

TPB PG-NO. 16A

**TOWN PLANNING BOARD GUIDELINES FOR
APPLICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT/REDEVELOPMENT WITHIN
“GOVERNMENT, INSTITUTION OR COMMUNITY” ZONE FOR USES OTHER THAN
GOVERNMENT, INSTITUTION OR COMMUNITY USES
UNDER SECTION 16 OF THE TOWN PLANNING ORDINANCE**

(Important Note :

The Guidelines are intended for general reference only. ~~The decision to approve or reject an application rests entirely with the Town Planning Board (the Board) and will be based on individual merits and other specific considerations of each case.~~

Any enquiry on this pamphlet should be directed to the *Secretariat of the Town Planning Board (15th Floor, North Point Government Offices (NPGO), 333 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong – Tel. 2231 4810 or 2231 4835) or the Planning Enquiry Counters* ~~Planning Information and Technical Administration Unit of the Planning Department (Hotline: 2231 5000) (17th Floor, NPGO and 14th Floor, Sha Tin Government Offices, 1 Sheung Wo Che Road, Sha Tin).~~, ~~17/F, North Point Government Offices, 333 Java Road, Hong Kong – Tel. No. 22315000.~~

The Guidelines are *subject to revision without prior notice.* ~~liable to revision without prior notice. The Board will only make reference to the Guidelines current at the date on which it considers an application.)~~

1. Scope and Application

- 1.1 “Government, Institution or Community” (“G/IC”) zones are designated on statutory plans to reflect the existing *government, institution and community (GIC) uses* and to reserve sites for future provision of GIC facilities *and other public uses* in accordance with the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG) *or to meet the requirements of government bureaux/departments to serve the present and future needs of the community.* Some GIC developments, especially the low-rise and low-density ones, *might also* serve as “breathing space” *and/or visual relief* within a high-rise and high-density environment. Some areas/sites are also zoned “G/IC” to cater for unforeseen future demands and for which no specific GIC uses have been designated for the time being.
- 1.2 Over the years, due to changing demographic structure and revisions to the standards and requirements of provision of GIC facilities, some existing or planned facilities may become surplus, obsolete or under-utilised while some others may require in-situ expansion or reprovisioning elsewhere so as to meet the current and anticipated future operational needs. In these circumstances, opportunities exist for some “G/IC” sites to be developed/redeveloped *for*

beneficial uses for non-GIC uses or for a mixture of GIC and non-GIC uses.

- 1.3 Use of “G/IC” sites for non-GIC uses which fall within *under* Column 2 (“*Column 2 uses*”) of the Notes for the “G/IC” zone may ~~or may not~~ be permitted with or without conditions on application to the Town Planning Board (the Board) under section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance (*Cap. 131*) (*the Ordinance*). The planning permission system will enable the Board to maintain adequate planning control over the use of “G/IC” sites and yet allow sufficient flexibility in accommodating the changing aspirations and requirements of the community, and sometimes to meet demand for better utilisation of the site potential.
- 1.4 Applications for development/redevelopment *for Column 2 uses* within a “G/IC” zone ~~for non-GIC uses~~ will be considered by the Board on individual merits *and* in accordance with the main planning criteria set out in paragraph 2 below.
- ~~1.5 As a general rule, for sites zoned “G/IC”, a major portion of the proposed development should be dedicated to GIC and other public uses including public open spaces. Otherwise, the proposed development is considered to constitute a significant departure from the planning intention of the “G/IC” zone and, unless with very strong justifications and under special circumstances, planning permission for such development would not be granted.~~
- ~~1.6 If the development is for predominantly non-GIC uses (e.g. more than 50% of the total site area or gross floor area of the development, as the case may be, are for non-GIC uses), the Board might consider rezoning the site to an appropriate zoning if the proponent could demonstrate that all the planning criteria have been met. Through zoning amendment to the relevant statutory plan, members of the public would be informed of the change in planning intention, and an opportunity could be provided for the public to comment on the zoning amendments and lodge objections for the consideration of the Board under the provisions of the Town Planning Ordinance.~~
- ~~1.7~~ 1.5 This set of Guidelines is applicable to *applications for* both development and redevelopment of “G/IC” sites ~~for non-GIC uses, including a mixture of GIC and non-GIC uses.~~

