

ITEM FOR PUBLIC WORKS SUBCOMMITTEE OF FINANCE COMMITTEE

HEAD 708 – CAPITAL SUBVENTIONS AND MAJOR SYSTEM AND EQUIPMENT

The Hong Kong Institute of Education

1EN - Development of the campus of the Hong Kong Institute of Education

Members are invited to recommend to the Finance Committee to approve a change in the approved project scope of **1EN** for Hong Kong Institute of Education to convert 66 former staff quarter units into 500 student hostel places and five former staff quarter units into an early childhood learning centre.

PROBLEM

The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIED) requires additional hostel accommodation to meet students' demand. At the same time, there is a need to optimise the use of vacant staff quarters arising, inter alia, from the implementation of the Home Financing Scheme for eligible staff in University Grants Committee-funded institutions (the UGC HFS).

PROPOSAL

2. With the support of the Secretary for Education and Manpower, the Secretary-General, University Grants Committee (SG, UGC) proposes to revise the approved project scope of **1EN** for HKIED to (a) convert 66 former staff quarter units into 500 student hostel places and, (b) convert five former staff quarter units into an early childhood learning centre.

PROJECT SCOPE AND NATURE

3. In December 1994, Finance Committee (FC) approved project **1EN** for the development of HKIED's new campus, including the provision of academic accommodation, administrative accommodation and central services, staff and student amenities, car parks, sport facilities as well as staff and student residences, for 5 000 full-time equivalent students.

4. We now propose to revise the approved project scope of **1EN** for the conversion of 66 former HKIED's staff quarter units into 500 student hostel places and five former staff quarter units into an early childhood learning centre. The works will involve repartitioning of internal walls, provision of furniture and equipment and in the case of the early childhood learning centre the forming of openings in structural walls. The gross floor area is 9 557 square metres. A site plan is at the Enclosure for Members' reference. HKIED plans to commence the conversion works for the student hostels and the early childhood learning centre in February 2001 and April 2001 respectively for completion in September 2001 and August 2001 respectively.

JUSTIFICATION

5. In December 1996, the Government promulgated a new policy for the provision of publicly-funded student hostel places at UGC-funded institutions. It represents Government's efforts to enhance the quality of university education by fostering hostel life which will sharpen student's communication skills, nurture their leadership quality, encourage independent thinking and promote participation in community affairs. Under this policy, all undergraduates will have the opportunity to stay in hostels for at least one year and all research postgraduates, non-local students and those undergraduates whose daily travelling time exceeds four hours will be provided with hostel places.

6. When FC approved project **1EN** in December 1994, among other things, FC also agreed that "100 of the staff eligible for staff quarters and up to 1 500 of the full-time students would be provided with purpose built quarters on campus. HKIED would be responsible for seeking private sponsorship to meet any additional requirement for student hostels". The construction works of staff quarters were completed in September 1999 (due to site constraint, the actual number of staff quarters built under **1EN** was reduced from 100 to 99). Meanwhile the demand for staff quarters was reduced considerably. After the implementation of the UGC HFS on 1 October 1998, HKIED only needs to retain four quarter units

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for existing eligible staff members who wish to take up staff quarters and 24 quarter units on a temporary basis for various other purposes (e.g. Visitors' Centre and other academic activities currently under consideration).

7. At the same time, there remains a shortfall in student hostels. At present, HKIEd has 1 500 wholly-publicly-funded hostel places built under 1EN. Under the student hostel policy promulgated in 1996 detailed in paragraph 5 above, another 500 hostel places have to be provided using private funding. HKIEd therefore proposes to use private funds to convert 66 surplus units into 500 hostel places.

8. The School of Early Childhood Education at the HKIEd has been the main provider of professional training for kindergarten teachers. The Administration supports the Institute's proposal to convert five surplus units of its staff quarters to an early childhood learning centre on a self-funding basis to provide an optimal setting for field experience activities for pre-service student teachers in Early Childhood Education courses to demonstrate the use of innovative teaching and learning approaches in Early Childhood Education and to provide opportunities for working with parents.

