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To:
Cc:
Date: 29/04/2012 20:07
Subject: West Wing CGO Hong Kong

To whom it may concern.....

As some one who witnessed close hand the well considered design and development of the CGO West Wing by an architect colleague in the Architectural office of the PWD in the 1950/60's, I wish to be one of those who makes a strong case for its Listing.

As the co-architect for the City Hall my credentials are, I feel, valid and having just returned from Hong Kong and seen for myself the changes which have taken place in the urban area in the past ten years, there is in my opinion, a need to stand back and take stock.

At the time of the city Hall a good deal of thought went into encouraging an urban city centre for pedestrians to freely enjoy. This was by seeing the new building as part of Statue Square, the Star Ferry Pier, Queen's Pier and the cenotaph. The sense of enclosure, on a fairly grand scale, was achieved by the surrounding buildings, ie The Supreme Court, Hong Kong Club, Mandarin Hotel, Queens Building and the major banks. In the main part the reprovision of all these buildings over the past 50 years together with the road under passes, some measure of a sense of an urban Centre has been retained, but alas it has lost its dynamic with the relocation of the Star Ferry pier, and a good deal of thought and planning needs to be undertaken to recover this.

You may ask what is the connection between this and the West Wing of the Central Government Offices? Well I see the removal of that building to replace it with yet another skyscraper as a further erosion of that pedestrian dynamic which is in such short supply in Hong Kong. The existing development formed by the East and West wings is of a human scale and one of the few remaining complexes in the central district that can boast of having such a quality. The green pedestrian access from Battery Path to and around St. John's Cathedral en route to Hong Kong Park would be completely overshadowed, if not completely destroyed, by a high rise building. Its overall effect upon the environs of Government House and the Botanical Gardens would be a disaster.

I have said on previous occasions that the only constant in life is change and society has to move on or go into decline, but society also needs to respect and learn from its history, however, to the matter in hand. To replace a well designed building which responded to its original brief whilst architecturally and environmentally achieving all the attributes which I have outlined I consider would be completely wrong and I strongly urge that it be given Listed status.

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