

Amenity Features

Amenity features are loosely defined as those elements of design that whilst not statutory requirements are desirable to improve the standard and quality of a building or a development project. Provision of such features enhances the sense of care and pride for buildings, thereby inducing proper maintenance and repair. To encourage these features, the Building Authority (BA) is prepared to consider modification and exemption, under the Buildings Ordinance and Regulations, for the provision of new amenities in both new developments and existing buildings.

2. To justify favourable consideration for modification or exemption, such proposals should meet one or a combination of the following objectives :

- (a) encouraging efficient and effective building management;
- (b) enhancing the quality of life for residents and users;
- (c) obviating the desire or temptation for unauthorized building works;
and
- (d) improving environmental compatibility with the neighbourhood.

3. It is not possible to lay down hard and fast rules. Applications would be considered on their individual merits and relevance to a particular building and its users.

4. For large schemes or innovative designs, it is advisable prior to formal submission to hold a preliminary discussion with the Buildings Department (BD). If necessary, a proposal will be the subject of consultation with the Lands Department and the Planning Departments. The intention is that the three Departments would consider a proposal on similar grounds and in its entirety : factors such as the preservation of trees, landscape and antiquities would be regarded as positive contributions.

5. Some examples of amenity features are given below.

Air-conditioning

6. For **residential buildings**, wall boxes or platforms in reinforced concrete or other suitable material may be constructed as a permanent feature, even over streets, and as such may be excluded from site coverage considerations (see PNAP APP-19). For **commercial and industrial buildings**, a centralized air-conditioning system should be provided or suitable internal areas should be set aside for this purpose at the design stage. Allowance should be made for adequate ducting and trunking, recesses, set-backs, open yards or other suitable spaces at or above floor levels where air-conditioning package units (or other plant and accessories) can be accommodated without the need to project over streets.

7. In accordance with Regulation 23(3)(b) of the Building (Planning) Regulations (B(P)R), any floor space genuinely intended for air-conditioning may be disregarded from gross floor area calculations, subject to compliance with the pre-requisites and the overall cap on GFA concessions stipulated in PNAP APP-151 on Building Design to Foster a Quality and Sustainable Built Environment.

8. The following provisions would be considered reasonable in the absence of the detailed design layout of the plants :

- (a) air-conditioning plant rooms not exceeding 1% of the total gross floor area of a building; and/or
- (b) air handling units, not exceeding 4% of the total gross floor area of **each floor** on which they are situated.

If it is intended to exceed these percentages or where an air-conditioning room is provided in each domestic unit as described in paragraphs 11 and 12 below, full justification must be submitted. In such cases, the advice of the Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services may be sought during processing.

9. If an unusually extensive system is proposed for exclusion from gross floor area calculations, then it should be shown in detail on the approved plans and be operational before an application for occupation permit or certification of completion of work under Form BA14 is made.

10. In all cases where buildings will be or are likely to be air-conditioned, careful consideration should be given to the location of the exhaust of the plant and the need to provide a disposal system for the condensation from the plant to prevent causing nuisance to adjoining occupants and the public.

11. In a **residential building**, for an air-conditioning plant room to be provided to serve an individual unit, such room should be located with access from outside that residential unit or from the common area of the building. If an air-conditioning plant room is proposed with access within an individual residential unit, the authorized person (AP) should justify why access to such room cannot be located outside the unit. In any event, the provision and size of such rooms need to be justified before consideration for disregarding from GFA calculations will be given.

12. In the event that such plant room is permitted to be provided with access within the individual unit, such plant room should meet the following criteria before it may be disregarded from GFA calculation :-

- (a) The floor of the plant room should have a level difference of a minimum of 500mm with the floor of the main accommodation;
- (b) The plant room should have at least one side open, and provision of railing , open grille and louvre on the open side up to parapet level are acceptable. Enclosure above parapet level may be allowed where there is a need to separate the intake air and exhaust air. Enclosure for the

/ purpose

purpose of compliance with para. 12.3 of the Code of Practice for Fire Resisting Construction may also be allowed on the open side; and

- (c) The open side should face into the open air.

