

**For discussion
on 10 December 2007**

Legislative Council Panel on Education

**Development of student residences at Lung Wah Street, Kennedy Town
by The University of Hong Kong**

PURPOSE

This paper briefs Members on a capital works proposal for the University of Hong Kong (HKU) to develop 1 800-place student residences at Lung Wah Street, Kennedy Town.

JUSTIFICATION

2. In view of the educational value of hostel life, the Executive Council approved in 1996 a set of criteria for calculating the level of publicly-funded student hostel provisions for the University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded sector. Under this policy, all undergraduate students should be given the opportunity to stay in student hostels for at least one year of their courses. Furthermore, all research postgraduates, non-local students as well as all undergraduate students whose daily travelling time exceeds four hours, should be provided with student hostel places. In addition, to support internationalisation, the Government has agreed to provide an additional 1 840 publicly-funded student hostel places at the UGC-funded sector to support student exchange activities and to cater for the accommodation needs of non-local and exchange students. The Government will fund up to 75% of the capital cost of the approved student hostel provision, with the remainder to be met by the respective institutions using private funds.

3. Under the prevailing hostel policy and taking into account the additional hostel places for exchange activities, the approved publicly-funded hostel provision for HKU in the 2007/08 academic year is 5 690 places. Given that HKU currently has 3 885 publicly-funded hostel places, the University has a shortfall of about 1 800 publicly-funded hostel places. To address the shortfall, HKU proposes to construct new student residences at Lung Wah Street, Kennedy Town.

4. The project mainly involves construction of a total of 1 800 publicly-funded hostel places in four hostel blocks on a podium of ancillary facilities. The blocks will provide approximately a total of 20 882 square metres (m²) in net operational floor area. Other ancillary facilities include flats for warden, senior tutor, tutor, *etc.* and open space of approximately 4 209 m², and the associated pedestrian walkway and stairway which will be open to the public.

5. The main campus of HKU is already congested and further development is constrained. Currently, the core academic and teaching facilities of HKU are concentrated in the main campus while most of the student hostels are located off-campus at nearby locations. The site at Lung Wah Street is the only site in the Western District that is both immediately available and suitable for HKU's hostel development. Furthermore, as the site is close to HKU's campus and the University's existing student hostel facilities, *e.g.* HKU's Jockey Club Student Village II and student facilities at Pokfulam Road, the proposed construction of hostels at Lung Wah Street can enhance students' interaction and cultivation of community life. A copy of the site plan is at Enclosure.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6. The estimated cost for the project is \$606.3 million in money-of-the-day (MOD) prices. The Government will fund up to \$459.7 million, *i.e.* 75% of the cost for the hostel buildings and the full construction costs for the open space and the pedestrian walkway and stairway which will be open for public. HKU will contribute the remaining 25% of the construction cost for the hostel places through its private sources of funding. The proposal will have no impact on tuition fees, and will not incur additional recurrent financial implications on the Government. HKU will operate these student hostels on a self-financing basis through charges levied on hostel places in accordance with established policy.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMETABLE

7. Subject to Members' views, we intend to seek the approval of the Public Works Subcommittee and the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council for the proposal on 9 January 2008 and 1 February 2008 respectively. Subject to funding approval of the Finance Committee, HKU plans to start the construction works in early 2008 for completion in mid 2011.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

