

Memorandum for the Hong Kong Housing Authority

**Use of Public Rental Housing Estates as
Community Isolation Facilities**

PURPOSE

This paper informs Members of the issues relating to the use of public rental housing (PRH) estates by the Government as Community Isolation Facilities (CIF) and our follow-up actions.

BACKGROUND

2. Because of the severity of the fifth wave of the epidemic, more isolation facilities are required. The Chief Executive (CE) announced on 15 February 2022 that the Government will use Block 1 and Block 7 of Queens Hill Estate (QHE), Fanling and Heng King House of Lai King Estate (LKE), Kwai Chung as isolation facilities. The three blocks have recently been completed and intake has not yet started.

3. QHE consists of seven blocks, providing a total of 8 865 flats. For Blocks 2, 3, 5 and 6 (5 028 flats in total), physical intake have been completed for PRH applicants who have accepted advance allocation. Physical intake for Block 4 (1 279 flats) is in progress. Block 1 and Block 7 each provides 1 279 flats. Around 880 PRH applicants have accepted advance allocation of flats in Block 1 while advance allocation for Block 7 has not yet started. Heng King House is a block in the existing LKE, providing 540 flats. Around 380 PRH applicants have accepted advance allocation.

4. In view of the rapid development of the situation, and the urgency of setting up more CIF, the Government was unable to inform the Housing Authority (HA) and its committees before public announcement. We appeal to the understanding of all Members in this regard.

CONVERTING THE THREE PRH BLOCKS INTO CIFs

5. The Housing Department (HD) is co-ordinating the efforts of various parties (including Food and Health Bureau, Security Bureau, Department of Health, Hospital Authority, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, Government Logistics Department, Hong Kong Police Force, Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, Lands Department, Electrical and Mechanical Services Department and the utilities companies) to convert the three PRH blocks into CIFs.

6. The necessary works include modification and construction works to separate the CIF from the rest of the PRH Estates concerned; as well as the provision of building services facilities (such as ventilation, air conditioning, lighting, electrical and telecommunication sockets, wifi, and sanitary fitments including shower and water tap) and other accessories such as furniture and electrical appliances for setting up the medical posts, command posts and other operation areas. For the CIF flats, gas water heaters, furniture, curtain, electrical appliances, accessories and daily necessities will be provided.

7. In order to enable the CIF to be commissioned for use as soon as possible, all parties involved have been working under an extremely tight schedule with a view to completing all the necessary works as soon as possible. The CIF area ^{Note} will be handed over to the Government for management and operation once the works are completed.

8. HD will discuss with the Government about the financial arrangements with respect to the costs incurred by HA for the conversion and the eventual reinstatement, restoration and other related works. We will brief the relevant committees and seek their approvals in due course, where necessary.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR AFFECTED PRH APPLICANTS

9. As mentioned above, around 880 PRH applicants have accepted advance allocation of flats in Block 1 of QHE and around 380 PRH applicants have accepted advance allocation of flats in Heng King House of LKE. Although the advance allocation offer letters have specifically reminded them not

Note Premises for use as a Day Care Centre for the Elderly, a Neighbourhood Elderly Centre and a kindergarten within the three blocks are included as part of the CIF for handover to the Government. We will notify the Social Welfare Department and the Education Bureau for necessary arrangements. For QHE, for security reasons, the basement carpark beneath Block 7 is also included in the CIF area and will be handed over to the Government. About 100 private car parking spaces and about 50 motor cycle parking spaces are affected. There is another basement carpark at the shopping centre providing some 180 private car parking spaces and some 20 motor cycle parking spaces, which will be able to serve the PRH residents and visitors of QHE. Furthermore, there is a public transport terminus in QHE with various bus and mini-bus routes connecting QHE to the Fanling MTR station and various districts.

to make premature arrangements for moving into the district of allocation (e.g. switching jobs or schools) while waiting for the intake and while the tenancy agreements have not yet been signed, it is recognised that the use of the three PRH blocks as CIFs may indeed cause them much inconvenience. HD will, as in the case of Chun Yeung Estate which was converted into quarantine centre in 2020, make special allocation arrangements for these affected PRH applicants. We issued an SMS message to all the affected PRH applicants on 15 February immediately after CE's announcement, informing them that we will write to them soon about possible alternative allocation arrangements.

10. There are still a number of flats in Blocks 2 to 6 of QHE that are available for allocation. HD plans to re-allocate suitable flats from this pool to the affected PRH applicants of Block 1, in accordance with the allocation priorities of their PRH applications. We are now sizing up the number of available flats in Blocks 2 to 6, and will contact the affected PRH applicants as soon as possible for re-allocation. If they do not wish to accept the re-allocated flats, they may wait for the reversion of Block 1 into PRH when the Government ceases to use it as CIF.

11. As regards Heng King House of LKE, the affected PRH applicants may wait for the reversion of Heng King House as PRH, or if they so wish, we will endeavor to allocate suitable units in other estates in the Extended Urban area to them, subject to availability.

12. We have already issued letters to them today (24 February 2022), informing them of the above-mentioned allocation arrangement. Furthermore, the Government has decided to grant a one-off ex-gratia allowance of \$8,000 to each affected PRH applicant (on household basis) from the Anti-epidemic Fund. HD will disburse payments as soon as funding is available.

INFORMATION

13. This paper is issued for Members' information.

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c.c. Members of HA Committees/Sub-Committees

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