Security Gates

13. As long as they do not obstruct the means of escape from a building and have locks openable from the inside without keys, security gates may be installed prior to the issue of an occupation permit or acknowledgement of Form BA14, or may be indicated on floor plans in suitable positions for future installation. Suitable positions are considered to be :

- (a) entrances to individual units;
- (b) main staircase exits from buildings; and
- (c) in a composite building, between the domestic part and the non-domestic part.

(In this case, the gate would be across an exit route, preferably in a lobby, and should be designed to prevent the entry of non-residents into the domestic part of the building.)

Counters, Kiosks, Offices, Stores, Guard Rooms, and Lavatories for Watchmen and Management Staff

14. Such provision enhances standards of control and maintenance of buildings. The Building Authority will consider favourably on application for exemption from GFA calculations where such provision meets the following criteria :

- (a) it should not be excessive in size;
- (b) it should be located in a common area or designated as a common area in a Deed of Mutual Covenant to prevent abuse. In case there is no DMC formed at the time of application for approval, the developer or owner is required to submit an undertaking to BD to include the said areas as common parts in the DMC whenever one is formed;
- (c) The maximum GFA that may be allowed for exemption in a domestic building or domestic part of a composite building is 0.2% of the total domestic GFA or 5m² for every 50 flats, whichever is smaller; and
- (d) The maximum GFA that may be allowed for exemption in a non-domestic building or non-domestic part of a composite building is 0.2% of the total non-domestic GFA or 120m², whichever is smaller.

15. The granting of GFA concessions set out in paragraph 14 above is subject to compliance with the pre-requisites and the overall cap on GFA concessions stipulated in PNAP APP-151 on Building Design to Foster a Quality and Sustainable Built Environment.

Owners' Corporation Office

16. Formation of Owners' Corporation would enhance better building management. The BA will consider favourably on application for exemption of Owners' Corporation Office in **residential** development from GFA calculations, with due reference to the required size under Lease if applicable, or justifications provided by the AP.

17. The granting of GFA concessions set out in paragraph 16 above is subject to compliance with the pre-requisites and the overall cap on GFA concessions stipulated in PNAP APP-151 on Building Design to Foster a Quality and Sustainable Built Environment.

Projections

18. These are generally covered in PNAP APP-19 and canopies are specifically dealt with in PNAP APP-68.

19. For individual domestic units, clothes-drying racks, anti-burglar bars and small window hoods designed to provide protection from the elements and falling objects would not have any site coverage or plot ratio implications.

Horizontal Screens

20. In open areas frequently used by occupants at ground floors or podium floors; or roof gardens/play areas at podium floor around the perimeter of a domestic tower, horizontal screens may be permitted to provide protection against inclement weather and falling objects subject to the following conditions:

- (a) the horizontal screens will not materially affect the lighting and ventilation of the areas or nearby buildings;
- (b) the areas are designated as common area in the Deed of Mutual Covenant; and
- (c) the areas do not form part of any commercial premises.

21. In assessing the acceptability of the width of the horizontal screens, the BA will take into consideration the population using the facility, the size of the development and the design of the screens. In any case, the width of such screens allowed to be exempted from GFA calculation should not exceed 2 m.

22. Erection of trellis on roof, including main roof and set-back roof, may be permitted and allowed to be exempted from GFA calculation subject to the following conditions:

/(a).....

- (a) For roof designated for private use, the area of trellis to be exempted is not more than 5% of the roof area where it is situated, or 2m² whichever is greater. For roof designated as common part of a building, a larger size may be allowed depending on the special circumstances of the case ;
- (b) the maximum and minimum size of each trellis is 20m² and 2m² respectively ;
- (c) the trellis should be single storey open-sided structure with a storey height of not more than 5 m;
- (d) if the trellis is located on a refuge roof, it should be made of non-combustible materials and the remaining open area should comply with paragraphs 9.2(e)(iii) and 21.2(b) of the Code of Practice for the Provision of Means of Escape In Case of Fire 1996;
- (e) the trellis on set-back roof should not obstruct the required prescribed windows/open air for rooms for habitation, kitchen, lavatory, bathroom, etc.;
- (f) no trellis should be permitted on roof with an area less than 4m²;
- (g) compliance with the requirements from other departments including the Fire Services Department, Lands Department and Planning Department.