9. HKIEd estimates that the conversion costs are \$35 million and \$8 million respectively for the student hostel and the early childhood learning centre. HKIEd is committed to raise private funds to build the 500 hostel places to meet the shortfall under the student hostel policy. Nevertheless, in view of the benefits of the proposal, namely, putting surplus quarters into optimal use and meeting the shortfall in student hostels in a cost-effective manner, the Administration has agreed that an exception be made to the policy such that HKIEd would not be required to fund the construction of the agreed 500 student hostel places provided that the conversion is financed totally by private funds. UGC therefore supports HKIEd's proposal to convert 66 former staff quarter units into 500 student hostel places and five units into an early childhood learning centre using private funds.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10. We estimate the conversion cost of the project to be \$43 million. HKIEd will secure private sponsorship to meet the conversion cost.

11. Under the agreed arrangements for disposal of surplus quarters arising from the UGC HFS, the institutions will continue to manage the surplus quarters and may turn them into rentable premises. In the cost and benefit analysis for the implementation of the UGC HFS, it is assumed that the benefits from such surplus quarters will accrue to Government in the form of Government sharing a portion of the notional rental income, at 70% of the rateable value of the premises in respect of publicly-funded quarters. However, the Administration is prepared to be flexible to the extent of not applying the rental sharing arrangement where the surplus quarters are to be put to alternative usage yielding greater public benefits.

12. HKIED's surplus quarters were not ready for occupation at the time of introducing the UGC HFS, and staff eligible for quarters were then accommodated in leased premises. The benefits arising from the UGC HFS have already been reflected in the reduction in leasing expenses. The Administration has agreed that the surplus quarters proposed for conversion into alternative usage in this submission will not be subject to any rental sharing arrangement.

13. The proposed project has no impact on tuition fees. Following the established practice for UGC-funded institutions, HKIED will operate these student hostels on a self-financing basis through charges levied on hostel places. HKIED will also operate the early childhood learning centre on a self-financing basis.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

14. We consider public consultation unnecessary as the proposed works will be carried out within the campus of HKIED.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

15. HKIED considers that the conversion project would not have any long-term adverse environmental impact. During conversion, the institution will control noise, dust and site run-off nuisances within the established standards and guidelines through the implementation of mitigation measures in the relevant works contracts. These include the use of noise suppression baffles and silencers, wheel washing facilities and dust suppression equipment as well as regular watering of the site.

16.

16. As the project involves little structural/partitioning change, the volume of construction and demolition (C&D) materials likely to be generated is not substantial. HKIEd estimates that about 800 cubic metres of C&D waste will be disposed of at landfills respectively and 700 cubic metres of public fill will be delivered to public filling facilities. Ways of minimising the generation of C&D materials were considered at the planning design stages. Where practicable, the institution shall reuse the public fill generated from the projects either on site or at other construction sites on the campus. HKIEd will require the contractor to submit a waste management plan for approval and will ensure that day-to-day operations on site comply with the approved plan. The waste management plan will include appropriate mitigation measures, including an on-site area for waste segregation and the sorting of the C&D materials by category. This will facilitate reuse/recycling to reduce the generation of waste. The reused/recycled materials shall include paper/cardboard, timber and metal. The institution will also encourage the contractor to use non-timber hoarding as far as practicable. The institution will control the disposal of C&D materials at designated public filling facilities and/or landfills through a trip-ticket system and shall record the disposal, reuse and recycling of C&D materials for monitoring purposes.

LAND ACQUISITION

17. The project does not require land acquisition.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

18. In December 1994, FC approved project **1EN** for the construction of HKIEd's new campus with an approved project estimate (APE) of \$2,094 million. FC further approved to increase the APE of **1EN** to \$2,552 million in July 1997. Construction work, except the Pak Shek Kok Sports Centre scheduled for completion in August 2000, was completed in September 1999.

19. With the endorsement of the Executive Council and approval by FC on 18 September 1998 vide paper referenced FCR(98-99)30, the UGC HFS was introduced with effect from 1 October 1998 as the only form of housing benefit available to newly appointed eligible staff of the UGC-funded institutions, and an irrevocable option for serving staff. The Administration and the UGC-funded institutions have agreed on arrangements to dispose of surplus quarters arising from the introduction of the UGC HFS, whereby the institutions will continue to manage the quarters, and may turn them into rentable premises or propose alternative

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disposal plans for the Administration's consideration. To ensure that surplus quarters are disposed of or converted in ways that yield the greatest public benefits, the Administration has set up a Task Force on Usage of UGC-funded Institutions Surplus Staff Quarters to consider and advise on proposals from institutions. The Task Force has supported the proposed conversion project.

