

A Review of Sustainable Building Design in Hong Kong

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Abstract

Peoples' desire to improve their living standards leads them to demand larger living spaces with more lavish fittings, finishings and decorations to their living spaces, etc. Consequently the consumption of materials is increasing at a much faster rate than the increase in population. In addition to the increased consumption of materials, the aspiration to better living conditions also leads to consumption of more energy and water resources. This, in turn, produces more waste and pollution, in particular pollution of the air and water. As everybody knows, there will be a high price to be paid both by us and our offspring.

Hong Kong started to flourish in the 1970s. At that time little attention was paid to sustainable building design. With the dynamic growth in population in Hong Kong, ever more and more buildings have been constructed and, due to land constraints and improved designs, subsequently demolished. This has resulted in progressively more construction waste being generated and, as a result, we are facing insufficient landfill space to dispose of all this waste. To achieve a better standard of living, we also demand more air-conditioning, and, as a consequence, more hot air is pumped into the atmosphere. This results in large amounts of heat becoming trapped in our environment and hence significant temperature rises in our urban living surroundings.