



**Arrangements for Processing Application Submissions
to the Town Planning Board and Development Proposals
to the Planning Department**

Introduction

1. One of the roles of the Planning Department (PlanD) is to serve the Town Planning Board (the Board) in processing planning applications under the Town Planning Ordinance (the Ordinance), including those for planning permission and amendment of plan, their pre-application enquiries, and submissions for compliance with conditions attached to planning permissions (approval conditions). PlanD also handles development proposals from proponents not eligible to apply for amendment of plan under section 12A of the Ordinance.

2. The purpose of this Practice Note is to set out PlanD's arrangement for processing such submissions and where appropriate, the time frame for reply to the applicant/proponent.

Planning Applications

Pre-application Enquiries

3. Any person can make enquiries to PlanD on whether planning application is required for a proposed development under the Ordinance and, if required, the procedure involved for making a submission to the Board. This can be done through PlanD's enquiry hotline at Tel No. 2231 5000; Fax No. 2877 0389; or enquiry e-mail enquire@pland.gov.hk. If the person wants to make an enquiry in person, he/she can visit the Planning Enquiry Counters (the Counters) located at 17th Floor, North Point Government Offices, 333 Java

Road, North Point or 14th Floor, Sha Tin Government Offices, 1 Sheung Wo Che Road, Sha Tin. All proponents should also refer to the relevant guidance notes available at the Counters or the Board's website (<http://www.tpb.gov.hk>).

4. For site-specific information and general exchange of views about a proposed development, the proponent is welcome to contact the relevant District Planning Office (DPO) direct (https://www.pland.gov.hk/pland_en/about_us/contact_us/address_tel.html). To facilitate more fruitful discussion, it would be advisable if the proponent could clearly provide in writing the relevant information of the proposed development and set out issues of concern.

5. If a proponent intends to seek comments on a development proposal and technical assessment(s) (e.g. level of details required, assumptions and methodology for the assessment) as a pre-application submission, the submission should include the required assessments with reasonable details in soft copy. DPO will seek comments from relevant government bureaux and departments (B/Ds) which will normally be required to provide their comments (departmental comments) in writing to the proponent direct with copy to the relevant DPO within **three weeks** after circulation. If needed, the DPO may initiate or on request by the proponent arrange meetings with concerned B/Ds and the proponent on any conflicting views and/or unresolved issues as identified in the departmental comments.

6. For a complicated proposal, a proponent should consider making good use of the above pre-application enquiry mechanism before submitting the planning application. It will help the proponent to identify major issues and resolve them as far as practicable during the pre-application stage, thereby avoiding the risk of failure to address these issues within the statutory time limit for the Board to consider the application.

7. It is, however, always important to bear in mind that all departmental comments and views expressed by officers of B/Ds at the meetings are on a non-committal basis which should not be taken as any form of pre-approval by concerned B/Ds. In addition, the proponent should not interpret the departmental comments and the views expressed at the meetings as the views of the Board. Neither the views of PlanD nor those of concerned B/Ds can pre-empt the decision of the Board, which is an independent statutory body, in considering and deciding on any related planning application made by the proponent under

the Ordinance.

8. The procedures for processing the pre-application submissions are illustrated in the flowchart at [Annex A](#).

Post-submission

9. After a planning application is made to the Board, DPO will seek comments from relevant B/Ds which will be required to provide departmental comments in writing to the relevant DPO within **three weeks** after circulation. For subsequent enquiries, applicant is welcome to contact PlanD via the contact information provided in the acknowledgement letter. The departmental comments can be released to the applicant or his/her authorized representative upon request. To facilitate the applicant to address major issues, DPO will forward the departmental comments to the applicant for any follow-up actions and provide the names and contact details of the relevant officers to the applicant so that the applicant can follow up with the officers directly¹.

10. If necessary, the applicant may request deferment of the Board's consideration of the application in writing with justifications to the Secretary of the Board (e.g. for submission of further information to address departmental comments) with reference to the Town Planning Board Guidelines on Deferment of Decision on Representations, Further Representations and Applications (https://www.tpb.gov.hk/en/forms/Guidelines/TPB_PG_33B.pdf). Any such request should preferably be made before the issue of agenda and paper (normally **one week** before the scheduled meeting date).

11. The post-submission procedures are illustrated in the flowchart at [Annex B](#).

After consideration by the Board

12. The applicant will be notified in writing of the Board's decision on his/her application after confirmation of the minutes of the meeting in which the decision was made. Pending written notification of the Board's decision, the applicant can make reference to the

¹ Planning submissions made under section 16 and section 17 of the Ordinance will be published for public comments. Public comments received will be made available for public inspection at PlanD's Planning Enquiry Counters until the Board or its Committee has decided on the application.

Gist of Decisions which will normally be posted on the Board's website (<http://www.tpb.gov.hk>) after the meeting on the same day. The applicant may also make verbal enquiries on the decision to the Secretary of the Board (Tel. No. 2231 4810 or 2231 4835) after the meeting.

13. For a planning application not approved by the Board, the Secretary of the Board will set out the reasons for rejection/deferral in the written notification, together with the relevant Board/Planning Committee's paper and minutes or links to these documents, to the applicant. The applicant can contact the responsible senior town planner (STP), whose telephone number will be included in the written notification, to clarify issues of concern of the Board.

14. For any planning permission granted by the Board on approval conditions imposed under section 16(5) of the Ordinance, the applicant is welcome to contact the responsible STP and the subject officers of the relevant B/Ds as provided in the Board's approval letter on the requirements to comply with the approval conditions. If the applicant makes any submission for the compliance with the conditions or, if applicable, approval of master layout plan under section 4A(3) of the Ordinance, DPO will consult concerned B/Ds and reply to the applicant within **six weeks**. If the submission involves any complicated issue, the applicant may request a meeting with DPO and where appropriate, concerned B/Ds with a view to resolving the issue.

15. To streamline the process for compliance with approval conditions, the applicant's submission to DPO may be copied to the concerned B/Ds in parallel for early action.

Development Proposals

16. An application for amendment of plan under section 12A of the Ordinance can only be made by an 'eligible person' as defined in section 12A(25) of the Ordinance. A proponent not eligible for making the application may submit a rezoning proposal to DPO for consideration. The submission should provide a concrete rezoning proposal with technical assessment(s) to demonstrate the technical feasibility of the proposal. Where appropriate, DPO will seek comments from relevant B/Ds and reply to the proponent on

whether the rezoning proposal is acceptable or not within **three months**.

17. The development proposal, including its location, proposed zoning and key development parameters (if available), will be made known to the public on PlanD's webpage (https://www.pland.gov.hk/pland_en/rezoning_proposal/index.html) when it is being processed by PlanD. The proposal will be removed from the webpage after PlanD's reply to the proponent.

18. For any assistance, the proponent of a rezoning proposal may contact the relevant DPO (https://www.pland.gov.hk/pland_en/about_us/contact_us/address_tel.html).

19. This Practice Note supersedes PlanD Practice Notes for Professional Persons No. 2/2005 and 4/2005.

(Ivan CHUNG)
Director of Planning
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