2. Main Planning Criteria

- 2.1 In general, sites zoned “G/IC” are intended to be developed or redeveloped ~~solely~~ for GIC uses unless it can be established that the provision of GIC facilities would not be jeopardised and the concerned Government departments have no objection to releasing a particular “G/IC” site or a certain part of it for ~~non-GIC~~ *other* uses. For applications for development/redevelopment for

~~non-GIC~~ **Column 2** uses within a “G/IC” site, the applicant should *provide justifications and* satisfactorily demonstrate the following:

- a. in the case of a “G/IC” site designated with specific uses,
 - i. the application site is no longer required for the designated GIC uses, or adequate reprovisioning of the designated GIC uses is provided either in-situ or elsewhere; and
 - ii. there is adequate provision of other GIC facilities in the district, ~~or the application site is not suitable for other GIC facilities; or~~
- b. in the case of an undesignated “G/IC” site, the application site is no longer required to be reserved for any GIC uses; and
- c. the proposed development/redevelopment would not adversely affect the provision of GIC facilities *and open space* in the district on a long-term basis.

2.2 The proposed development should not adversely affect the normal operation of the existing GIC facilities nor delay the implementation of the planned GIC facilities, if any, within the “G/IC” site. Temporary reprovisioning, if necessary, should be provided prior to the completion of the proposed development.

2.3 The proposed development should be compatible in land-use terms with the GIC uses on the site, if any, and with the surrounding areas.

2.4 The scale and intensity of the proposed development should be in keeping with that of the adjacent area. In this regard, development restrictions stipulated on the statutory plan for similar developments in the locality and the prevailing development restrictions administratively imposed by the Government on nearby similar developments (e.g. development restrictions in *the outline development plans/layout plans* ~~Special Control Areas~~ and, and plot ratios in accordance with the density zones under the HKPSG) would be taken into consideration.

~~2.5 The scale and design of the proposed development should have regard to the character and massing of the buildings in the surrounding areas and should not cause significant adverse visual impact on the townscape of the area. Where one of the planning intentions of the existing/designated GIC development on the site is to serve as a “breathing space” or visual break within a high-rise and high-density environment, the proposed development should be designed~~

~~in such a way that this planning intention would not be undermined.~~

- 2.5 The scale and design of the proposed development *within "G/IC" site* should *take into account* ~~have regard to~~ the character and massing of the buildings in the surrounding areas and should not cause significant adverse *air ventilation and/or* visual impact on the townscape *and ventilation* of the area. ~~Where one of the planning intentions of the existing/designated GIC development on the site is to serve as a "breathing space" or visual break within a high rise and high density environment, the proposed development should be designed in such a way that this planning intention would not be undermined.~~
- 2.6 The proposed development should be sustainable in terms of the capacities of existing and planned infrastructure such as drainage, sewerage, roads, water supply and utilities in the locality and its surrounding areas.
- 2.7 There should be adequate provision of parking and loading/unloading facilities to serve the proposed development in accordance with the HKPSG and to the satisfaction of the Transport Department (*TD*). Adequate vehicular access arrangements should also be provided to the satisfaction of ~~the Transport Department~~ *TD*.
- ~~2.8 The proposed development should be sustainable in terms of the overall planned provision of open space and GIC facilities in the area.~~
- ~~2.92.8~~ The proposed development should not cause, directly or indirectly, the surrounding areas to be susceptible to adverse environmental impacts and should not be susceptible to adverse environmental impacts from pollution sources nearby including heavily trafficked road; otherwise adequate environmental mitigation, monitoring and audit measures must be provided.
- ~~2.102.9~~ For "G/IC" sites covered by mature trees and vegetation or located in areas of high landscape or amenity value, the design and layout of the proposed development should be compatible and should blend in well with the surrounding areas. ~~The proposed development should not involve extensive clearance of existing natural vegetation, adversely affect the existing natural landscape, or cause adverse visual impact on the natural environment in the surrounding areas. A master landscape plan (including a detailed survey of the existing trees, proposals on preservation of the trees, tree transplanting, compensatory planting and, where appropriate, an indication of the proposed hard finishes of all landscape areas, slopes and retaining structures) should be submitted to the Board for consideration.~~ *Landscape Assessment according to Annex B of Guidance Notes for Application for Permission under Section 16 of the Ordinance should be submitted as necessary.*

~~2.11~~**2.10** The design and layout of the proposed development should have regard to the preservation of any existing buildings of historical or architectural values on or adjoining the application site.