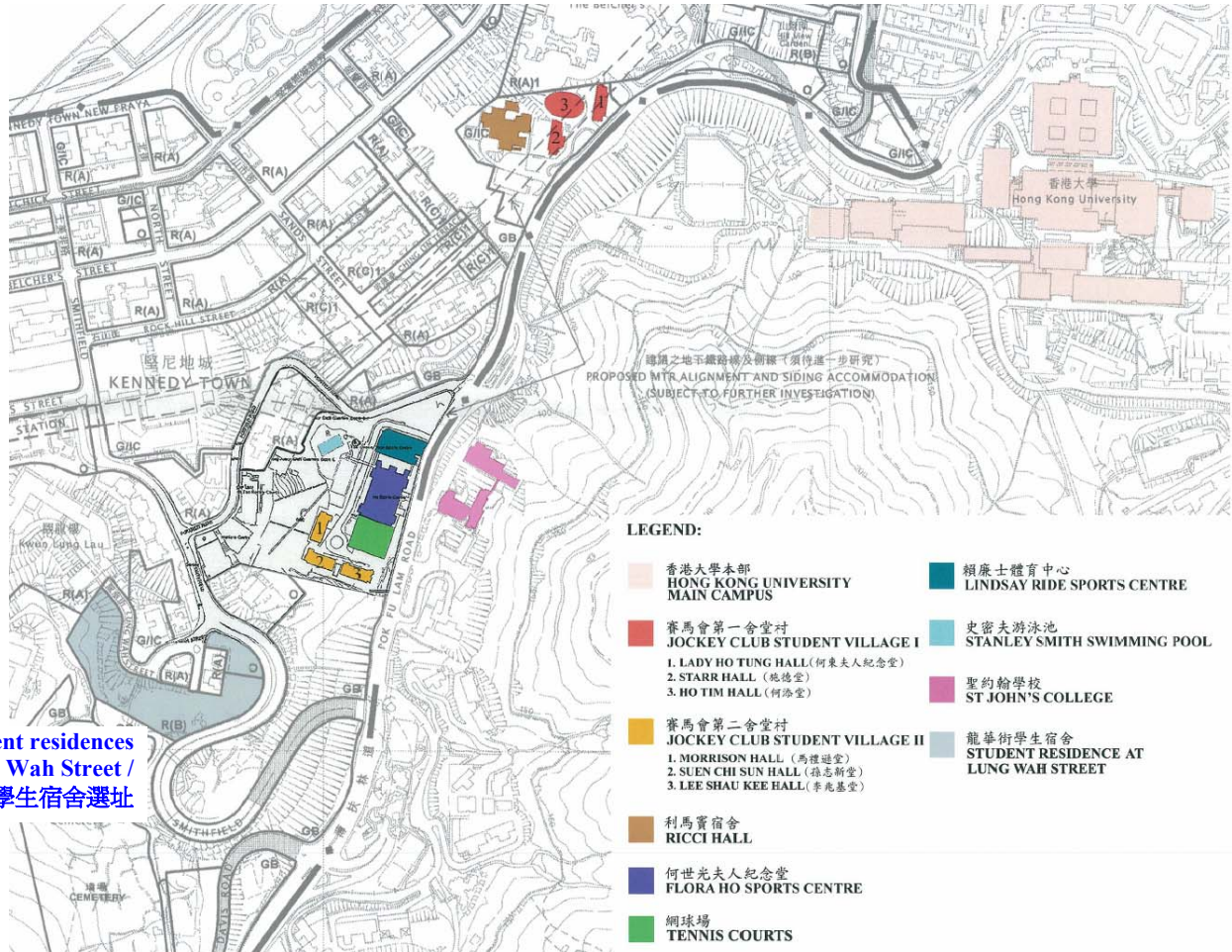
8. The Central and Western District Council (C&WDC) was consulted on 5 October 2006 and most Members indicated in-principle support to the project. Nonetheless, they requested HKU to conduct further consultation to gauge the views of the residents in the vicinity. In response, HKU organized consultation sessions with resident representatives in the neighbourhood and C&WDC Members on 21 December 2006. Some participants raised concerns about possible noise problem arising from the new hostels. To minimize possible impact on the neighbourhood, HKU has adopted appropriate features and made necessary adjustments to the design of the project such as lowering the development density at the site; locating the hostel blocks closer to the hill (and hence further away from the residential community of Lung Wah Street); adding architectural fins to the building facades to serve as noise barrier; and increasing the area for greenery. HKU organized a workshop on 31 March 2007 to explain the above measures to the local residents and community representatives, and to exchange views on the project design. HKU would continue to maintain a close dialogue with C&WDC and the resident representatives over the development of the project.

MEMBERS' VIEWS

9. Members are invited to give their views on the proposal.

Education Bureau
December 2007

**Site plan for the development of student residences
at Lung Wah Street, Kennedy Town by The University of Hong Kong**
香港大學於堅尼地城龍華街興建學生宿舍的位置圖



Site for student residences
at Lung Wah Street /
龍華街學生宿舍選址