

立法會
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Panel on Housing

Meeting on 8 February 2013

**Updated background brief on the "Public Housing Construction Programme"
prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat**

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the Public Housing Construction Programme ("PHCP") of the Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HA"), and gives a brief account of the views and concerns expressed by Members on the subject.

Background

2. The objectives of the Government's housing policy include providing low-income families who cannot afford private rental accommodation with public rental housing ("PRH"), with a target of maintaining the average waiting time ("AWT") for general PRH applicants on the Waiting List ("WL") at around three years¹. To this end, HA has put in place PHCP, which is a rolling programme forecasting PRH production of the coming five years. PHCP will be reviewed annually and the level of PRH production will be adjusted as and when necessary to maintain the target AWT.

2012/13 - 2016/17 Public Housing Construction Programme

3. The demand for PRH has been increasing in recent years. At present, there are about 200 000 applications on WL queuing for PRH allocation, and many

¹ The AWT pledge does not apply to non-elderly one-person PRH applicants on WL.

of the applicants are non-elderly singletons. According to the PHCP as at September 2012, the forecast production of PRH for the five-year period from 2012/13 to 2016/17 is about 75 000 flats, i.e. averaging at about 15 000 units per year, with details as follows —

Year	Production level of PRH
2012/13	13 100
2013/14	14 100
2014/15	12 700
2015/16	20 400
2016/17	15 300

4. HA has advised that the average annual PRH production of 15 000 units is not a rigid target. It will adjust the production level should additional sites become available, so as to maintain AWT for general PRH applicants at around three years.

5. Under the 2012/13 - 2016/17 PHCP, new PRH production will mainly come from urban/extended urban areas² with the remaining from the New Territories ("NT"). A breakdown of the PRH production forecast for the five-year period from 2012/13 to 2016/17 (as at September 2012) is in **Appendix I**.

6. On 16 January 2013, the Chief Executive ("CE") delivered the Policy Address which sets out a series of housing and land supply policy initiatives. CE re-affirmed the provision of an annual average of about 15 000 new PRH flats during the five-year period from 2012/13 to 2016/17 under PHCP. The Administration estimates that an annual average of about 7 000 PRH flats can be recovered through voluntary surrender of flats to HA by sitting tenants and tenancy enforcement actions against the misuse of PRH flats, and these flats are available for re-allocation to those on WL. In other words, there will be an average of some 22 000 PRH flats each year for allocation. CE has also pledged to increase the supply of PRH, and adopt a production target of at least 100 000 units in total for the five years starting from 2018.

Measures to increase land supply for public rental housing development

7. As announced in the 2013 Policy Address, the Administration will review and assess the development feasibility of land with development potential under

² Extended urban areas include Kwai Tsing, Tsuen Wan, Sha Tin (including Ma On Shan), Tseung Kwan O and Tung Chung.

the established planning regime. HA will also keep existing public housing developments under review and undertake redevelopment of PRH estates where appropriate. The following measures have been taken by HA to ensure an adequate and steady land supply for PRH development —

- (a) liaising closely with relevant bureaux and government departments ("B/Ds"), District Councils ("DCs"), and local communities to identify suitable sites for PRH development in different parts of the territory;
- (b) examining the build-back potential of aged PRH estates;
- (c) optimizing the development potentials of public housing sites to make more effective use of the precious land resources, irrespective of the sizes of individual sites; and
- (d) striving to achieve relaxation in plot ratios and height restrictions where appropriate without compromising the living environment.

8. In addition, before the delivery of the 2013 Policy Address, CE announced on 30 August 2012 ten short to medium term measures on housing and land supply. These include the conversion of HA's Chai Wan Factory Estate into PRH, the allocation of a piece of land in Kai Tak and an "Open Space" without development programme in Cheung Sha Wan for Home Ownership Scheme and PRH developments. A steering committee has also been established to conduct the Long Term Housing Strategy review to ensure an optimal use of the existing land and housing resources to meet the housing needs of different sectors in the community.

