

**Memorandum for the Commercial Properties Committee of  
the Hong Kong Housing Authority**

**Provision of Welfare Facilities in Public Housing Developments**

**PURPOSE**

This paper informs Members of the arrangements for the provision of welfare facilities in public housing developments <sup>Note 1</sup>.

**BACKGROUND**

2. The primary responsibility of the Housing Authority (HA) is to provide affordable housing to low-income families. Depending on the circumstances, HA also provides various non-domestic facilities such as retail, welfare and parking facilities in public housing developments to serve the residents and the community. As at the end of June 2019, there are about 1.78 million square metres of non-domestic facilities under HA, of which about 49% are welfare and community facilities, about 14% are retail facilities and the remaining 37% are other facilities <sup>Note 2</sup>.

**HA'S DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

3. When planning new public housing developments, HA endeavours to first maximise domestic flat production, while trying to include various non-domestic facilities to serve the residents and the community. Taking into

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**Note 1** Public housing developments comprise public rental housing, Green Form Subsidised Home Ownership Scheme and other subsidised sale flats developments.

**Note 2** Including estate management offices, mutual aid committee offices, contractors' offices, storerooms, factory units, telecommunications installations, etc.

consideration various statutory and administrative controls<sup>Note 3</sup>, HA's development strategy for public housing developments is, in summary –

- (a) for sites which are subject to a total Gross Floor Area (GFA) (covering both domestic or non-domestic use), we will maximise the use of domestic GFA as far as practicable; and
- (b) for sites which are subject to separate maximum limits for domestic and non-domestic GFA, we will maximise the use of domestic GFA and determine the use of non-domestic GFA subject to comprehensive consideration of its impact on flat production, construction programme and financial aspect.

4. According to the established mechanism, we liaise with relevant government bureaux/departments (B/Ds) and consult the District Councils (DCs) and other stakeholders for the provision of non-domestic facilities within the development. In considering whether and what non-domestic facilities to include in a development, we take into account such views from stakeholders and a host of other factors, including characteristics of the site, availability of facilities in the vicinity, etc. In some cases, we may not be able to use all of the non-domestic GFA, after taking into account requirements from relevant B/Ds and views of the DCs and/or due to restrictions on planning, architectural design and site constraints.

5. There are about 40 new developments approved by the HA's Building Committee over the past five years, and we have in general maximised the use of non-domestic GFA in these developments with the exception of four –

- (a) for three of the developments<sup>Note 4</sup>, we have consulted relevant B/Ds and DCs in accordance with the established mechanism and provided suitable non-domestic facilities, including welfare facilities such as special child care centre and day care centre for

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**Note 3** Including the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123) and its subsidiary Building (Planning) Regulations, Outline Zoning Plans published under the provisions of the Town Planning Ordinance (Cap. 131) and administrative controls stipulated in approved planning briefs and/or conditions under government leases.

**Note 4** The three developments are the additional block in Fu Shan Estate in Wong Tai Sin, the Hiu Ming Street development in Kwun Tong and the development at the North West Kowloon Reclamation Site 1 (East) in Sham Shui Po.

the elderly at the request of the Social Welfare Development (SWD). We have also provided other non-domestic facilities such as retail, parking facilities, kindergarten, etc. according to the needs of the development and the community; and

- (b) for the fourth development (Hoi Tak Court in Sham Shui Po), after discussion with relevant government departments and district consultation, we have taken into account local concerns on the impact of the development on the neighbouring school including lighting and ventilation and reduced the scale of our development. As a result, only ancillary non-domestic facilities, such as property management office, are provided.

