

Town Planning Board Guidelines revised

The Town Planning Board (TPB) today (March 27) promulgated a set of revised Guidelines (TPB PG-No. 13F) for Application for Open Storage (OS) and Port Back-up (PBU) Uses under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance, which takes immediate effect.

The revised Guidelines are the result of a review conducted by the Planning Department on the previous version of the Guidelines (TPB PG-No. 13E) which was promulgated in October 2008.

The Guidelines set out the criteria for assessing planning applications for OS and PBU uses and provide guidance for making such applications. Rural areas in the New Territories covered by statutory plans are classified into four categories under the Guidelines (Category 1 to 4) with the intention to channel OS/PBU uses to specific areas, thereby preventing them from proliferating into the much wider unspoiled rural area. Amendments have been made to the coverage, site classification and assessment criteria of the Guidelines.

Since the last promulgation of the Guidelines, the Board has prepared various new outline zoning plans (OZPs) to provide statutory planning control for different parts of the New Territories. The coverage of the Guidelines has been updated to include all areas covered by rural statutory town plans including these new OZPs involving an addition of about 5 033 hectares of land under 42 OZPs. About 93 per cent and 7 per cent of the newly included areas are classified under Category 4 and Category 3 respectively.

Taking into account the latest planning circumstances, the site classification of land has been reviewed and re-classified to reflect various completed developments and updated zonings of these sites. The re-classification has also made reference to the spatial distribution of the brownfield sites revealed in the "Study on Existing Profile and Operations of Brownfield Sites in the New Territories". To avoid spreading out of OS/PBU uses to environmentally sensitive areas, the Board recognises the need to channelise them to more appropriate locations.

For New Development Areas (NDAs), the existing OS/PBU uses permitted under previous plans or with previous planning permissions are generally allowed to continue until NDA implementation, but new applications for OS/PBU uses would normally be rejected unless under exceptional circumstances.

For applications submitted to re-provision operations affected by Government development projects, the revised Guidelines specify that sympathetic consideration may be given if the concerned site does not fall within the Category 4 area, the re-provisioning has the policy support of the relevant bureau, and there are no adverse departmental comments and local objections, or the concerns could be addressed by approval conditions.

The revised Guidelines (TPB PG-No. 13F) are now available at the

Secretariat of the Board at 15/F, North Point Government Offices, 333 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong (Tel: 2231 4810 or 2231 4835) and the Board's website (www.info.gov.hk/tpb).

Any enquiries on the guidelines may be addressed to the Secretariat of the Board at the above address or by email (tpbpd@pland.gov.hk), or to the Planning Enquiry Counters of the Planning Department (hotline: 2231 5000, email:enquire@pland.gov.hk) at 17/F, North Point Government Offices and 14/F, Sha Tin Government Offices, 1 Sheung Wo Che Road, Sha Tin.