Deliberations by Members

9. Members discussed the production of PRH under PHCP and land supply for public housing development at the meetings of the Panel on Housing on 7 January and 17 June 2008, 17 April 2009, 3 January 2011 and 5 November 2012 as well as the joint meetings with the Panel on Development on 6 July 2009, 10 December 2010 and 9 November 2012. They had also received the views of DCs and representatives of a concern group regarding the provision and allocation of PRH units (LC Paper Nos. CB(1)245/11-12(01), CB(1)245/11-12(02), CB(1)1700/11-12(01) and CB(1)2430/11-12(01)).

Land supply for public housing development

10. In general, members were concerned about the inadequacy of land supply for PRH development. They pointed out that unlike the earlier days when large-scale sites were earmarked for PRH projects, nowadays only smaller and scattered sites could be identified due to shortage of land and objections from the community. The situation was further aggravated when some sites originally earmarked for PRH development had been used for other purposes. They opined that HA should secure land for PRH development beyond the five-year period specified in the prevailing PHCP, and that the Administration should make available suitable sites during the planning stage and adopt a higher degree of transparency in development.

11. Members were also of the view that the Administration should revamp the existing housing policies and identify new land to meet the housing needs of the growing population, in particular single youths, for example, by developing PRH at the peripheral part of urban areas and implementing land reclamation outside the Victoria Harbour. Some members also suggested that consideration should be given to relaxing the plot ratio of land sites in NT to increase development density, thereby enhancing flat production. While more land should be made available for PRH development, the Administration should avoid over-concentration of PRH in certain districts, and provide adequate ancillary facilities, such as roads and transport networks, for new PRH estates and to ensure that their operation would tie in with the intake of residents.

12. In the 2013 Policy Address, CE has stated that the re-organized Steering Committee on Land Supply, chaired by the Financial Secretary, will co-ordinate the overall plans for development and supply of land in the territory to address the changing demand for land. The Administration will continue to adopt a multi-pronged approach to build up a land bank through better utilization of land, and will work closely with different parties concerned to identify potential sites for public housing.

Production of public housing

13. On PRH production, members stressed the need to increase the production volume as it would be a more effective means than recovering existing PRH flats in expediting flat allocation to the large number of applicants on WL. The Administration should also review the redevelopment plan for PRH estates and formulate a long term strategy for the redevelopment of old PRH estates. While acknowledging the need for the Administration to consult DCs in PRH development, some members opined that DCs could give views on where and how

the PRH estates within their districts should be developed, but not object to the provision of PRH estates as a matter of principle.

14. The Administration has advised that to increase the overall supply of PRH units, HA will review the redevelopment potential of its aged PRH estates. According to the HA's latest Refined Policy on Redevelopment of Aged Public Rental Housing Estates, HA will examine the build-back potential and availability of suitable rehousing resources (i.e. reception estates) in addition to structural safety and cost effectiveness in repair works, with a view to better utilizing land resources and increasing flat production.

Allocation of public rental housing units

15. In order to meet the PRH demand of low-income families, some members urged the Administration to relax the Income and Asset Limits for WL applicants. On the other hand, there were views that the setting of stringent Income and Asset Limits was a means to regulate the demand for PRH. Members belonging to the Liberal Party considered it necessary to ensure that PRH flats were only provided to those in genuine need so as to enable rational use of the heavily subsidized housing resources. They pointed out that checking of income and asset declarations should be stepped up. Besides, to assess PRH demand, a survey on the rent-to-income ratio of low-income families living in private rental accommodation should be conducted.

16. According to the Administration, HA will step up its efforts to investigate the income/assets declarations made by PRH tenants, including those suspicious cases referred by frontline staff and the public, as well as those randomly selected cases of income/assets declarations made under the "Well-off Tenants Policies" to ensure that PRH units are allocated to people in genuine need. HA will also continue to take enforcement actions to detect suspected non-occupation cases.