~~2.12~~ The financial viability of a development/redevelopment proposal in support of the GIC elements to be provided, and the status of the land under lease and the planning gains to be brought about by the proposed development would also be part of the considerations of the Board when assessing the proposal. However, the amount of weight to be given to these considerations would depend on the circumstances and merits of each case. Under normal circumstances, planning considerations such as land use compatibility, traffic and environmental impacts, and landscape and urban design concerns would take precedence.

2.11 *In general, the Board may give favourable consideration to the proposed development that may bring planning gain to the community.*

~~2.13~~**2.12** All other statutory or non-statutory requirements of relevant government departments should be met.

3. In-situ Conversion of “G/IC” Building for non-GIC Uses

3.1 ~~With the exception of the criteria under para. 2.4, 2.5, 2.10 and 2.11 mentioned above,~~ This set of Guidelines is also applicable to proposed in-situ conversion for ~~non-GIC~~**Column 2** uses of an existing “G/IC” building, or part thereof, within the “G/IC” zone, *wherever appropriate*.

TOWN PLANNING BOARD

~~January 1999~~**FEBRUARY 2026**

TPB PG-NO. 20A

TOWN PLANNING BOARD GUIDELINES ON COMPLIANCE ~~OF~~ WITH APPROVAL CONDITIONS

(Important Note:

The Guidelines are intended for general reference only. Any enquiry on this set of guidelines should be directed to the ~~Planning Information and Technical Administration Unit of the Planning Department, 17th floor, North Point Government Offices, 333 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong Tel. No. 2231 5000~~ *Secretariat of the Town Planning Board (15th Floor, North Point Government Offices (NPGO), 333 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong – Tel. No. 2231 4810 or 2231 4835) or the Planning Enquiry Counters of the Planning Department (Hotline: 2231 5000) (17th Floor, NPGO and 14th Floor, Sha Tin Government Offices, 1 Sheung Wo Che Road, Sha Tin.)*.

General Principles

1. One of the fundamental principles regarding the compliance ~~of~~ *with* approval conditions is that all conditions imposed by the Town Planning Board (the Board), in particular those related to the development itself, should be complied with ~~as far as practicable~~ *(except for those with prescribed time limit)* before the use applied for actually comes into place. This is because in granting the permission, the Board has taken that the application would only be permissible subject to the complete fulfillment of all the imposed conditions.
2. Other than those conditions imposed with a prescribed time limit *(usually applicable to temporary uses)*, the approval conditions could be broadly divided into two types, i.e. those required to be complied with before building plan approval and those required to be complied with after building plan approval, normally before occupation of the development.

Conditions Imposed with Prescribed Time Limit

3. For those conditions imposed with a prescribed time limit, they should be complied with before the expiry of the time limit.

Conditions ~~To Be~~ Complied with before Building Plan Approval

4. The following conditions which concern or would affect the detailed design of the

development should be complied with before the approval of the building plans:

- a. Conditions governing the design, disposition or layout of the proposed development or the provision of certain facilities such as car parking spaces, footbridges and other community facilities within or forming part of the building development. The subject matters of these conditions can be shown on the building plans;
 - b. Condition requiring the submission of a landscaping proposal. In the case of a development falling within a “Comprehensive Development Area” *zone* or *an* area with special design significance, as the conceptual landscaping proposal may affect the building design, the condition needs to be complied with before approval of the building plans. However, it is important to note that in order to satisfy this condition, the applicant is only required to submit a conceptual landscape proposal rather than a detailed landscape plan; and
 - c. Conditions requiring the submission of ~~further detailed~~ *new/revised* impact assessments, e.g. traffic impact assessment, environmental assessment, drainage impact assessment, etc. Since the assessment results will affect the building design, they should be completed before approval of the building plans.
5. Since requirements for conditions in *paragraphs* 4(b) and (c) above may not be reflected in general building plans, a separate submission to the relevant ~~Government~~ *government* departments for consideration is necessary. However, some applicants may prefer to submit the landscape proposal and other required assessments together with the general building plans. This will be a matter of choice for the applicant.
 6. In the case of the condition requiring the submission of a revised Master Layout Plan (MLP), if ~~the compliance of~~ *with* other approval conditions would not result in any major changes in the design, disposition or layout of the proposed development, submission of the revised MLP is not a pre-requisite for the approval of building plans.

