

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)562/06-07(07)

Ref: CB1/PL/HG

Panel on Housing
Meeting on 4 January 2007

Background Brief
on Comprehensive Structural Investigation Programme
for Aged Public Housing Estates

Purpose

This paper sets out the background on the comprehensive structural investigation programme (CSIP) for aged public rental housing (PRH) estates launched by the Housing Authority (HA) in 2005, and summarizes the major concerns and views on related issues expressed by Members at Council meetings and the meetings of the Panel on Housing (Housing Panel) in the 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 sessions.

Comprehensive Structural Investigation Programme

2. Given the deteriorating building conditions of some aged PRH estates, HA launched CSIP in September 2005 with the objective to ascertain the building conditions of estates of ages about or over 40 years and identify the repair and strengthening works required to sustain the buildings for a reasonable period of time, say, at least 15 years. On the basis of the findings, technical assessments of concrete strength, extent of steel reinforcement corrosion and likely extent of further deterioration in the coming 15 years are then made, to be followed by assessment of the necessary repair and strengthening works to sustain the buildings. A financial viability assessment will also be conducted to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the necessary repair and strengthening works. The findings of the investigation aim to enable HA to work out the improvement and repair plans for individual aged estates, and, if the buildings are beyond economic repair, consider the need for clearance. CSIP covers ten aged estates and is estimated to be completed in about two and a half years. Details of the ten estates are in **Appendix I**.

3. Meanwhile, in October 2005, HA endorsed the Total Maintenance Scheme for improving maintenance services in PRH estates. The Scheme includes, among others, taking proactive and comprehensive approach to identify maintenance problems. In carrying out the necessary maintenance works to sustain the aged PRH estates, which are identified as structurally safe under CSIP, opportunity will be taken

to study and implement the Estate Improvement Programme under the Total Maintenance Scheme to enhance the living environment of these estates.

Outcomes of investigation on Sai Wan Estate and So Uk Estate

4. The comprehensive structural investigations of Sai Wan Estate and So Uk Estate were completed in January 2006. According to the Housing Department (HD), the outcome of the investigation on Sai Wan Estate has confirmed that all buildings in the estate are structurally safe and in fairly good condition. To sustain the buildings for use in the next 15 years, only minor repair works are required. Such works will be included in the routine maintenance programme. To further enhance the living environment of the estate, HA will also carry out the necessary works under the Estate Improvement Programme having regard to the demographic profile of tenants and their actual needs. As regards So Uk Estate, while results of the structural investigation has indicated that all buildings in the estate are structurally safe and the concrete strength is satisfactory in general, the structural conditions are deteriorating and corrosion of steel reinforcement bars are evident particularly in the toilet areas and cantilever corridors as a result of ageing and environmental factors. Taking account of the overall building conditions, scale of improvement works required as well as likely disturbances to tenants, HA has decided to clear So Uk Estate in two phases in 2008 and 2011. Affected tenants will be rehoused in Un Chau Estate Phases 2 and 4, and Cheung Sha Wan Flatted Factory Redevelopment projects.

Major concerns and views expressed by Members

5. Members have been monitoring issues related to rehabilitation of and maintenance for aged PRH estates through raising questions at Council meetings. The details of questions raised at Council meetings in the 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 sessions are hyperlinked in **Appendix II**.

6. The Housing Panel discussed the Total Maintenance Scheme and received a briefing on the outcome of CSIP for Sai Wan Estate and So Uk Estate at the meetings on 7 November 2005 and 9 May 2006 respectively. On the Total Maintenance Scheme, while members welcomed the various initiatives under the Scheme, they raised enquiries about the criteria for determining demolition of estates and assessing the cost-effectiveness of repair works, as well as rehousing arrangements for affected tenants. There were suggestions for HA to review the internal layout of flats in aged PRH estates and consider installing lifts or escalators for estates located in hillside areas with a view to improving the living conditions of and providing easy access for tenants. As far as CSIP was concerned, members supported HA's decision to demolish So Uk Estate given its dilapidated conditions and undertake repairs works for Sai Wan Estate. In view of the large population of elderly tenants in So Uk Estate, members called for the early set-up of Community Service Teams to assist residents in the clearance exercise. HD was also urged to exercise flexibility in making re-housing arrangements, including allocating affected households with flats that met

