

**Relevant extracts of the Town Planning Board Guidelines
No. 15A for “Application for Eating Place within
“Village Type Development” zone in rural areas
under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance
(TPB PG-No.15A)**

1. Scope and Application of the Guidelines

- 1.1 The general planning intention of the "Village Type Development" ("V") zone in the rural New Territories is to demarcate both existing recognised villages and areas of land considered suitable for village expansion. It is the planning intention to concentrate village and related development within the "V" zone for a more orderly development pattern, economic and efficient use of land and provision of infrastructure and services. A selective range of uses including commercial, community and recreational uses may be permitted within this zone on application to the Town Planning Board (the Board) on the basis that these uses would serve the needs of villagers and would not adversely affect the character of villages.
- 1.2 In view of the above planning intention, eating place use (such as restaurant and alfresco dining facility) in the "V" zone should be compatible with the surrounding land-uses and would not create any nuisance or cause inconvenience to the local residents. The development should not have adverse impacts on traffic, drainage, sewage disposal and fire safety aspects. In addition, it should not reduce the land area available for village type development. For sites located adjacent to recreational uses or tourist attraction spots, favourable consideration may be given if the above considerations are not compromised.
- 1.3 Even if a proposal is considered acceptable in land-use planning terms and other planning criteria are met, under normal circumstances only a temporary approval for a maximum of three years should be considered so as to retain planning control on the development at the site and to cater for changing circumstances in future.
- 1.4 These Guidelines set out the planning criteria for assessing planning applications for eating place use in the "V" zone in the rural areas.

2. Definition of New Territories Exempted House (NTEH)

"NTEH" is defined in the Covering Notes in rural outline zoning plans.

3. Requirement for Planning Permission

Eating place use on the ground floor of a NTEH within the "V" zone does not require planning permission. However, such use on other floors of a NTEH, on open ground as an extension to a ground floor eating place in a NTEH, or as a free-standing development within the "V" zone requires planning permission from the Board.

4. Main Planning Criteria

- 4.1 The eating place use should not create any environmental nuisance or cause inconvenience to the residents nearby. Such use should preferably be located at the fringe of a village area, e.g. area abutting the main road. For any eating place use that is situated amidst the existing village houses, sympathetic consideration may only be given if there are no objections from local residents.
- 4.2 The eating place use should not have any adverse traffic impact on its surrounding areas nor should it affect any pedestrian circulation in the area.
- 4.3 Sympathetic consideration may also be given to any application which would not have adverse impacts on drainage, sewage disposal facilities or fire safety aspects.
- 4.4 For any application on open ground as an extension to ground floor eating place in a NTEH or as a free-standing development, the eating place use should not adversely affect the land availability for village type development. Application sites with configurations/dimensions which are not suitable to be delineated separately for village type development or which are considered not suitable for village type development (e.g. within 20m of public roads constructed/maintained by the Highways Department or 15m of other local public roads), sympathetic consideration may be given by the Board on individual merits.
- 4.5 For a village located adjacent to recreational uses or tourist attraction spots, favourable consideration may be given to eating place use which will provide catering facilities to serve the visitors and tourists. In such circumstances, adequate car-parking spaces should be provided to serve the eating place use as required by the Transport Department. If it is impossible to provide car-parking spaces at the application site, the applicant should demonstrate that there are adequate car-parking facilities conveniently located in the vicinity to serve the eating place use.
- 4.6 All other statutory or non-statutory requirements of relevant Government departments should be met.

**Relevant extract from the Town Planning Board Guidelines
for Application for Open Storage and Port Back-up Uses
(TPB PG-No. 13F)**

2.6 Other Considerations

- (a) Notwithstanding the above locational and site planning criteria, each application will be assessed on individual merits, taking due account of the nature and scale of the proposed use and local circumstances. 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 this Guidelines are complied with.
- (b) Having considered that the open storage and port back-up uses have a role to play in Hong Kong's economy and provide considerable employment opportunities, and the operators/uses affected by resumption and clearance operations of the Government to make way for developments may face difficulties in finding a replacement site, sympathetic consideration could be given to such type of applications, except those involving land in Category 4 area (only minor encroachment may be allowed), if the following criteria are met:
 - (i) policy support is given by the relevant bureau(x) to the application for relocation of the affected uses/operations to the concerned sites; and
 - (ii) no adverse departmental comments and local objections. or

3. Applications in New Development Areas (NDAs)

- 3.1 The planning for various NDAs (including potential development areas) in the New Territories has been in progress and the land use proposals for some of these areas have been incorporated as appropriate into relevant statutory town plans. The NDAs will be implemented by phases. While it is envisaged that the existing open storage and port back-up uses in these areas will be gradually phased out, sympathetic consideration may be given to applications for continued operation of these uses during the interim period before the sites are required for NDA development. For applications in NDAs with new/amended OZPs gazetted, the assessment criteria set out in the following paragraphs, instead of those in paragraph 2.1 above, should be adopted.
- 3.2 For existing open storage and port back-up uses with previous planning approval(s) and/or permitted under the previous OZPs, sympathetic consideration may be given to the application (irrespective of whether the application is submitted by the applicant of previous approval or a different applicant) until the concerned site is required for implementation of NDA

development, provided that the relevant approval conditions, if any, have been complied with. Technical assessments, where appropriate, should be submitted to demonstrate that the continued operation of the current uses would not have adverse drainage, traffic, visual, landscaping and environmental impacts on the surrounding areas and the concerns of the departments and local residents, if any, can be addressed through the implementation of the approval conditions.