17. On some DC members' request for re-delineation of the four districts for PRH application³ so as to satisfy the geographical preference of PRH applicants, the Administration has advised that under the prevailing policy, applicants are not allowed to opt for a specific location or estate within a PRH district, except for applicants who have individual special circumstances and are recommended by relevant departments or organizations, so as to ensure rational and effective allocation of limited public housing resources. The Administration has pointed out that as the supply of PRH units varied from district to district, if applicants are allowed to confine their choices to specific districts or if the four PRH districts are

³ The four districts are Urban, Extended Urban, the New Territories and Islands.

re-delineated, the waiting time for PRH would be prolonged inevitably. HA will make appropriate arrangements for applicants with special housing needs as recommended by relevant B/Ds subject to the availability of resources. PRH applicants can also join the Express Flat Allocation Scheme to choose suitable flats from the list of available flats with reference to the number of family members on their WL applications. In addition, HA also operates different transfer schemes, such as the Harmonious Families Transfer Exercise, the Territory-wide Overcrowding Relief Transfer Exercise, and the Living Space Improvement Transfer Scheme, to cater for PRH tenants' different needs. Tenants recommended by relevant departments for transfer to other PRH estates for health or social reasons could apply for special transfer.

Relevant papers and Council questions

18. A list of the relevant papers is in **Appendix II**. Hon Ronny TONG, Hon LEE Wing-tat and Hon WU Chi-wai raised questions related to PHCP at the Council meetings on 25 May and 2 November 2011, and 14 November 2012 respectively. Details of the Council questions are also hyperlinked in **Appendix II** for ease of reference.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
5 February 2013

Production of PRH Flats in the Coming Five Years (2012/13 – 2016/17)

Year of Completion / District [#]	Sub-District	Planned PRH Flat Number [*]
2012/13		
Urban	Kowloon City	5 200
	Kwun Tong	2 700
	Sham Shui Po	1 400
Extended Urban	Sha Tin	2 800
New Territories	Tuen Mun	1 000
Sub -Total :		13 100
2013/14		
Urban	Kowloon City	8 200
	Sham Shui Po	1 500
Extended Urban	Kwai Tsing	2 300
	Sai Kung (Tseung Kwan O)	2 100
Sub -Total :		14 100
2014/15		
Urban	Sham Shui Po	2 900
	Wong Tai Sin	1 000
Extended Urban	Sha Tin	3 000
New Territories	North	1 400
	Yuen Long	4 400
Sub -Total :		12 700
2015/16		
Urban	Eastern	200
	Kwun Tong	9 600
Extended Urban	Sha Tin	8 000
New Territories	Tai Po	500
	Yuen Long	2 100
Sub -Total :		20 400
2016/17		
Urban	Kwun Tong	7 900
	Sham Shui Po	400
	Wong Tai Sin	900
Extended Urban	Island (Tung Chung)	3 500
New Territories	Tuen Mun	2 600
Sub -Total :		15 300
Total :		75 600

(Based on the Public Housing Construction Programme as at September 2012)

Extended Urban Area includes Kwai Tsing, Tsuen Wan, Sha Tin (including Ma On Shan), Tseung Kwan O and Tung Chung.

* Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.

Appendix II

List of relevant papers

Council/ Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Housing	7 January 2008	<p>Information paper on "Land Supply for Public Housing" provided by the Administration (LC Paper No. CB(1)506/07-08(03)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0107cb1-506-3-e.pdf</p> <p>Administration's response to Hon LEE Wing-tat's request for supplementary information on land supply for public housing development (LC Paper No. CB(1)506/07-08(05))</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)1159/07-08) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/hg/minutes/hg080107.pdf</p>
Panel on Housing	17 June 2008	<p>Information paper on "Land Supply for Public Housing" provided by the Administration (LC Paper No. CB(1)1656/07-08(04)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0617cb1-1656-4-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)2298/07-08) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/hg/minutes/hg080617.pdf</p>

