

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

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(Question Serial No. 3177)

Head: (91) Lands Department
Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified
Programme: (1) Land Administration
Controlling Officer: Director of Lands (Thomas CHAN)
Director of Bureau: Secretary for Development

Question:

Please provide the details including the brief description, estimated expenditure, objective and timetable in respect of each of the projects under the new round of revitalisation scheme for industrial buildings in 2019-20.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Han-pan (LegCo internal reference no.: 27)

Reply:

The new round of Industrial Buildings (IBs) Revitalisation Scheme includes the following six measures:

Wholesale Conversion

- (1) Offer a three-year time-limited exemption of waiver fees for applications made to the Lands Department (LandsD) for wholesale conversion of existing IBs aged 15 years or above in "Commercial" ("C"), "Other Specified Uses (Business)" ("OU(B)") and "Industrial" ("I") zones for uses permitted under the relevant Outline Zoning Plans (OZPs), with an additional condition that 10% of the converted floor space should be designated for specific uses prescribed by Government.

Redevelopment

- (2) As a policy direction, but subject to approval of the Town Planning Board on a case-by-case basis and the maximum non-domestic plot ratio (PR) allowed under the Buildings (Planning) Regulations, allow increasing the maximum permissible non-domestic PR by up to 20% to incentivise redevelopment of IBs constructed before 1987 (pre-1987 IBs) for sites located outside "Residential" ("R") zones in Main Urban Areas and New Towns.

Facilitate Transitional Housing in Wholesale-converted IBs without Industrial Uses

- (3) Facilitate proposals from the community for providing transitional housing in portions or entire blocks of IBs (without any age limit) located in “C”, “Comprehensive Development Area” (CDA), “OU(B)” and “R” zones which have already undergone or will pursue wholesale conversion into non-industrial uses, by exercising flexibility in the application of planning, land lease, and building design requirements, including not charging a waiver fee for this specific use of transitional housing.

Other Measures Permitting Non-industrial Uses in Existing IBs

- (4) For individual units in existing IBs, relax the waiver application policy on a time-limited basis, initially five years, to permit certain uses for the arts and cultural sectors, creative industries, and innovation and technology sectors in an orderly manner (without the need for owners making separate waiver applications and paying waiver fees), provided that such uses are permitted under the planning regime in the first place.
- (5) Broaden the permissible use of buffer floors, with due regard to public safety, to cover (among other permitted uses at present) “telecommunications exchange centres” and “computer/data processing centres”, to facilitate partial conversion of lower floors of IBs into non-industrial uses.
- (6) Promulgate a broader definition for “godown” use under lease provisions, covering (among other permitted uses at present) “cargo handling and forwarding operation” and “recyclable collection centre” uses.

Regarding the expenditure in 2019-20, LandsD estimates that there will be 17 posts to handle directly the processing of applications submitted in connection with the above revitalisation measures. The estimated annual staff cost is about \$8.6 million. Some of the related land administration work would also be undertaken and absorbed by existing staff resources of LandsD for which no separate breakdown is available.

The timetable and details of the new revitalisation measures introduced under the Scheme are as follows:

Revitalisation measure	Timetable
(i) Wholesale conversion	Application should be submitted to LandsD on or before 31 March 2022. Conversion works should be completed within three years after execution of land document. Details are specified in Lands Department LAO Practice Note No. 6/2019.

Revitalisation measure	Timetable
(ii) Redevelopment	Application should be submitted to Town Planning Board on or before 9 October 2021. If approved, the land document should be executed within three years after planning approval. Redevelopment should be completed within five years after execution of land document. Details are specified in Lands Department LAO Practice Note No. 2/2019.
(iii) Transitional housing in converted industrial buildings	No application deadline. Details will be specified in Lands Department LAO Practice Note to be issued.
(iv) Relaxation of waiver application policy	Put into force from 1 February 2019 to 31 January 2024. The Government would review the policy and the need for extension towards the end of the five-year period. Details are specified in Development Bureau's announcement on 1 February 2019.
(v) Broadening the permissible uses of buffer floors	No application deadline. Details are specified in Lands Department LAO Practice Note No. 3/2019.
(vi) Broader definition for "Godown" use under lease provisions	Details are specified in Lands Department LAO Practice Note No. 1/2019.

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