Conditions ~~To~~ *Be* Complied with after Building Plan Approval

7. Some of the conditions may not need to be complied with at building plan approval

stage, but are expected to be complied with before the occupation of the development. Non-compliance ~~of~~*with* these conditions prior to the occupation of the development may cause ~~serious~~*significant* adverse impacts ~~to~~*on* both the development itself and the surrounding area. These *may* include:

- a. Conditions requiring the provision of on-site facilities such as vehicular access, landscaping, drainage and sewage treatment and disposal facilities;
 - b. Conditions requiring the implementation of any proposed mitigation measures for the treatment of environmental, drainage and sewage impacts; and
 - c. Conditions requiring that the development should not be occupied before provision of off-site works/facilities such as road improvements, trunk sewers improvement, etc.
8. Conditions regarding the provision of facilities which require funding from ~~the government~~*Government* such as public transport facilities, external footbridge links, government, institution, *and* community (GIC) and other off-site facilities should tie in with the respective programmes of concerned government departments.
9. Since the above conditions have no direct impact on the detailed design of the development, they need not be complied with before building plan approval. The exact timing for the compliance ~~of~~*with* these conditions would depend on individual circumstances. Nevertheless, in order to ensure timely provision of such facilities, it is recommended that the design of these facilities should be submitted well in advance to the relevant ~~Government~~*government* departments for consideration.

TOWN PLANNING BOARD

~~MAY 1999~~FEBRUARY 2026

TPB PG-No. 35DE

**TOWN PLANNING BOARD GUIDELINES ON
EXTENSION OF TIME FOR COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT**

(Important Note:

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The Guidelines are subject to revision without prior notice.)

1. Introduction

1.1 Any planning permission granted by the Town Planning Board (the Board), except those for ~~regularization~~ **regularisation** of uses and those granted on a temporary basis, is subject to a time limit that the permission shall cease to have effect on a specified date unless prior to that date, the approved development has commenced or an extension of time for commencement of development is granted. Where an approved development has not commenced within the specified time limit, the applicant may apply for an extension of the time for commencement of the development.

1.2 The time limit attached to planning permission imposed by the Board is to ensure that the approved development proposals would be implemented within a reasonable period. With good justifications **and taking into account the assessment criteria in paragraph 4 below**, the Board may grant an extension of time for commencement of development under **section 16A** (s.16A) of the Town Planning Ordinance (**the Ordinance**). However, should there be new planning circumstances governing the application, the Board is under no obligation to approve the application.

2. Commencement of Approved Development

2.1 The determination on whether an approved development has commenced should be considered on the basis of the facts and circumstances of each case. In general, the approval of building plans would constitute a

commencement of development. However, where land transaction with the Government is required to implement an approved development, the Board may consider that an approved development has commenced as at the date of acceptance of the formal basic terms offer¹ by the applicant of the concerned transaction under the relevant land document, generally including land grant (including land sale, small house grant, etc.), lease modification (including short-term or temporary waiver, etc.), land exchange, short term tenancy agreement, and any other documents issued by the Lands Department which are required to effect the approved development. Where building plan submission or land transaction is not applicable, the issuance of relevant documents for undertaking the approved development, use(s) or works by relevant authorities may constitute a commencement of development, for instance, excavation permit for land excavation, certificate of exemption in respect of site formation works (e.g. proposed land filling for permitted New Territories Exempted House), etc. For ~~Government~~**government** projects or uses, the Board may also consider the grant of the relevant ~~Government~~**government** land allocation (GLA) or the approval of funding for carrying out detailed design/building works as a commencement of development. For a development scheme undertaken by the Urban Renewal Authority, the approval of the resumption of land by the Chief Executive in Council would also constitute a commencement of development.

