

Extract of Town Planning Board Guidelines
for Application for Development within Green Belt Zone
under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance (TPB PG-No. 10)

The relevant assessment criteria are as follows:

- (a) There is a general presumption against development (other than redevelopment) in a “Green Belt” (“GB”) zone. In general the Board will only be prepared to approve applications for development in the context of requests to rezone to an appropriate use.
- (b) An application for new development in a “GB” zone will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and must be justified with very strong planning grounds. The scale and intensity of the proposed development including the plot ratio, site coverage and building height should be compatible with the character of surrounding areas. With the exception of New Territories Exempted Houses, a plot ratio up to 0.4 for residential development may be permitted.
- (c) Applications for New Territories Exempted Houses with satisfactory sewage disposal facilities and access arrangements may be approved if the application sites are in close proximity to existing villages and in keeping with the surrounding uses, and where the development is to meet the demand from indigenous villagers.
- (d) Redevelopment of existing residential development will generally be permitted up to the intensity of the existing development.
- (e) Applications for government/institution/community (G/IC) uses and public utility installations must demonstrate that the proposed development is essential and that no alternative sites are available. The plot ratio of the development site may exceed 0.4 so as to minimize the land to be allocated for G/IC uses.
- (f) Passive recreational uses which are compatible with the character of surrounding areas may be given sympathetic consideration.
- (g) The design and layout of any proposed development should be compatible with the surrounding area. The development should not involve extensive clearance of existing natural vegetation, affect the existing natural landscape, or cause any

adverse visual impact on the surrounding environment.

- (h) The vehicular access road and parking provision proposed should be appropriate to the scale of the development and comply with relevant standards. Access and parking should not adversely affect existing trees or other natural landscape features. Tree preservation and landscaping proposals should be provided.
- (i) The proposed development should not overstrain the capacity of existing and planned infrastructure such as sewerage, roads and water supply. It should not adversely affect drainage or aggravate flooding in the area.
- (j) The proposed development must comply with the development controls restrictions of areas designated as water gathering grounds.
- (k) The proposed development should not overstrain the overall provision of G/IC facilities in the general area.
- (l) The proposed development should not be susceptible to adverse environmental effects from pollution sources nearby such as traffic noise, unless adequate mitigating measures are provided, and it should not itself be the source of pollution.
- (m) Any proposed development on a slope or hillside should not adversely affect slope stability.

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

1. On 17.10.2008, the Town Planning Board Guidelines for Application for Open Storage and Port Back-up Uses under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance (TPB PG-No. 13E) were promulgated, which set out the following criteria for the various categories of area:
 - (a) Category 1 areas: favourable consideration will normally be given to applications within these areas, subject to no major adverse departmental comments and local objections, or the concerns of the departments and local residents can be addressed through the implementation of approval conditions. Technical assessments should be submitted if the proposed uses may cause significant environmental and traffic concerns;
 - (b) Category 2 areas: planning permission could be granted on a temporary basis up to a maximum period of 3 years, subject to no adverse departmental comments and local objections, or the concerns of the departments and local residents can be addressed through the implementation of approval conditions. Technical assessments, where appropriate, should be submitted to demonstrate that the proposed uses would not have adverse drainage, traffic, visual, landscaping and environmental impacts on the surrounding areas;
 - (c) Category 3 areas: applications would normally not be favourably considered unless the applications are on sites with previous planning approvals. Sympathetic consideration may be given if the applicants have demonstrated genuine efforts in compliance with approval conditions of the previous planning applications and included in the fresh applications relevant technical assessments/proposals to demonstrate that the proposed uses would not generate adverse drainage, traffic, visual, landscaping and environmental impacts on the surrounding areas. Planning permission could be granted on a temporary basis up to a maximum period of 3 years, subject to no adverse departmental comments and local objections, or the concerns of the departments and local residents can be addressed through the implementation of approval conditions; and
 - (d) Category 4 areas: applications would normally be rejected except under exceptional circumstances. For applications on sites with previous planning approvals, and subject to no adverse departmental comments and local objections, sympathetic consideration may be given if the applicants have demonstrated genuine efforts in compliance with approval conditions of the previous planning applications and included in the applications relevant technical assessments/proposals to demonstrate that the proposed uses would not generate adverse drainage, traffic, visual, landscaping and environmental impacts on the surrounding areas. The intention is however to encourage the phasing out of such non-conforming uses as early as possible. A maximum period of 2 years may be allowed upon renewal of planning permission for an applicant to identify suitable sites for relocation. No further renewal of approval will be given unless under very exceptional circumstances and each application for renewal of approval will be assessed on its individual merit.

2. In assessing applications for open storage and port back-up uses, the other major relevant assessment criteria are also summarized as follows:
- (a) there will be a general presumption against development on sites of less than 1,000 m² for open storage uses and 2,000 m² for port back-up uses in rural areas, other than sites located in major corridors, industrial/godown/workshop areas, quarrying activities or where it is demonstrated that optimum use is made of the site. This is to prevent the further proliferation of small sites in rural areas, minimizing sprawl over countryside areas and reducing travel trips;
 - (b) port back-up sites and those types of open storage uses generating adverse noise, air pollution and visual intrusion and frequent heavy vehicle traffic should not be located adjacent to sensitive receivers such as residential dwellings, hospitals, schools and other community facilities;
 - (c) port back-up uses are major generators of traffic, with container trailer/tractor parks generating the highest traffic per unit area. In general, port back-up sites should have good access to the strategic road network, or be accessed by means of purpose built roads;
 - (d) adequate screening of the sites through landscaping and/or fencing should be provided where sites are located adjacent to public roads or are visible from surrounding residential areas;
 - (e) there is a general presumption against conversion of agricultural land and fish ponds to other uses on an ad hoc basis, particularly in flood prone areas or sites which would obstruct natural drainage channels and overland flow; and
 - (f) 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, planning permission may be refused, or a shorter compliance period for the approval conditions may be imposed, notwithstanding other criteria set out in the Guidelines are complied with.

