

Many thanks for submitting CHOS-2021-0424 'Tenure Strength, Public Facilities and Housing Prices: Evidence from Shenzhen, China' to Housing Studies.

In my initial evaluation of submitted manuscripts, I identify whether the manuscript sufficiently satisfies editorial guidelines of Housing Studies and provides a clear theoretical and analytical developments in the housing field; and the likelihood of being assessed favourably by our reviewers. When a submitted manuscript fails to satisfy one or more of these criteria, a decision is made to return the manuscript instead of sending it to reviewers.

I regret to inform you that I have decided not to send your manuscript to our reviewers for their comments and evaluation. In its current format the potential contributions that this paper makes to the field of housing studies remains limited, and aspects of the conceptual and empirical work would benefit from further reflection to make it more appealing to potential reviewers.

In terms of developing the paper further there are two aspects that you might want to consider.

First. Property characteristics are currently captured by number of floors and management fee. Number of floors captures the degree of density, but in practice says little about the dwelling unit itself. Management fee potentially does, but there is no explanation for how this is calculated or what it, in practice, reflects. There is thus limited information on property characteristics (hedonic components) themselves. An issue to consider here too is the location of dwellings. SPRH dwellings appear to be located at further distance to the CBD, whereas the density of commercial dwellings is higher around the CBD. Finally, an issue to consider here is whether properties are occupied by owner occupiers or (sub)let. Sales prices itself may not capture whether properties are inhabited by owners or renters.

Second. Conceptually the term tenure security requires additional reflection. The capitalisation argument is one of dwellings being immobile / spatially fixed and thus providing access to a range of public services. The desirability of services (such as education) can thus lead to higher property values. In the case of China, though, the variable, as described in the text, is not only one of potential security of tenure, but also one of who can live in the property – reflecting China's dual land ownership structure. This is set out on p 3 (differences in property prices between SPRH and commercial dwellings) and p 7 (village housing), but the implication is not fully discussed. For instance, other research finds that houses developed by village committees are more likely to house rural migrants without local hukou that (Song et al 2008, He et al 2010), in practice, determines

access to a range of locality specific public services. Even if tenure in SPRH was – from a security perspective – as strong as it is for commercial housing, there is thus no reason why the quality of public services should be capitalised in village dwellings occupied by rural migrants. In other words, it may not be the tenure security that is causal here, but the hukou status of those living in these dwellings.

Song Y, Zenou Y, Ding C. Let's Not Throw the Baby Out with the Bath Water: The Role of Urban Villages in Housing Rural Migrants in China. *Urban Studies*. 2008;45(2):313-330.

Shenjing He, Yuting Liu, Fulong Wu & Chris Webster (2010) Social Groups and Housing Differentiation in China's Urban Villages: An Institutional Interpretation, *Housing Studies*, 25:5, 671-691, DOI: 10.1080/02673037.2010.483585

The two above points need to be considered more fully in relation to identification issues and discussion of findings, specifically the contribution that the paper seeks to make to the literature. As you point out the capitalisation of public services in property values is, per se, not a new finding. In the conclusion there is discussion around institutional differences (and discrimination) of migrant populations living in particular dwellings as causal, rather than tenure security. You could thus improve the paper by more explicitly considering what the causal relationships are that lead to differences in price effects (for instance also worthwhile testing whether the coefficients in the two sets of properties are significantly different from each other) and also whether the differences truly capture heterogeneity or simply systematic variation in the public service access provided by different types of land ownership structures (rural villages v urban land) and the characteristics of tenants in dwellings on different types of land ownership structure.

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We appreciate the effort that goes into preparing research for submission and therefore also thank you for considering Housing Studies as an outlet for your work. I hope the decision on this particular manuscript will not discourage you from submitting your work to Housing Studies in the future.