- 2.2 Where the approved development comprises more than one structure/premises, involving more than one approval of building plans or land transactions or GLAs covering different parts of a site, the facts and circumstances in each case will be taken into consideration to decide whether the approved development has “commenced”. For comprehensive development² which is not under single ownership and involves different implementation phases as specified in the approved scheme, phased commencement could be allowed provided that it has been demonstrated in the approved scheme that phased development will not undermine the planning intention of the comprehensive development³.

¹ This refers to the basic terms (excluding provisional basic terms), with or without premium, fee or rent, offered by the Lands Department to the applicant of the concerned transaction.

² This refers to development within zone(s), e.g. “Comprehensive Development Area” zone, on statutory plan intended for comprehensive development or redevelopment, or permitted in the form of a comprehensive development scheme.

³ In considering whether the planning intention of the comprehensive development will be undermined, reference will generally be made to the criteria on ‘Allowance for Phased Development’ as specified

The circumstances on what constitute a commencement of development set out in paragraph 2.1 above are applicable. For the avoidance of doubt, the project proponents of comprehensive developments with phased commencement shall make due effort to implement the remaining phases within the validity period ~~as far as possible~~, or otherwise the remaining phases of the approved schemes yet to be commenced shall cease to have effect.

3. Application Procedures

- 3.1 Any extension(s) of time for commencement of development shall not result in an aggregate extension period longer than the original duration for commencement of the approved development proposal. An application for such extension(s) falls within Class B amendments published by the Board and shall be made to the Board in accordance with s.16A of the Ordinance. The application procedures set out in the Town Planning Board Guidelines for Class A and Class B Amendments to Approved Development Proposals ~~should~~**shall** be followed.
- 3.2 The applicant shall submit the application to the Board no less than 6 weeks before the expiry of the specified time limit so as to allow sufficient time for processing and consultation with concerned ~~Government~~**government** departments.
- 3.3 If the approved development is not commenced by the specified time limit as imposed by the Board, the planning permission will lapse. The Board does not have power under the Ordinance to extend time for a planning permission that has lapsed and ceased to have effect. Therefore, despite that an application is submitted before the expiry of the specified time limit, the Board will have no power to extend time in respect of a planning permission that has ceased to have effect at the time of consideration. Under such circumstances, a fresh s.16 planning application for the development in accordance with the provision of the extant statutory plan will be required.
- 3.4 In support of an application for extension of time for commencement of

in the Town Planning Board Guidelines No. 17A for 'Designation of "Comprehensive Development Area" ("CDA") Zones and Monitoring the Progress of "CDA" Developments'.

development, the applicant is required to provide:

- (a) reasons for the application;
- (b) time period for which an extension of time is sought; and
- (c) an account of all actions taken to implement the development since the granting of planning permission, including evidence and documentation on the submitted proposals and any works undertaken/completed to fulfil any approval conditions.

4. Assessment Criteria

The criteria for assessing applications for extension of time for commencement of development *may* include:

- (a) whether there has been any material change in planning circumstances since the original permission was granted (such as a change in the planning policy/land-use zoning for the area);
- (b) whether there are any adverse planning implications arising from the extension of time;
- (c) whether the commencement of development is delayed due to some technical/practical problems which are beyond the control of the applicant, e.g. delays in land administration procedures, technical issues in respect of vehicular access and drainage works or difficulties in land assembly;
- (d) whether the applicant has demonstrated that reasonable action(s), e.g. submission of building plans for approval *and/or* application for Small House/land exchange, *where applicable*, have been taken for the implementation of the approved development;
- (e) whether the applicant has demonstrated that reasonable action(s), e.g. submission *and/or* implementation of proposals, *where applicable*, have been taken to the satisfaction of relevant ~~Government~~ *government* departments in complying with any approval conditions;

- (f) whether the applicant has demonstrated that there is a good prospect to commence the proposed development within the extended time limit;
- (g) whether the extension period applied for is reasonable; and
- (h) any other relevant considerations.