Good Practice Guidelines for Open Storage Sites

		Internal Access for Fire Appliances	Lot Boundaries (Clear Width)	Distance between Storage Cluster and Temporary Structure	Cluster Size	Storage Height
1.	Open Storage of Containers		2m	4.5m		
2.	Open Storage of Non-Combustibles or Limited Combustibles	4.5m	2m	4.5m		
3.	Open Storage of Combustibles	4.5m	2m	4.5m	40m x 40m	3m

Remarks: Smoking and naked flame activities shall not be allowed within the open storage / recycling site.

Advisory clauses

- (a) prior planning permission should have been obtained before commencing the applied use at the application site (the Site);
- (b) the Site should be kept in a clean and tidy condition at all times;
- (c) to note the comments of the District Lands Officer/Yuen Long, Lands Department that the Site comprises an Old Schedule Agricultural Lot held under the Block Government Lease which contains the restriction that no structures are allowed to be erected without the prior approval of the Government. The Site is accessible from Long Hon Road via Government Land (GL). Her office does not provide maintenance work for GL involved and does not guarantee any right-of-way over the GL to the Site. The lot owner(s) will need to apply to her office to permit the structures to be erected or regularise any irregularities on the Site, if any. Besides, given the proposed use is temporary in nature, only application for regularisation or erection of temporary structure(s) will be considered. No construction of New Territories Exempted Building(s) will be considered or allowed. Applications for any of the above will be considered by her department acting in the capacity as the landlord or lessor at its sole discretion and there is no guarantee that such application will be approved. If such application 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 her department;
- (d) to note the comments of the Commissioner for Transport that the land status of the access road/path/track leading to the Site from Long Hon Road should be checked with the lands authority. The management and maintenance responsibilities of the access road/path/track should be clarified and consulted with the relevant management and maintenance authorities accordingly. Sufficient space should be provided within the Site for manoeuvring of vehicles. In addition, no parking of vehicles on public road is allowed;
- (e) to note the comments of the Chief Highway Engineer/New Territories West, Highways Department that adequate drainage measures should be provided at the site access to prevent surface water flowing from the Site to nearby public roads/drains. His department shall not be responsible for the maintenance of any access connecting the Site and Tong Yan San Tsuen Road;
- (f) to note the comments of the Director of Environmental Protection that relevant mitigation measures and requirements in the latest “Code of Practice on Handling the Environmental Aspects of Temporary Uses and Open Storage Sites” issued by the Environmental Protection Department should be followed to minimise any potential environmental nuisances;
- (g) to note the comments of the Director of Fire Services that in consideration of the design/nature of the proposal, fire service installations (FSIs) are anticipated to be required. Relevant layout plans incorporated with the proposed FSIs should be submitted to his department for approval. The layout plans should be drawn to scale and depicted with dimensions and nature of occupancy, the location of where the proposed FSIs to be installed should also be clearly marked on the layout plans. The good practice guidelines for open storage (**Appendix IV** of this RNTPC Paper) should be adhered to. If the proposed structure(s) is required to comply with the Buildings Ordinance (BO) (Cap. 123), detailed fire service requirements will be formulated upon receipt of formal submission of general building plans;

- (h) to note the comments of the Chief Building Surveyor/New Territories West, Buildings Department (BD) that the excavation and backfilling works should be carried out under the supervision of a competent person. Your attention is drawn to Building (Minor Works) Regulation that excavation with a depth between 0.3m to 3m falls within the items of Class I or Class II minor works and is subject to the Minor Work Control System. The excavation works should be supervised by competent persons, who are Professional and/or Prescribed Registered Contractor. Adequate precautionary measures and suitable working procedures should be adopted in carrying out the above works to safeguard the stability of any building, structure, land, street or services. Any precautionary measures, which involve new building works, are subject to the regulation as stated below. When any natural, formed or man-made land has due to any cause been rendered so dangerous or liable to become so dangerous that it will collapse, or be likely to collapse, and thereby will cause, or will be likely to cause, a risk of injury to any person or damage to any property, enforcement action may be taken by the BD. 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 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, demolition and land filling) are to be carried out on the Site, prior approval and consent of the BA should be obtained, otherwise they are UBW. An Authorised Person 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. The Site does not abut on a specified street of not less than 4.5m wide and its permitted development intensity shall be determined under Regulation 19(3) of the B(P)R at the building plan submission stage; and
- (i) to note the comments of the Project Manager (West), Civil Engineering and Development Department that the Site falls within the boundary of the proposed Yuen Long South (YLS) Development – Stage 2. The YLS Development would provide land to meet the medium to long term housing needs of Hong Kong. Extension of the planning permission may not be supported in future when the detailed implementation programme of works in the Site under YLS Development – Stage 2 is formulated.