PRIVATE HOUSING

Public housing in Hong Kong is a set of mass housing programmes through which the Government of Hong Kong provides affordable housing for lower-income residents. It is a major component of housing in Hong Kong, with nearly half of the population now residing in some form of public housing.

The public housing programmes were established in Hong Kong to provide housing for lower-income residents, and are heavily subsidised by the government, with revenues partially recovered from sources such as rents and charges collected from car residents.

The earliest urban built typology in Hong Kong by the time the British first arrived in Hong Kong was the Row house. This was a widespread building form in the South Asia area, such as Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and Malaysia. Although variations of this form can be found in different regions, the Row house typology had certain characteristics that were common across these areas.

In 1903, the British government introduced public housing programs and new building codes to control the mass of city buildings. The Public Health Ordinance (enacted in 1903) specified the provisions for the upper floors to set back on a particular site. Since there was no reduction in permissible building height, which was limited to the width of the ground floor, there was a need to reduce the mass on any given site. Therefore, illegal extensions began to decrease. This resulted in an urgent need for emergency housing.

The fire in Shek Kip Mei, Hong Kong on Christmas day of 1953 left 53,000 people homeless. This resulted in an urgent need for emergency housing. The Hong Kong government responded by introducing public housing programs and new building codes to control the mass of city buildings. The Public Health Ordinance (enacted in 1903) specified the provisions for the upper floors to set back on a particular site. Since there was no reduction in permissible building height, which was limited to the width of the ground floor, there was a need to reduce the mass on any given site. Therefore, illegal extensions began to decrease. This resulted in an urgent need for emergency housing.

In the 1890s, bubonic plague was spreading throughout southern China, as noted above, and by 1894 had erupted in Guangzhou (Canton), Guangdong Province, 87 miles up the Pearl River Estuary from Hong Kong. Thus began the search for light and air in the housing. The government introduced new building codes and regulations to control the mass of city buildings. This resulted in an urgent need for emergency housing. The Hong Kong government responded by introducing public housing programs and new building codes to control the mass of city buildings. The Public Health Ordinance (enacted in 1903) specified the provisions for the upper floors to set back on a particular site. Since there was no reduction in permissible building height, which was limited to the width of the ground floor, there was a need to reduce the mass on any given site. Therefore, illegal extensions began to decrease. This resulted in an urgent need for emergency housing.

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