- 3.3 In view of the impending implementation of NDAs, new open storage and port back-up uses are generally not encouraged to infiltrate into the NDAs. There is a general presumption against such uses at greenfield areas and/or at sites with land use compatibility issue, e.g. in close proximity to existing residential dwellings which may be subject to environmental nuisances caused by the open storage and port back-up uses. Applications will normally be rejected unless under exceptional circumstances.
- 3.4 Any approved temporary use and development should not jeopardize the long-term planned development on the respective site/the surrounding area under the NDA and the applicant should be advised that the site would be required by the government at any time during the planning approval period for implementation of government projects.
- 3.5 The above paragraphs are applicable to areas covered by the Kwu Tung North/Fanling North NDA and Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen NDA, as well as future NDAs upon the gazetting of the relevant new/amended OZPs for such areas.

Advisory Clauses

- (a) to resolve any land issue relating to the development with the concerned owner(s) of the application site;
- (b) to note the comments of District Lands Officer/Yuen Long, Lands Department (DLO/YL, LandsD) that the Site comprises Old Schedule Agricultural Lots (OSALs) and GL. The OSALs are held under the Block Government Lease which contains the restriction that no structures are allowed to be erected without prior approval of the Government. No permission is given for occupation of GL (about 84.2m² subject to verification) included in the Site. The act of occupation of GL without Government's prior approval is not allowed. Part of the Site falls within "Fung Shui Area of Hung Uk Tsuen and Kiu Tau Wai". The lot owner(s) of the lots will need to apply to his office for permitting the structures to be erected or to regularize any irregularities on site, if any. Also, the applicant has to either exclude the GL from the Site or apply for a formal approval prior to the actual occupation of the above GL. Besides, given the proposed use is temporary in nature, only application or regularization or erection of temporary structures will be considered. Application(s) for any of the above will be considered by LandsD acting in the capacity of the landlord or lessor at its sole discretion and there is no guarantee that such application(s) will be approved. If such application(s) is approved, it will be subject to such terms and conditions, including among others the payment of premium or fee, as may be imposed by LandsD;
- (c) to note the comments of the Commissioner for Transport (C for T) that sufficient manoeuvring space shall be provided within the Site. No vehicles are allowed to queue back to public roads or reverse onto/from public roads. The local track leading to the Site is not under Transport Department's purview. The applicant shall obtain consent of the owners/managing departments of the local track for using it as the vehicular access to the Site;
- (d) to note the comments of the Chief Highway Engineer/New Territories West, Highways Department (CHE/NTW, HyD) that adequate drainage measures should be provided at the site access to prevent surface water flowing from the Site to nearby public roads/drains. HyD shall not be responsible for the maintenance of any access connecting the Site and Kiu Hung Road;
- (e) to note the comments of the Chief Building Surveyor/New Territories West, Buildings Department (CBS/NTW, BD) that if the existing structures (not being a New Territories Exempted House) are erected on leased land without the approval of the Building Authority (BA), they are unauthorised building works (UBW) under the Buildings Ordinance (BO) and should not be designated for any proposed use under the application. For UBW erected on leased land, enforcement action may be taken by the BD 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. Before any new building works (including containers/open sheds as temporary buildings and land filling) are to be carried out on site, prior approval and consent of the BA should be obtained, otherwise they are UBW. An Authorised Person (AP) should be appointed as the co-ordinator for the proposed

building works in accordance with the BO. The Site shall be provided with means of obtaining access thereto from a street and emergency vehicular access in accordance with Regulations 5 and 41D of the Building (Planning) Regulations (B(P)R) respectively. If the Site does not abut a specified street of not less than 4.5m wide, its permitted development intensity shall be determined under Regulation 19(3) of the B(P)R at the building plan submission stage. Detailed checking under the BO will be carried out at building plan submission stage. If the proposed use under application is subject to issue of a license, the applicant should be reminded that any existing structures on the Site intended to be used for such purposes are required to comply with the building safety and other relevant requirements as may be imposed by the licensing authority;

- (f) to follow the “Code of Practice on Handling the Environmental Aspects of Temporary Uses and Open Storage Sites” issued by the Environmental Protection Department to minimise potential environmental nuisance to the surrounding area;
- (g) to note the comments of the Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (DEFH) that proper licence / permit issued by his Department is required if there is any food business / catering service / activities regulated by DFEH under the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132) and other relevant legislation for the public and the operation of any business should not cause any obstruction. If the proposal involves any commercial/trading activities, no environmental nuisance should be generated to the surroundings. Also, for any waste generated from the commercial/trading activities, the applicant should handle on their own/at their expenses; and
- (h) to note the comments of the Director of Fire Services (D of FS) that the applicant is advised to submit relevant layout plans incorporated with the proposed fire services installations (FSIs) to him for approval. The layout plans should be drawn to scale and depicted with dimensions and nature of occupancy. The location of where the proposed FSI to be installed should be clearly marked on the layout plans. The applicant is reminded that if the proposed structure(s) is required to comply with the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123), detailed fire service requirements will be formulated upon receipt of formal submission of general building plans.