Council/ Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Housing	17 April 2009	<p>Information paper on "Construction Programme of Public Housing and the Implementation of Building Guidelines" provided by the Administration (LC Paper No. CB(1)1263/08-09(03)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0417cb1-1263-3-e.pdf</p> <p>Background brief on Public Housing Construction Programme prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (LC Paper No. CB(1)1263/08-09(04)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0417cb1-1263-4-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)1906/08-09) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/hg/minutes/hg20090417.pdf</p>
Panel on Development and Panel on Housing	6 July 2009	<p>Information paper on "Land Supply for Public Housing" provided by the Administration (LC Paper No. CB(1)2072/08-09(01)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/hg/papers/devhg0706cb1-2072-1-e.pdf</p> <p>Background brief on land supply for public housing prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (LC Paper No. CB(1)2072/08-09(02)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/hg/papers/devhg0706cb1-2072-2-e.pdf</p> <p>Referral arising from the meeting between Legislative Council Members and Islands District Council members on 11 June 2009 (Chinese version only) (Restricted to Members) (LC Paper No. CB(1)2072/08-09(03))</p> <p>Referral arising from the meeting between Legislative Council Members and Yuen Long District Council members on 2 July 2009 (Chinese version only) (Restricted to Members) (LC Paper No. CB(1)2151/08-09(01))</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)2715/08-09) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/hg/minutes/devhg20090706.pdf</p>

Council/ Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Development and Panel on Housing	10 December 2010	<p>Information paper on "Housing Land Supply" provided by the Administration (LC Paper No. CB(1)679/10-11(01)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/hg/papers/devhg1210cb1-679-1-e.pdf</p> <p>Information paper on "Land Supply for Housing" provided by the Administration (LC Paper No. CB(1)727/10-11(01)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/hg/papers/devhg1210cb1-727-1-e.pdf</p> <p>Background brief on land supply for housing prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (LC Paper No. CB(1)679/10-11(03)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/hg/papers/devhg1210cb1-679-3-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)1910/10-11) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/hg/minutes/devhg20101210.pdf</p>
Panel on Housing	3 January 2011	<p>Information paper on "2010/11 – 2014/15 Public Housing Construction Programme" provided by the Administration (LC Paper No. CB(1)891/10-11-(05)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0103cb1-891-5-e.pdf</p> <p>Updated background brief on Public Housing Construction Programme prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (LC Paper No. CB(1)891/10-11(06)) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0103cb1-891-6-e.pdf</p> <p>Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)1432/10-11) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/hg/minutes/hg20110103.pdf</p>

Council/ Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Housing	2 November 2011*	<p>Referral arising from the meeting between Legislative Council Members and Tai Po District Council members on 23 June 2011 regarding the development of public housing in Tai Po (Chinese version only) (Restricted to Members) (LC Paper No. CB(1)245/11-12(01))</p> <p>Referral arising from the meeting between Legislative Council Members and Islands District Council members on 12 May 2011 regarding the provision of public housing in Tung Chung (Chinese version only) (Restricted to Members) (LC Paper No. CB(1)245/11-12(02))</p>
Panel on Housing	26 April 2012*	Referral arising from the meeting between Duty Roster Members and "關注新界區編配公屋居民組" on 13 March 2012 regarding the provision and allocation of public rental housing flats in the North District of the New Territories (Chinese version only) (Restricted to Members) (LC Paper No. CB(1)1700/11-12(01))
Panel on Housing	6 August 2012*	Referral arising from the meeting between Legislative Council Members and Kowloon City District Council members on 7 June 2012 regarding the issue of "Increasing the production of public rental housing ("PRH") and relaxing the income and asset limits for PRH applicants" (English version only) (Restricted to Members) (LC Paper No. CB(1)2430/11-12(01))
Panel on Housing	18 January 2013	<p>Information paper on "2013 Policy Address – Housing-related policy initiatives of Transport and Housing Bureau" provided by the Administration (LC Paper No. CB(1)438/12-13(01))</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/hg/papers/hg0118cb1-438-1-e.pdf</p>
Panel on Development	22 January 2013	<p>Information paper on "2013 Policy Address - Policy Initiatives of Development Bureau" provided by the Administration (LC Paper No. CB(1)428/12-13(03))</p> <p>http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr12-13/english/panels/dev/papers/dev0122cb1-428-3-e.pdf</p>

*Date of issuance of papers

Hyperlinks to relevant Council Questions:

Date	Council Question
25 May 2011	Council question raised by Hon Ronny TONG http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201105/25/P201105250111.htm
2 November 2011	Council question raised by Hon LEE Wing-tat http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201111/02/P201111020299.htm
14 November 2012	Council question raised by Hon WU Chi-wai http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201211/14/P201211140251.htm