their affordability and particular needs, and re-housing affected households in estates in the same or vicinity districts. To address the concern of commercial tenants of So Uk Estate, members noted that rents had already been frozen upon the announcement of the clearance project and would be subject to six-month review to take account of decrease in population in the estate. Given the favourable location of the site of So Uk Estate in the urban area, HA was urged to make early planning for the cleared site. With the great demand for public housing flats in the urban area, there was the view that HA should not return the cleared site to the Government.

Latest development

7. CSIP for Choi Hung Estate and Model Housing Estate commenced in February 2006 and was completed in August 2006 as scheduled. Findings have revealed that both estates are structurally safe but recommended that structural repair and improvements works be carried out to sustain the buildings for the next 15 years. The Administration will brief the Housing Panel on the findings and the necessary repair works for the two estates at the coming meeting on 4 January 2007.

Reference

8. The relevant papers with their hyperlinks are in **Appendix II**.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
3 January 2007

**Aged public housing estates included in the
Comprehensive Structural Investigation Programme**

Estate	Year of Completion	Age ^{Note}	No. of Blocks	No. of Units	(Estimated) investigation completion date
Model Housing	1952-1972	53	6	667	Aug 2006
Sai Wan	1958-1959	47	5	638	Jan 2006
So Uk	1960-1963	45	16	5 316	Jan 2006
Choi Hung	1962-1964	43	11	7 449	Aug 2006
Ma Tau Wai	1962-1965	43	5	2 075	Mar 2007
Wo Lok	1962-1966	43	11	1 941	Mar 2007
Fuk Loi	1963-1967	42	9	3 129	Jul 2007
Tung Tau (Block 22)	1965	40	1	906	Jul 2007
Wah Fu	1967-1978	38	18	9 147	Apr 2008
Ping Shek	1970-1971	36	8	4 575	Sep 2008

^{Note} The age is calculated on the basis of the age of the oldest block in the estate as at 2005.

(Source: Annex A to the Administration's paper on comprehensive structural investigation of aged public housing estates (LC Paper No. CB(1)CB(1)1396/05-06(03)) and additional information provided by the Administration.)

Comprehensive Structural Investigation Programme for Aged Public Housing Estates

List of relevant papers

Council/Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Council meeting	19 May 2004	Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee raised a question on Comprehensive Building Rehabilitation Programme for Old Public Housing Estates [Hansard "page 25"] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/counmtg/hansard/cm0519ti-translate-e.pdf
Housing Panel	7 November 2005	LC Paper No. CB(1)212/05-06(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/panels/hg/papers/hg1107cb1-212-3-e.pdf LC Paper No. CB(1)239/05-06(01) (Chinese version only) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/chinese/panels/hg/papers/hg1107cb1-239-1-c.pdf Minutes http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/panels/hg/minutes/hg051107.pdf
Council meeting	9 November 2005	Dr Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long raised a question on Provision of Escalators or Lifts in Old Public Housing Estates [Hansard "page 70"] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/counmtg/hansard/cm1109ti-translate-e.pdf
Council meeting	14 December 2005	Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung raised a question on Total Maintenance Scheme [Hansard "page 101"] http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/counmtg/hansard/cm1214ti-translate-e.pdf
Housing Panel	9 May 2006	LC Paper No. CB(1)1396/05-06(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0509cb1-1396-3-e.pdf

Council/Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
		<p>LC Paper No. CB(1)1466/05-06(01) (Chinese version only) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/chinese/panels/hg/papers/hg0509cb1-1466-1c.pdf</p> <p>LC Paper No. CB(1)1466/05-06(02) (Chinese version only) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/chinese/panels/hg/papers/hg0509cb1-1466-2c.pdf</p> <p>Minutes http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/panels/hg/minutes/hg060509.pdf</p>

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