

**Hon. HUI Chi-fung**

Room 913, Legislative Council Complex,  
1 Legislative Council Road,  
Central, Hong Kong

2 March 2018

Dear Hon Hui,

**The Role of Landscape Architectural Profession**

We, the Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects (HKILA), regret to learn from your deliberation in the Legislative Council's Panel on Development on 27 February 2018 that showed a very serious misunderstanding of the role of landscape architects in planning, designing and managing both our urban and natural environment. It is very important for us as a professional institute to clarify some key areas of misconception:

**1. Landscape Architect's focus**

*It was misunderstood that Landscape Architects only focused on 'aesthetic design' without due attention to conservation.*

Values that support human health, environmental protection and biodiversity are part of our commitment. The vision of HKILA and its members is to pursue for professional advancement and excellence for the benefit of our community and the environment. Landscape architects have a wide spectrum of knowledge on natural and built environment. With the awareness of art, natural science and technology, we pursue to design with nature and utilize limited resources for creating a healthy, safe and sustainable living environment.

Our work involves the understanding of the natural environment in the development process and creating genius loci through the design process with consideration of trees and other flora, fauna and associated habitats; together with hydrology, soil science and geomorphology. We master plan and create open spaces and green corridors, urban oases and promenades; revitalise river channels, abandoned brownfields and underutilized sites; and create the green and blue infrastructural network. Moreover, we actively engage in research on various aspects such as green roof / vertical greening / sky gardens, sustainable design and tree preservation.

## 2. Training

*It was misunderstood that Landscape Architects are only trained in aesthetic design without tree knowledge.*

Landscape Architects are trained in design and management of trees through academic education and enhanced in professional practice (see attached letter from the University of Hong Kong dated 27.1.2018). Locally, we have enhanced our scope in vegetation management and urban forestry and have taken an active and leading role in the introduction of tree risk assessment and management in recent years. For the proper delivery of tree works and clarification of arborists' scope to safeguard public interest, the HKILA has also advocated a registration / licensing system for arborists and established a well-recognised list of Accredited Arboricultural Practitioners for the public.

## 3. Role in development

*It was misunderstood that Landscape architects excessively remove trees in development and work against the public demand for tree conservation.*

To the contrary, Landscape Architect is always the profession to defend for the proper design and management of natural resources and actively design for the positive and reasonable green coverage in developments. We are both project managers and designers who are often responsible for coordinating and collaborating with various professionals, or specialists and experts in different fields in the development process. The roles of these team members are complementary and collaborative for the synergy of the projects. It is common for many landscape projects to engage tree experts/arborists for specialized tree works. Landscape Architects and these specialists co-operate and interact for the successful delivery of projects rather than separately or contrarily. Moreover, we also actively engage the public and green groups in the development process and preservation of trees.

It is very disconcerting that our profession was so severely misunderstood in some of your public deliberations when landscape architecture is becoming an emerging profession in many parts of the world contributing to the sustainability and resiliency of future cities under the shadow of climate change. It is, therefore, of paramount importance for us to meet so that we can communicate clearly of our work and together explore further the

potential for a better environment for our community. While our Secretariat is contacting you for arranging a meeting, you are also welcome to contact the undersigned at 2896 2833 or via email to [president@hkila.com](mailto:president@hkila.com).

Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely,



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**Tak WONG**

President

The Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects

c.c. Hon Wu Chi-wai

Landscape Architects Registration Board (Attn. Mr. S.C. Lo, Chairman)