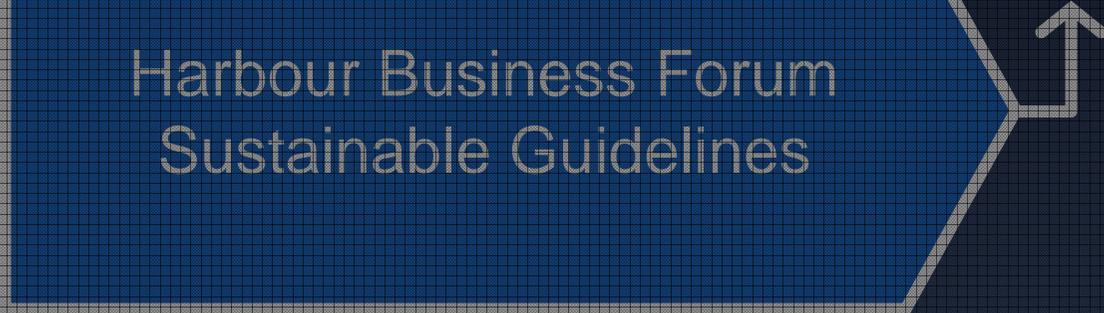
Guidelines for a Sustainable Hong Kong Harbour

June 2007





Harbour Enhancement Committee  
Harbourwide Design Guidelines



Harbour Business Forum  
Sustainable Guidelines





