

**Extract of Town Planning Board Guidelines for
Application for Open Storage and Port Back-up Uses
under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance
(TPB PG-No.13E)**

1. On 17.10.2008, the Town Planning Board Guidelines for Application for Open Storage and Port Back-up Uses under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance (TPB PG-No. 13E) were promulgated, which set out the following criteria for the various categories of area:
 - (a) Category 1 areas: Favourable consideration will normally be given to applications within these areas, subject to no major adverse departmental comments and local objections, or the concerns of the departments and local residents can be addressed through the implementation of approval conditions. Technical assessments should be submitted if the proposed uses may cause significant environmental and traffic concerns;
 - (b) Category 2 areas: Technical assessments, where appropriate, should be submitted to demonstrate that the proposed uses would not have adverse drainage, traffic, visual, landscaping and environmental impacts on the surrounding areas. Subject to no adverse departmental comments and local objections, or the concerns of the departments and local residents can be addressed through the implementation of approval conditions, planning permission could be granted on a temporary basis up to a maximum period of 3 years;
 - (c) Category 3 areas: Applications would normally not be favourably considered unless the applications are on sites with previous planning approvals. In that connection, sympathetic consideration may be given if the applicants have demonstrated genuine efforts in compliance with approval conditions of the previous planning applications and included in the fresh applications relevant technical assessments/proposals, if required, to demonstrate that the proposed uses would not generate adverse drainage, traffic, visual, landscaping and environmental impacts on the surrounding areas. Subject to no adverse departmental comments and local objections, or the concerns of the departments and local residents can be addressed through the implementation of approval conditions, planning permission could be granted on a temporary basis up to a maximum period of 3 years;
 - (d) Category 4 areas: Applications for open storage and port back-up uses would normally be rejected except under exceptional circumstances. For applications on sites with previous planning approvals, and subject to no adverse departmental comments and local objections, sympathetic consideration may be given if the applicants have demonstrated genuine efforts in compliance with approval conditions of the previous planning applications and included in the applications relevant technical assessments/proposals, if required, to demonstrate that the proposed uses would not generate adverse drainage, traffic, visual, landscaping and environmental impacts on the surrounding areas. The intention is however to encourage the phasing out of such non-conforming uses as early as possible. A maximum period of 2 years may be allowed upon renewal of planning permission for an applicant to identify suitable sites for relocation. No further renewal of approval will be given unless under very exceptional circumstances and each application for renewal of approval will be assessed on its individual merits; and

- (e) Taking into account the increasing demand for cross-boundary car parking facilities, applications for cross-boundary parking facilities at suitable sites in San Tin area, particularly near the existing cross-boundary link in Lok Ma Chau, may also be considered. Application of such nature will be assessed on its own merits, including its nature and scale of the proposed use and the local circumstances, and subject to satisfactory demonstration that the proposed use would not have adverse drainage, traffic, visual, landscaping and environmental impacts on the surrounding areas, and each case will be considered on its individual merits.
2. In assessing applications for open storage and port back-up uses, the other major relevant assessment criteria are also summarised as follows:
- (a) port back-up sites and those types of open storage generating adverse noise, air pollution and visual intrusion and frequent heavy vehicle traffic should not be located adjacent to sensitive receivers such as residential dwellings, hospitals, schools and other community facilities;
 - (b) adequate screening of the sites through landscaping and/or fencing should be provided at the periphery of the site within the boundary, especially where sites are located adjacent to public roads or are visible from surrounding residential areas;
 - (c) there will be a general presumption against development on sites of less than 2,000 m² for port back-up uses, and below 1,000 m² for open storage uses in rural areas, other than sites located in major corridors, industrial/godown/workshop areas, quarrying activities or where it is demonstrated that optimum use is made of the site. This is to prevent the further proliferation of small sites in rural areas and concentrate activities within appropriate surroundings, thus minimising sprawl over countryside areas and reducing travel trips;
 - (d) port back-up uses are major generators of traffic, with container trailer/tractor parks generating the highest traffic per unit area. In general, port back-up sites should have good access to the strategic road network, or be accessed by means of purpose built roads;
 - (e) there is a general presumption against conversion of agricultural land and fish ponds to other uses on an ad-hoc basis in rural areas, particularly in flood prone areas or sites which would obstruct natural drainage channels and overland flow; and
 - (f) for applications involving sites with previous planning approvals, should there be no evidence to demonstrate that the applicants have made any genuine effort to comply with the approval conditions of the previous planning applications, the Board may refuse to grant permission, or impose a shorter compliance period for the approval conditions, notwithstanding other criteria set out in the Guidelines are complied with.