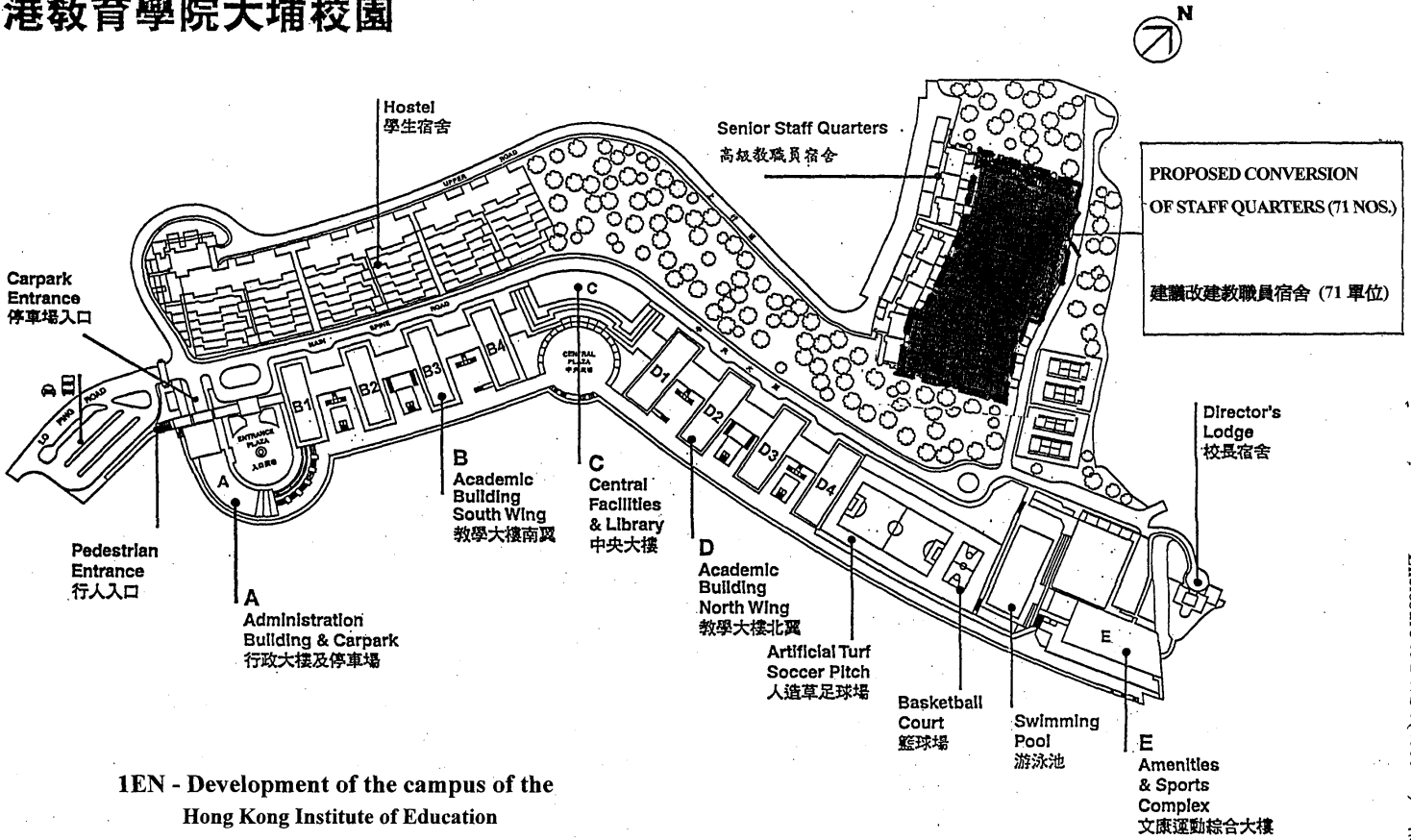
20. The Administration briefed the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Education in February 2000 and LegCo Panel on Financial Affairs in May 2000 on the conversion proposal as part of our long-term plans to optimise the use of surplus quarters arising from the UGC HFS. The proposal was supported in principle.

21. We estimate that the proposed conversion works of **1EN** will create about 53 jobs, with a total of 28 man months comprising three professional, 15 technical staff, and 35 labourers during the conversion period.

Education and Manpower Bureau
May 2000

(PWSC0284/WIN11)

The Hong Kong Institute of Education Tai Po Campus 香港教育學院大埔校園



1EN - Development of the campus of the
Hong Kong Institute of Education
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