23. The granting of GFA concessions set out in paragraphs 20, 21 and 22 above ¹ is subject to compliance with the pre-requisites and the overall cap on GFA concessions stipulated in PNAP APP-151 on Building Design to Foster a Quality and Sustainable Built Environment.

Prestige Entrances

24. These are generally covered in PNAP APP-2. The BA aims to adopt a liberal attitude towards provision of such features for non-domestic developments. However, care must be taken in the design to ensure that future occupants would maintain the integrity of protected lobbies and corridors related to means of escape and fireman's lifts.

25. The granting of GFA concessions set out in paragraph 24 above is subject to compliance with the pre-requisites and the overall cap on GFA concessions stipulated in PNAP APP-151 on Building Design to Foster a Quality and Sustainable Built Environment.

/Communal

¹ BA is prepared to consider excluding the GFA of horizontal screen in paragraphs 20 to 22 from the overall cap on GFA concession stipulated under PNAP APP-151, if the whole area of the top of the horizontal screen is provided with greenery to the satisfaction of the BA. The area of greenery provided at the horizontal screen in such case however, should not be counted as part of the site coverage of greenery required under PNAP APP-152 if so applicable.

Communal Podium Garden, Covered Landscaped and Play Areas

26. The provision of communal podium gardens, covered landscaped and play areas is encouraged. Where these amenities occur under and within the perimeter of a domestic tower, a modification of Regulation 23(3)(a) of the B(P)R would be granted, provided the area is open in design and not encumbered with structural elements, and the total area exempted is within 5% of total domestic GFA.

27. The granting of GFA concessions set out in paragraph 26 above is subject to compliance with the pre-requisites stipulated in PNAP APP-151 on Building Design to Foster a Quality and Sustainable Built Environment.

Recreational Facilities

28. Certain other recreational facilities such as squash courts, gymnasiums, indoor swimming pools, sauna facilities, function rooms (for either active or passive recreational activities) are often clearly identifiable with a particular development and aim to benefit the residents and occupiers generally. These can be considered for exclusion from GFA calculations by modification of Regulation 23(3)(a) of the B(P)R on a case-by-case basis, but are subject to limitation as stipulated in PNAP APP-104.

29. The granting of GFA concessions set out in paragraph 28 above is subject to compliance with the pre-requisites and the overall cap on GFA concessions stipulated in PNAP APP-151 on Building Design to Foster a Quality and Sustainable Built Environment.

Satellite Dishes

30. These are becoming quite common nowadays being installed in response to public demand. It would seem appropriate therefore to make provision at the design stage of a building to accommodate such a feature.

31. Such a provision could be by way of cast-in-situ mounting blocks and/or built-in-fixing bolts together with an appropriate increase of the design load of the structural elements to accommodate the weight of the dish.

Concluding Observations

32. The BA is open to suggestions for consideration as amenities in the context of this practice note.

/Implementation....

Implementation

33. This practice note is applicable to all new building plans or major revision of building plans for development proposals submitted to the BA for approval on or after 1 April 2011. Subject to paragraph 34 below, this practice note is also applicable to building plans which have been previously disapproved and are resubmitted for approval on or after 1 April 2011.

34. For building plans which have been firstly submitted on or before 31 March 2011 and subsequently disapproved by the BA but not on ground relating to proof of ownership or realistic prospect of control of the land forming the site, the first resubmission of such plans to the BA on or after 1 April 2011, which is submitted within 6 months from the date of disapproval of the firstly submitted plans, would not be subject to the requirements of this practice note. For the avoidance of doubt, if such first resubmission of plans eventually has been disapproved by the BA, any further resubmission of the plans would be subject to the requirements of this practice note.

