



香港房屋經理學會
The Hong Kong Institute of Housing

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Hon WONG Kwok-hing
Chairman
Subcommittee on the Long Term Housing Strategy
Panel on Housing

Dear Hon Wong,

Views on the Long Term Housing Strategy – The Hong Kong Institute of Housing

Thank you for giving The Hong Kong Institute of Housing (HKIH) an opportunity to express our views as the professionals of property management on the Long Term Housing Strategy (LTHS). Basically, HKIH supports the broad principles of the Strategy and would like to propose the following supplementary suggestions for your consideration:

1. Areas of concern for increase in housing supply

Regarding the increase of housing supply at 470,000 units built in coming 10 years, the main concerns from the property management perspectives are listed as below:

- 1.1 When the government plans for building more housing units, there should be a parallel comprehensive planning for other associated social needs such as the infrastructures for connecting the CBD or working places, schools, medical centres, sports and recreational facilities. The new housing stocks should not be isolated from the urban activities even though they are self-contained in daily necessities.
- 1.2 Emphasis should not be on quantity only but should also be on the quality of housing supply and the residents who live there. Apart from the adequate provision of the community facilities mentioned above, environmental concerns and quality living for people must be taken care of as well.
- 1.3 Supply of housing units in the ratio of 60:40 for rental public housing(RPH)and private property as suggested respectively in LTHS is supported. However, the allocation of public and private housing stocks is best to be arranged with consideration of the demographic changes in the coming years. This can help to ensure an equal distribution of resources.
- 1.4 The most important point is the sustainability of the buildings (both the old and new ones) i.e. the need to ensure the safety of old buildings and to prolong the life span of the new housing stocks. In the LTHS Consultation Paper, proactive

advocacy for quality management and maintenance planning for the old and new housing stocks is neglected, however, we find it vital to incorporate them in the overall housing strategy, a Chinese saying“ preventive is better than cure”, public safety should always come first.

- 1.5 Increase of housing supply will increase the demand for property management (PM) professionals. There are around 70,000 property management practitioners including the front line and supporting manpower. In fact, in the recent statistics obtained and analyzed by HKIHL, there are only around 15,000 PM practitioners in Hong Kong who are currently providing professional and quality services to the property owners.

- 1.5.1 Based on our experience, about 1,500 to 2,000 units to be managed by one professional PM manager who leads a team of average 10 staff including 3 to 4 practitioners on supervisory level in order to deliver quality services for buildings. That means, we need an extra workforce of at least a total of 300 professional managers and 1000 practitioners to cater for the rapid increase of housing supply in the coming 10 years.

- 1.5.2 Each year, there are about 300 graduates from the existing accredited PM courses in various academic institutions. However, majority of the graduates are, in fact, working in the property management field and the minimal inexperienced full time students are unable to even fill up the normal turnover vacancies resulting from retirement, change of career or working in Mainland/overseas etc. Therefore, there is an urgent need to attract 130 or more new bloods each year to meet the 10 years' need.

2. Suggestions on easing the concerns

2.1 Reclamation to explore more land

To cope with the increase of housing supply, availability of land is very important. With only 1,108 sq km of land for population over 7 million, reclamation seems to be one of the long term measures in increasing the land supply. But, in any case the reclamation should not affect the prime financial benefit of the existing Victoria Harbour waterway. Despite the fact that it is a long term strategy, it is essential to plan comprehensively and to act earlier to avoid unnecessary delay.

2.2 Vacant private/public non-residential buildings

Government is advised to encourage private developers to revitalize their vacant industrial or non-residential buildings in order to maximize land use. Alter or renovate the industrial buildings to proper, legal and safe standard residential units and to be managed by NGO with assistance/advice from the property management professionals can be considered. Households vacated from those illegal sub-divided units and are G- waiting List applicants can temporarily stay

in this type of “interim accommodation” until they are successfully queued up for the Housing Authority public rental housing. Incentives to encourage owners of industrial buildings can include simplifying the procedures on applications for change of land use, low land premium etc.

2.3 Encouragement for Increase of professional property management practitioners

As discussed before, it is foreseeable that there will be an increasing demand for property management expertise resulting from the increase in housing supply.

- 2.3.1 HKIH requests the government to speed up the legislative process on the licensing scheme proposed by HAD on PM practitioners and companies. With a well-recognized professional status, it encourages more new workforce to join the profession.
- 2.3.2 Other than to attract more new joiners to cope with the additional 130 new bloods required for the average 47,000 new units in the PM industry each year, there is a need to plan for retaining the existing experienced professionals who are urgently required to manage and to maintain the ageing properties in the whole territory. To achieve the purpose, the government should provide more funding to the academic institutions in running more PM related courses and at the same time to subsidize part-time and full-time students of PM courses.

2.4 Speed up construction of public rental housing

There are around 200,000 applicants/families on the General Waiting List for rental public housing. Many of them are currently living in sub-divided units in aged buildings due to high rental level in the private property market. Such sub-divided units are poor in living environment and are unhygienic which at the end become a social problem rather than a housing problem. As such, there is a need to speed up the rehabilitation and redevelopment process of old low rise rental public housing which will effectively reduce the General Waiting List as new high rise rental blocks can accommodate more families in need.

2.5 Encourage developers on selling the units to first-time local buyer

Such requirement in the sale and purchase agreement has been well-received by the public in 2012 when Heya Green of Hong Kong Housing Society launched for sale in the market. It also showed good response from the public. The policy is worth to continue.

2.6 Expedite the redevelopment by Urban Renewal Authority

It is suggested that dilapidated and low rise tenement buildings in urban areas can be replaced by high rise new developments with self-contained community facilities. This can offer owners of old tenement buildings a practical choice to improve their living condition and their personal safety too.

3. Licensing of sub-divided unit

Licensing of sub-divided units as suggested by LTHS Consultation Paper is not supported mainly because:

- 3.1 We afraid that the outcome will be similar to those unauthorized fixtures of village houses, it will only create more new cases which will be out of control at the end due to minimal manpower of Building Department.
- 3.2 Even some professions are voluntarily offering services to inspect the rooms or building structure for safety concern, the services cannot be provided indefinitely. It still needs time to cover all such buildings in the territory.
- 3.3 More thorough consultation to solicit expertise views from related professional institutes on this issue is suggested.

The above are some suggestions from HKIH and hope they can benefit the LTHS. Should you require more information from us, please feel free to contact the undersigned via the Secretariat Office on 25443111 or by e-mail: info@housing.org.hk.

We wish the consultation a successful one.

Yours sincerely,
For and on behalf of
The Hong Kong Institute of Housing



Cora Yuen
President