

\$405m proposal to foster team spirit

By LOUIS-NG

LARGER offices, a clubhouse, library and a training centre proposed by the Housing Department will bring its office further above the government standard adopted in other departments.

Director of Housing Fung Tung has recommended that the Housing Authority spend \$405 million on two developments to relieve "overcrowding" in the authority's Ho Man Tin headquarters, which the Director of Audit Brian Jenney has already described as above the standard.

The two developments cover a total floor space of 19,830 sq metres - more than three times the present accommodation of 5,991 sq metres.

The authority's establishment and finance committee approved development of the buildings - in Wang Tau Hom Estate, Wong Tai Sin, and Ho Man Tin South - last year.

"The overcrowding situation will persist unless some major relocations are to take place," an internal paper prepared by the Housing Department said.

The authority comprises mostly unofficial members and it maps out public housing policy. It is supported by the Housing Department as its executive arm.

Special facilities and a material testing laboratory are to be moved to a development in Ho Man Tin South.

The complex, with a total area of 7,000 sq metres, was estimated to cost \$179 million at 1993 prices.

The four-level office podium in Wang Tau Hom Estate will house staff of the department's housing management branch.

The total floor area of the proposed complex is 12,830 sq metres, costing \$226.4 million at 1993 prices. Both developments are scheduled to be completed in 1999.

The Ho Man Tin South complex will provide a larger library, club, communications centre, training centre and visitor centre.

The new club at 2,000 sq metres will be about 500 sq metres larger than the present one.

The department said it considered it appropriate that the club should be expanded to include more facilities such as a fitness room and reading area.

"It is expected that by providing a larger clubhouse and better catering service at lunch hours, *esprit de corps* and solidarity can be fostered and developed among staff of the department," the same paper said.

The complex will also house a larger training cen-

tre - 1,570 sq metres, compared with 365 sq metres.

"Hopefully with the expansion of the training centre, staff will be provided with more and better training," the paper said.

A communications centre of 610 sq metres, 10 times the existing size, will accommodate public relations officers and duty officers who answer telephone inquiries.

A big visitor centre with a Housing Museum and an exhibition centre will be built.

The building at Wang Tau Hom Estate will house the commercial properties division, applications units, home ownership centre, housing subsidy and home purchase loan unit and other related units.

"Since 1992, space requirement of the housing management branch at the Housing Authority's headquarters has already exceeded the allocated area, and in 1993 the shortfall in space has increased to 463.38 sq metres," another internal paper said.

The authority said some units of the applications section and commercial properties division were outside the headquarters at present.

Putting all units together would make things easier for the public.