35. Subject to section 16(3)(d) of the BO, building plans approved by the BA prior to the implementation of this practice note should make reference to the "February 2003" version of this practice note (Appendix A)



(AU Choi-kai)
Building Authority

Ref. : BD GP/BORD/48
BD GP/BREG/P/9 (IV)

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2. To justify favourable consideration for modification or exemption, such proposals should meet one or a combination of the following objectives :

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- (b) enhancing the quality of life for residents and users;
- (c) obviating the desire or temptation for unauthorized building works;
and
- (d) improving environmental compatibility with the neighbourhood.

3. It is not possible to lay down hard and fast rules. Applications would be considered on their individual merits and relevance to a particular building and its users.

4. For large schemes or innovative designs, it is advisable prior to formal submission to hold a preliminary discussion with the Buildings Department. If necessary, a proposal will be the subject of consultation with the Lands and the Planning Departments. The intention is that Buildings, Lands and Planning Departments would consider a proposal on similar grounds and in its entirety : factors such as the preservation of trees, landscape and antiquities would be regarded as positive contributions.

5. Some examples of amenity features are given below.

Air-conditioning

6. For **residential buildings**, wall boxes or platforms in reinforced concrete or other suitable material may be constructed as a permanent feature, even over streets, and as such may be excluded from site coverage considerations (see PNAP 68). For **commercial and industrial buildings**, a centralized air-conditioning system should be provided or suitable internal areas should be set aside for this purpose at the design stage. Allowance should be made for adequate ducting and trunking, recesses, set-backs, open yards or other suitable spaces at or above floor levels where air-conditioning package units (or other plant and accessories) can be accommodated without the need to project over streets.

7. In accordance with Building (Planning) Regulation 23(3)(b), any floor space genuinely intended for air-conditioning may be excluded from gross floor area calculations. The following provisions would be considered reasonable in the absence of the detailed design layout of the plants :

- (a) air-conditioning plant rooms not exceeding 1% of the total gross floor area of a building; or
- (b) air handling units, not exceeding 4% of the total gross floor area of **each floor** on which they are situated.

If it is intended to exceed these percentages or where an air-conditioning room is provided in each domestic unit, full justification must be submitted. In such cases, the advice of the Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services would be sought during processing.

8. If an unusually extensive system is proposed for exclusion from gross floor area calculations, then it should be shown in detail on the approved plans and be operational before an application for occupation permit is made.

9. In all cases where buildings will be or are likely to be air-conditioned, careful consideration should be given to the location of the exhaust of the plant and the need to provide a disposal system for the condensation from the plant to prevent causing nuisance to adjoining occupants and the public.

Security Gates

10. As long as they do not obstruct the means of escape from a building and have locks openable from the inside without keys, security gates may be installed prior to the issue of an occupation permit or may be indicated on floor plans in suitable positions for future installation. Suitable positions are considered to be :

- (a) entrances to individual units;
- (b) main staircase exits from buildings; and
- (c) in a composite building, between the domestic part and the commercial part.

(In this case, the gate would be across an exit route, preferably in a lobby, and should be designed to prevent the entry of non-residents into the domestic part of the building.)

Counters, Kiosks, Offices, Stores, Guard Rooms, and Lavatories for Watchmen and Management Staff

11. Such provision enhances standards of control and maintenance of buildings. The Building Authority will consider favourably on application for exemption from gross floor area calculations where such provision meets the following criteria :

- (a) it should not be excessive in size; and

- (b) it should be located in a common area or designated as a common area in a Deed of Mutual Covenant to prevent abuse.

Miniature Logistic Service Room

12. Small logistic service room in a multi-storey residential building allows the temporary storage of delivered goods under the custody of the management staff while the occupants are out. Such facility not only improves security but also alleviates fire hazard as otherwise the goods would be left unattended in the common lobby or staircase. Where such provision is provided in accordance with the following criteria, the Building Authority (BA) will favourably consider application for exemption of such rooms from GFA calculation :

- (a) The room is not excessive in size. As a general guide, a room size of 8 m² may be allowed for a block size of 240 flats.
- (b) The room should be located in the common area adjacent to the management office or guard post.