TOWN PLANNING BOARD
~~OCTOBER 2022~~ *FEBRUARY 2026*

**TOWN PLANNING BOARD GUIDELINES FOR
APPLICATION FOR FACTORY / WORKSHOP / WAREHOUSE USE
WITHIN UNSPECIFIED USE AREA ON
DEVELOPMENT PERMISSION AREA PLANS
UNDER SECTION 16 OF THE TOWN PLANNING ORDINANCE**

(Important Note :

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1. Scope and Application

- 1.1 About 60% of the land within the Development Permission Areas (DPAs) are designated as "unspecified use" areas. While the general planning intentions for these areas have largely been indicated in the explanatory statements of the respective DPA plans, the specific land use zonings for these areas have yet to be considered in relation to sub-regional development options and development constraints when the relevant Outline Zoning Plans are prepared. Thus only traditional uses in the New Territories are permitted as of right within the "Unspecified Use" areas. They are listed in the Notes of DPA plan. All other uses require permission from the Town Planning Board (the Board).
- 1.2 As there are many planning applications for factory / workshop / warehouse developments in the "unspecified use" areas, it is considered useful to publish some general guidelines for this type of applications so that prospective applicants will be made aware of the Board's requirements prior to submitting their applications. However, each application will still be assessed on its individual merits.

2. Factory / Workshop / Warehouse

A factory/workshop is defined as any place, structure, building or part of the building in which the articles are manufactured, altered, assembled, cleansed, repaired, ornamented, finished, adapted for sale or broken up or demolished or in which materials are transformed and packaged. It also includes vehicles repair garage but excludes concrete batching plant. As distinguished from conventional flatted factory, the industrial operation involved in a factory/workshop in the rural areas of the New Territories is usually of a smaller scale and less sophisticated nature. As regards warehouse/godown, it means any place, building or part of a building for the storage of raw materials and goods including the carrying out of ancillary bulk breaking and packaging, but excluding the storage of any dangerous goods to which section 3 of the Dangerous Goods Ordinance (Cap.295) applies.

3. Main Planning Criteria

- a. The proposed development should be in line with the general planning intention for the area as stated in the explanatory statement of the relevant DPA plan as far as possible. Justifications are required for any departure from this intention.
- b. In general, the proposed development should be compatible with its surrounding land uses, particularly in those areas where the proposed development is in close proximity to rural settlements, well-established agricultural areas or areas with scenic, environmental and ecological value. It should not constitute an environmental nuisance or cause interface problems with existing developments.

- c. The applicant should demonstrate that the proposed development would not overstrain the capacity of the existing and planned infrastructure such as sewerage, drainage, road network and water supply. Submission of relevant impact studies on traffic and drainage may be required.
- d. The proposed development should not have significant adverse impacts, such as odour, dust, smoke, glare, noise, vibration, wastewater and solid waste, upon the surrounding environment. Applications should include basic information on proposed activities, possible environmental impacts on the surrounding area and possible mitigating measures to reduce any adverse impact. An environmental impact assessment would be required for an application which may cause such problems.
- e. The proposed development should not cause visual intrusion/impact to the surrounding areas. Where there are visual impacts, they should be mitigated by appropriate measures such as planting and screening walls.
- f. The applicant should ensure that adequate vehicular access is provided. Also, parking, loading/unloading facilities should be provided in accordance with the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines for industrial use.
- g. The maximum permitted site coverage should not generally exceed 25%. Where a larger site coverage is required on environmental and operational grounds, appropriate justification should be provided.
- h. The height of the proposed development should generally be limited to 7.62 metres. Where a greater building height is required on operational grounds, justification should be provided.
- i. In general, for factory/workshop and warehouse storing combustible materials, water supply for fire fighting purpose should be provided at the site if the unimpeded distance of the site from the nearest existing pedestal fire hydrant on public roads is more than 500 metres. The required water supply should be in the form of pedestal fire hydrants with adequate flow and pressure or a 245m³ capacity water tank subject to individual assessment.