

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)504/20-21(05)

Ref. : CB1/PL/HG

Panel on Housing

Meeting on 1 February 2021

**Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat on
interim housing**

Purpose

This paper provides background information on interim housing ("IH"), and gives a summary of the views and concerns expressed by Members on the subject.

Background

2. Under the prevailing Government policy, no person will be rendered homeless as a result of natural disasters or clearance operations. Any persons who are rendered homeless as a result of Government actions (such as clearance of unauthorized structures, eviction of unauthorized persons in public rental housing ("PRH"), Court Bailiff's execution of court orders to repossess private building units, etc.), natural disasters or emergencies, they may apply, through the referral of relevant departments such as the Buildings Department, the Lands Department, the Bailiff Section, etc., to the Housing Department ("HD") for temporary accommodation in a transit centre while awaiting eligibility vetting for further rehousing or looking for alternative accommodation themselves. After these households are admitted to the transit centre, HD will obtain more details about their actual situation to ascertain whether they are genuinely homeless. If these households have stayed in the transit centre for three months, passed the "homeless test", proved that they have no alternative accommodation, and fulfilled the prescribed eligibility criteria for PRH, HD

will arrange for their admission to IH while awaiting PRH through PRH application.¹

3. Currently, the IH² under the Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HA") includes Po Tin IH in Tuen Mun and Shek Lei IH in Kwai Chung.³

Major views and concerns

4. The major views and concerns expressed by Members on the subject are summarized in the ensuing paragraphs.

Policy on interim housing

5. Some Members opined that the Government had taken increasingly frequent enforcement actions against households of subdivided units ("SDUs") in recent years which in effect rendered the evicted household homeless. Arranging such households to stay in a transit centre for three months in order to prove that they did not have other accommodation and thereby fulfil the "homeless test" requirement was unnecessary. Instead, HD should accommodate them in IH.

6. The Administration explained that according to the Government's prevailing policy, all SDU households affected by the Government's enforcement actions were required to find their own accommodation. If households were relocated due to enforcement actions of the Buildings Department, the Buildings Department would closely liaise with the Social Welfare Department, the Home Affairs Department and HD to provide appropriate assistance for those affected. To ensure that no one would be rendered homeless as a result of the Government's enforcement actions, households affected by the enforcement actions (such as demolition of unauthorized structures, and eviction action for recovering private premises by Bailiff under court order) and had temporary accommodation need might, through referral of relevant Government departments, be accommodated temporarily in the Po Tin Transit Centre. The households should look for alternative accommodation or wait for the eligibility vetting for further

¹ LC Paper No. [CB\(1\)868/15-16\(04\)](#)

² After its reviews conducted in 2011 and 2013, HA decided to clear Long Bin IH in the New Territories in January 2016, and retain Po Tin IH in the New Territories and Shek Lei IH in extended urban district (LC Paper No. [CB\(1\)868/15-16\(04\)](#)).

³ Shek Lei IH is located at Blocks 10 and 11 of Shek Lei (II) Estate in Kwai Chung. The blocks were completed in 1960s and converted from PRH to IH in late 1990s. Po Tin IH was built in 2000 (LC Paper No. [CB\(1\)868/15-16\(04\)](#)).

rehousing during such period. Subject to their meeting the eligibility criteria for PRH, HD would arrange for such households' admission to IH while awaiting PRH allocation through PRH application.⁴

7. The Administration advised that admitting affected illegal SDU households to IH directly without passing HD's eligibility vetting would be unfair to the many eligible PRH applicants who had been waiting for a long time, and those who were currently staying in transit centres and undergoing the "homeless test". It would also convey a wrong message to the society that living in illegal SDUs was a shortcut for admission to IH and even PRH, which might induce more households to live in illegal SDUs, thus worsening the problem and resulting in safety risk to both the public and the households.⁵

Supply of interim housing

8. When discussing the latest situation of Shek Lei IH at the meeting of the Panel on Housing on 10 May 2016, members noted that HD was studying the conversion of Shek Lei IH into PRH,⁶ and expressed concern about the reduction in the stock of IH units in the urban and extended urban district if Shek Lei IH was cleared. Some members enquired about the rehousing arrangements for the affected households if HA decided to redevelop Shek Lei IH and whether HA would rehouse them in other IH.

9. The Administration advised that PRH would be the ultimate solution to address the housing needs of low-income families who could not afford private rental accommodation. Given the acute shortage of housing resources and the lack of land in the urban and extended urban districts, HD held the view that suitable land resources in the urban and extended urban districts should be used for PRH development. In this connection, HD was exploring ways of putting IH resources into other beneficial uses, including study to convert Shek Lei IH for

⁴ LC Papers No. [CB\(1\)1466/16-17\(01\)](#) and [CB\(1\)1399/16-17\(01\)](#)

⁵ LC Papers No. [CB\(1\)1466/16-17\(01\)](#)

⁶ In its paper submitted to the Panel on Housing for discussion at the meeting on 10 May 2016 (LC Paper No. [CB\(1\)868/15-16\(04\)](#)), the Administration advised that the Audit Commission had recommended in its Report No. 62 issued in 2014 that HA should study measures to make better use of IH resources and explore ways of putting HA's vacant sites into beneficial uses. When exploring ways of putting IH resources into other beneficial uses effectively, HD had considered the building age of Shek Lei IH as well as the feasibility of constructing more PRH units in extended urban district. Since the construction of PRH could address the housing needs of low-income households in the long term effectively, HD was studying to convert Shek Lei IH for PRH development.

PRH development.⁷ If HA decided to clear Shek Lei IH in the future, households that were due for PRH allocation at the time of clearance would be offered suitable PRH units according to their choices of PRH districts. Households which were not yet due for PRH allocation would move to other IH. Po Tin Estate consisted of nine residential blocks, providing both PRH and IH units. Po Tin IH could provide adequate units to accommodate those households who were not eligible for admission to PRH, as well as to cater for future demand for IH.⁸

10. On the question whether the Administration would reserve some of the transitional housing units to accommodate residents affected by the Government's enforcement actions, the Administration advised that HA anticipated that the existing IH would suffice to meet the temporary accommodation needs of households affected by Government's clearance and enforcement actions. Therefore, transitional housing should mainly serve the purpose of alleviating the hardship faced by families awaiting PRH instead of being reserved for use as IH.⁹

Latest developments

11. According to the Administration¹⁰, HA has decided to clear Shek Lei IH with December 2022 as the target clearance date. The Administration will brief members at the meeting on 1 February 2021 on the implementation arrangement of the clearance of Shek Lei IH.

Relevant papers

12. A list of relevant papers is in the **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
28 January 2021

⁷ LC Paper No. [CB\(1\)1060/15-16](#)

⁸ LC Paper No. [CB\(1\)1137/15-16\(01\)](#)

⁹ LC Paper No. [CB\(1\)235/19-20\(01\)](#)

¹⁰ LC Paper No. [CB\(1\)293/20-21\(07\)](#)

Appendix

Interim housing

List of relevant papers

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Housing	10 May 2016	Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(1)868/15-16(04)) Minutes of meeting (LC Paper No. CB(1)1060/15-16) Administration's supplementary papers (LC Papers No. CB(1)998/15-16(01) and CB(1)1137/15-16(01))