Mail Room

13. Mail rooms for large commercial and industrial buildings are facilities which enhance the serviceability of the buildings. The BA will consider favourably an application for exemption from gross floor area calculations where the provision of a mail room meets the following criteria :

- (a) it should not be excessive in size;
- (b) it should be endorsed by Postmaster General (in this connection an additional set of plans should be submitted for consideration by Postmaster General);
- (c) it should be located in a common area or designated as a common area in a Deed of Mutual Covenant to prevent abuse; and
- (d) the building is centrally managed.

14. For a typical mail room,

- (a) there should be a small public area for tenants to enter and collect their items from the lockable boxes;
- (b) there should be a small counter for postmen to sort mail into lockable mail boxes;
- (c) a stamp vending machine and a posting box are usually provided in the mail room for the convenience of the tenants; and
- (d) it is preferably provided at ground floor or basement level.

A typical mail room detail is at Appendix A for attention.

Building Service Facilities

15. These are generally covered in PNAP 13.

Projections

16. These are generally covered in PNAP 68 and canopies are specifically dealt with in PNAP 173.

17. For individual domestic units, clothes-drying racks, anti-burglar bars and small window hoods designed to provide protection from the elements and falling objects would not have any site coverage or plot ratio implications. Similarly, any projections that improve the energy efficiency of a building, including enhanced wall thicknesses would also be disregarded for the purposes of site coverage and plot ratio.

Horizontal Screens

18. In open areas frequently used by occupants at ground floors or podium floors; or roof gardens/play areas at podium floor around the perimeter of a domestic tower, horizontal screens may be permitted to provide protection against inclement weather and falling objects subject to the following conditions:

- (a) the horizontal screens will not materially affect the lighting and ventilation of the areas or nearby buildings;
- (b) the areas are designated as common area in the Deed of Mutual Covenant; and
- (c) the areas do not form part of any commercial premises.

19. In assessing the acceptability of the width of the horizontal screens, the BA will take into consideration the population using the facility, the size of the development and the design of the screens.

Prestige Entrances

20. These are generally covered in PNAP 13. The BA aims to adopt a liberal attitude towards provision of such features. However, care must be taken in the design to ensure that future occupants would maintain the integrity of protected lobbies and corridors related to means of escape and fireman's lifts.

Recreational Facilities

21. The provision of podium roof gardens and play areas is encouraged. Where these amenities occur under and within the perimeter of a domestic tower, a modification of Building (Planning) Regulation 23(3)(a) would be granted, provided the area is open in design and not encumbered with structural elements. For the avoidance of doubt, it is clarified that staircases or lift shafts that pass through such floors may be discounted from gross floor area considerations, provided they are not connected with an entrance to the building from outside the podium level or do not serve other accountable

accommodation at that level.

22. Certain other recreational facilities such as squash courts, gymnasiums, indoor swimming pools, sauna facilities, function rooms (for either active or passive recreational activities) are often clearly identifiable with a particular development and aim to benefit the residents and occupiers generally. These can be considered for exclusion from gross floor area calculations by modification of Building (Planning) Regulation 23(3)(a) on a case-by-case basis.

23. This concession does not apply to substantial luxury clubs with restaurants and other facilities obviously meant for an exclusive membership and commercial takings, rather than for the general benefit of residents and occupiers.

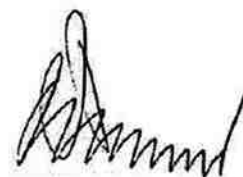
Satellite Dishes

24. These are becoming quite common nowadays being installed in response to public demand. It would seem appropriate therefore to make provision at the design stage of a building to accommodate such a feature.

25. Such a provision could be by way of cast-in-situ mounting blocks and/or built-in-fixing bolts together with an appropriate increase of the design load of the structural elements to accommodate the weight of the dish.

Concluding Observations

26. The BA is open to suggestions for consideration as amenities in the context of this practice note.



(H W CHEUNG)
Building Authority

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Previous APPENDIX A
(PNAP 116)