Recommended Advisory Clauses

- (a) prior planning permission should have been obtained before commencing the applied use at the Site;
- (b) the planning permission is given to the development/uses under application. It does not condone any other development/uses which currently exist on the Site but not covered by the application. The applicant shall be requested to take immediate action to discontinue such development/uses not covered by the planning permission;
- (c) to note the comments of the District Land Officer/North, Lands Department as follows:
 - (i) the applicant should make his own arrangement, and there is no guarantee that any adjoining Government land will be allowed for the vehicular access of the applied use;
 - (ii) the existing structures on the Site were erected without approval from his office. The aforesaid structures are not acceptable under the lease concerned. His office reserves the right to take necessary lease enforcement actions against the aforesaid structures; and
 - (iii) if the application is approved, the owner of the lot concerned shall apply to his office for a Short Term Waiver (STW) covering all the actual occupation area. The application for STW will be considered by Government in its landlord's capacity and there is no guarantee that it will be approved. If the STW is approved, its commencement date would be backdated to the first date of occupation and it will be subject to such terms and conditions to be imposed including payment of waiver fee and administrative fee as considered appropriate by his office;
- (d) to note the comments of CE/MN, DSD that the Site is in an area where no public sewerage connection is available;
- (e) to note the comments of Commissioner for Transport that the local track leading to the Site is not managed by Transport Department. The land status, management and maintenance responsibilities of the local track should be clarified with the relevant lands and maintenance authorities accordingly;
- (f) to note the comments of the Chief Highway Engineer/New Territories East, Highways Department that the access road to the Site is not maintained by Highways Department;
- (g) to note the comments of the Chief Building Surveyor/ New Territories West, Buildings Department as follows:
 - (i) before any new building works (including containers as temporary buildings) are to be carried out on the Site, the prior approval and consent of the Building Authority (BA) should be obtained, otherwise they are unauthorized building works (UBW). An Authorized Person (AP) should be appointed as the coordinator for the proposed building works in accordance with the Buildings Ordinance (BO);
 - (ii) for UBW erected on leased land, enforcement action may be taken by the BA to effect

their removal in accordance with BD's enforcement policy against UBW as and when necessary. The granting of any planning approval should not be construed as an acceptance of any existing building works or UBW on the Site under the BO;

- (iii) in connect with (ii) above, the Site shall be provided with means of obtaining access thereto from a street under the Building (Planning) Regulation (B(P)R 5 and emergency vehicular access shall be provided under B(P)R 41D;
 - (iv) if the Site is not abutting on a specified street having a width not less than 4.5m wide, the development intensity shall be determined by the BA under B(P)R19 (3) at the building plan submission stage;
 - (v) the temporary structures are subject to the control of Part VII of the B(P)Rs and require prior approval and consent under BO; and
 - (vi) detailed comments will be given at building plan submission stage;
- (h) to note the comments of the Director of Fire Services as follows:
- (i) in consideration of the design/ nature of the proposed use, the applicant is advised to submit relevant layout plans incorporated with the proposed fire service installations (FSIs) to his satisfaction;
 - (ii) the applicant should be advised that the layout plans should be drawn to scale and depicted with dimensions and nature of occupancy and the location of where the proposed FSI to be installed should be clearly marked on the layout plans; and
 - (iii) detailed fire safety requirements will be formulated upon receipt of formal submission of general building plans;
- (i) to note that comments of the Chief Engineer/Construction, Water Supplies Department that for provision of water supply to the development, the applicant may need to extend the inside services to the nearest suitable Government water mains for connection. The applicant shall resolve any land matter (such as private lots) associated with the provision of water supply and shall be responsible for the construction, operation and maintenance of the inside services within the private lots to WSD's standards; and
- (j) to follow the environmental mitigation measures as set out in the latest "Code of Practice on Handling the Environmental Aspects of Temporary Uses and Open Storage Sites" issued by DEP in order to minimize any possible environmental nuisances.