

Press Release

Government Urban Renewal Authority Developer Abuse “Artist Impression” Pictures Far from Reality Lack Regulation of Sales Description No True Photos Sea View of Millions Turns to Buildings

Green Sense has long been concerned of town planning. It is because of the planning loopholes of the new development in Wu Kai Sha and Tseung Kwan O, and its unreliability of its promotion, that our President Roy Tam and Legislator Alan Leong hold a press conference. Photos taken at the sites and loopholes of the sale of property will be disclosed in order to arouse the awareness of the media and the public. Major loopholes are:

1. Property promotion materials normally describe the surrounding environment by “artist impression”, misleading the public that the property surrounded by mountains and sea, with prefect sights. Most ridiculously, the book of property information booklet, which is regulated by the government, only provide “artist impression”, but not factual photos taken at the site. Citizens spending a lot to on a presumably sea view flat but later turns to building view.
2. Citizens cannot know the future development of the surroundings from the exhibition in sales office or the property information booklet. Potential buyers cannot find the approved master layout plans and building plans of the surrounding sites. For example, in the promotion materials and property information booklet of Lake Silver(a currently selling residential development), the future developments and already built residential blocks around the property are not mentioned clearly.
3. Members of Green Sense have talked to several agents in sales office of Lake Silver as if we are potential buyers. We discover that agents tend to hide the unfavourable truth, like, describing the large construction project at the front, which includes 25 blocks, storeys ranging from 10 to 32, as “low density”.
4. If buildings in the same residential zone have different completion time of construction (like the current Lohas Park, 50 blocks in total, is constructed and sold in phases), will first sell inland flats and later those near the shore. Therefore, every building has “sea view” as a selling point. The constructing buildings at the front soon block flats newly bought. Thus, the sea view of inland flats is temporary. Unnamed staff working in the development companies points out that

this selling strategy has practiced for long, believing that lots of citizens have been affected. The total number of affected buyers is too large to estimate.

Green Sense suggests the government regulate developers that they have to have true photos of the surrounding of the property in the property information booklet, but not “artist impression”. Moreover, information of approved project of the surroundings as far as 200m should be clearly provided, including height, blocks and storeys. Consumers will then know the future plans of the surrounding areas of a property.

Addressing the problem, we have formed a group named ‘disclosure of planning truth’(規劃真相大披露) in Facebook. We will regularly release information of plans from the government and exaggerated advertisements from developers. As a result, citizens will obtain factual information.

Projects with unrealistic “artist impression” and incomprehensive sales description

Lake Silver (MTR and Sino Group)

The advertisement of the newly wall buildings is so exaggerated. Cover page of newspapers has shown the “artist impression” of surrounding seas and mountains for days.

However, according to Town Planning Board and Buildings Department, in front of Lake Silver is a residential project of Henderson Land Development Company located in Lok Wo Sha. It includes 25 blocks buildings 10 to 32 storeys high. Furthermore, it should be Monte Vista, which finished construction for long, instead of mountains in the “impression”. There are 12 blocks of Monte Vista, 30 storeys for each. Therefore, Those lower and middle flats, which are presumably facing mountains, are in fact facing buildings.

Lohas Park The Captitol and Le Prestige (MTR and Cheung Kong (Holdings) Limited)

Recently, Cheung Kong (Holdings) Limited has released Lohas Park in Tseung Kwan O for sale. Advertisement leaflets from many property agents feature the phase 1 and phase 2 properties are surrounded by mountains and sea.

However, according to the approved master layout plan form Town Planning Board, there are over 50 buildings under the project. Buildings are constructed in various phases. Buildings of the same phases are arranged in the position as a straight line. Most of the sea view of The Captitol and Le Prestige will be blocked when the buildings near the shore are constructed.

Once the full project the Lohas Park is completed, it will be another Kowloon Station project of MTR in the sense that blocks would be packed and residents share tiny piece of sky. Unfortunately, advertisement leaflets have not mention that some flats of Lohas Park are in fact very close to the landfill. Residents may have to bear the smell without expectation.

The Pawn in Wan Chai – Restoration and Revitalisation Project (Urban Renewal Authority)

Trees featured by “artist impression” were not present in the real finished building.

Hanoi Road Project (Urban Renewal Authority and New World Group)

Public areas are changed from really open into having a cover. Part of the area is even under a bridge. The original designed one was a single building, however, it is now extremely broad and is a wall building.

The Dynasty (Urban Renewal Authority and Sino Group)

The Dynasty is located in Tsuen Wan. However, it is painted with the buildings near Kowloon Station in the “artist impression”.