

Town Planning Board promulgates new guidelines for pilot scheme on transfer of plot ratio (TPB PG-No. 43)

The Town Planning Board (TPB) today (July 7) promulgated new Guidelines for Application for Transfer of Plot Ratio (TPR) under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance (the Ordinance). The Guidelines take immediate effect.

As an incentive to speed up urban regeneration through private initiatives, the new Guidelines put in place a new planning tool allowing TPR between sites through processing of a section 16 planning application under the Ordinance. The TPR mechanism, recommended by the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) in its District Study for Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok, will be implemented as a pilot in the two old districts where redevelopment momentum has been slow while the number of old-age buildings has been growing.

The TPR mechanism allows transfer of permissible gross floor area (GFA) from sending site(s) (SS) to receiving site(s) (RS) within the same Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) up to 30 per cent of the maximum GFA permitted for the RS under the OZP through a planning application for minor relaxation of the plot ratio/GFA restriction, with allowance for interchangeability of domestic and non-domestic GFA upon transfer. Examples of SS may include sites of low redevelopment potential (e.g. sites with small and isolated dilapidated buildings, or sites currently occupied by buildings with GFA exceeding the OZP level); sites with building(s) worthy of preservation; or sites suitable for conversion to open space or Government, Institution and Community (GIC) purpose. RS are usually larger site(s) at more strategic and accessible locations suitable for higher density development.

By allowing GFA to be transferred from sites with low redevelopment potential to more sizable RS sites at the more strategic and accessible locations suitable for higher development intensity, the TPR mechanism is expected to facilitate a better restructuring and replanning in the two old districts. It will also bring planning gains, in the form of additional open space and other GIC facilities, as well as preservation of buildings with conservation value to the community.

The TPB stressed that the applicant has to demonstrate the planning gains from the development scheme involving the SS(s) and RS(s) in a totality manner to justify a higher development intensity for the RS as well as the technical feasibility of the scheme. In considering the applications, the TPB would take into account established planning principles including visual impact, urban design, etc. The TPB also took note that safeguards would be put in place to ensure enforceability of applicants' obligations through lease modifications and other administrative measures.

Subject to market response, the Administration will review the mechanism around 2025 with a view to enhancing the operational details of the scheme. At the time of review, the Administration will take into account recommendations of further urban restructuring studies respectively in Sham Shui Po and Tsuen Wan now being conducted by the URA.

The new Guidelines (TPB PG-No. 43) are now available at the Secretariat of the TPB at 15/F, North Point Government Offices, 333 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong (tel: 2231 4810 or 2231 4835) and the TPB's website (www.info.gov.hk/tpb).

Any enquiries on the guidelines may be addressed to the Secretariat of the TPB 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.