## **PROVISION OF WELFARE FACILITIES**

### **Planning for Welfare Facilities in New Developments**

6. In March 2018, we informed Members (Paper No. CPC 7/2018) of the arrangements for the provision and letting of welfare premises in public housing estates. Under the existing mechanism in paragraph 4 above, relevant B/Ds will liaise and plan for the provision of welfare facilities in new public housing developments in consultation with various stakeholders. This arrangement enables relevant B/Ds, including SWD, to explore the provision of facilities in a comprehensive manner at the early planning stage, in order to provide suitable welfare facilities in the new developments as far as practicable. As far as SWD is concerned, it will in general take into account the needs of the local community, the overall demand for welfare services, the floor area requirements of different welfare facilities, the location and accessibility of the site as well as the advice from the Planning Department and HA on site constraints, development parameters and limitations (including such environmental issues as noise and air quality), etc. in recommending appropriate welfare facilities to address the service demand arising from such developments, as well as to cater for the community demand at large. The collaboration between HA, SWD and relevant B/Ds in this regard allows optimal site utilisation to address the society's demands for public housing and various welfare and community facilities. Out of a total of about 60 public housing developments completed during 2005/06 to 2017/18, about 50 were provided with welfare and community facilities at the time of project completion.

7. A recent development is that the Government decided in August 2018 to adopt a new arrangement, whereby for sites to be rezoned for housing purpose (both public and private), the floor area for Government, Institution or Community facilities known at the plan-making stage will be exempted from GFA calculation for the sites concerned on statutory town plans, subject to positive technical feasibility assessment. This arrangement will enable the provision of welfare facilities to meet local demand without compromising housing production, and help increase the floor area for the provision of welfare facilities.

### **Provision of Welfare Facilities in Existing Developments**

8. We have been reviewing the use of non-domestic facilities in public housing developments from time to time. Subject to availability of suitable premises, technical feasibility, compliance with statutory requirements and land lease conditions (if applicable) as well as local views, we would convert vacant non-domestic premises such as storerooms to welfare uses in response to demand. In recent years, we have converted some storerooms and vacant bays to 21 welfare premises in public housing developments <sup>Note 5</sup>. The list of vacant non-domestic premises available for welfare letting is available on the HA/Housing Department website for open application by interested Non-government Organisations (NGOs). HA also regularly shares the list with SWD.

9. Upon receipt of applications, HA consults relevant B/Ds including SWD and arrange for leasing of the premises at a concessionary rent <sup>Note 6</sup> to eligible NGOs <sup>Note 7</sup> providing direct services of welfare and community nature to residents as recommended by relevant B/Ds. For Government-funded

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**Note 5** The 21 welfare premises comprise one in each of Choi Wan (I), Choi Wan (II), Chuk Yuen (South), Kai Tin, Kwai Shing East, Lai King, Shek Wai Kok, Tai Hing, Tai Ping, Tin Heng, Upper Wong Tai Sin and Wah Fu (I) Estates, two in each of Sau Mau Ping (South), Shui Chuen O and Yat Tung (I) Estates and three in Sau Mau Ping Estate.

**Note 6** As endorsed by Members in December 2018 (Paper No. CPC 37/2018), the current rate of concessionary rent is \$59/m<sup>2</sup> per month exclusive of rates and Government rent (if any) with effect from 1 April 2019. The concessionary rent is subject to review by the Commercial Properties Committee every three years, and the next review date will fall on 1 April 2022.

**Note 7** Charitable or non-profit making organisations with exemption under Section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112).

welfare premises, HA leases the premises to NGOs nominated by relevant B/Ds at a nominal rent of \$1 per annum <sup>Note 8</sup>.

10. As at the end of June 2019, HA has executed about 1 500 tenancies under the above arrangements for relevant organisations to provide various types of welfare services, such as children and youth services, elderly services, family welfare services, as well as child care, medical, rehabilitation and educational services.

11. We will continue to keep in view the use of non-domestic facilities in public housing developments. On the premise that adequate space will be provided for residents' access and leisure, HA will endeavor to balance residents' need for various types of facilities and consider increasing the provision of welfare and other non-domestic facilities subject to available space, feasibility and demand.

## INFORMATION

12. This paper is issued for Members' information.

Ms Michelle LAU  
Secretary, Commercial Properties Committee  
Tel. No. : 2761 7928  
Fax No. : 2761 0019

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(Estate Management Division)

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c.c. Members of Housing Authority

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**Note 8** A management and maintenance charge, currently at \$41/m<sup>2</sup> per month, will also be charged. The management and maintenance charge is subject to annual review and the next review date will fall on 1 April 2020.