

Extending effective period of relaxation of waiver application for existing industrial buildings

The Development Bureau (DEVB) announced today (January 26) the extension of the effective period of the relaxation of waiver application requirement for existing industrial buildings (IBs) to January 31, 2025.

With a view to revitalising and optimising the use of existing IBs, on February 1, 2019, the DEVB relaxed the waiver application requirement for an initial period of five years, to permit the following five specific non-industrial uses to operate in individual units of existing IBs without the need for the owner to make a temporary waiver application to the Lands Department (LandsD) and pay any fee, provided that such uses are permitted under the land use zoning of the sites concerned on the relevant Outline Zoning Plans as "Column 1" (i.e. always permitted) uses:

- Art Studio;
- Office (Audio-visual Recording Studio);
- Office (Design and Media Production);
- Office (used by "specified creative industries" only (i.e. design and media production firms, printing and publishing industries, film companies, and film-related trade organisations)); and
- Research, Design and Development Centre.

With public safety as a prime concern, the permitted uses above are covered on the premise that they do not involve uses/activities that attract visiting members of the general public by providing direct services or goods, such as conducting hobby classes, exhibitions and sales activities, or providing rehearsal facilities for any party other than the operator, owner and tenant(s) of the premises.

A spokesperson for the DEVB said, "The waiver relaxation arrangement facilitates the provision of needed floor space within existing IBs in a pragmatic manner to meet persistent demand from various industries without compromising public safety, and the market feedback has been generally positive."

The extension of the effective period to January 31, 2025, will continue to enable many existing IB units (especially those under multiple ownership hence not ready for redevelopment or wholesale conversion in the near future) to be used for both industrial and certain non-industrial uses in a controlled and pragmatic manner. The Government will review the need for further extension in due course.

The terms and conditions of the relaxation of waiver application for existing IBs will remain unchanged. For details about the arrangement, please visit the DEVB website (www.devb.gov.hk/en/issues_in_focus/index.html) or the

LandsD website (www.landsd.gov.hk/en/reIntBuild/index.htm). For enquiries about the application to individual IBs, please contact relevant District Lands Offices of the LandsD.