

Hong Lai Huat Group Limited

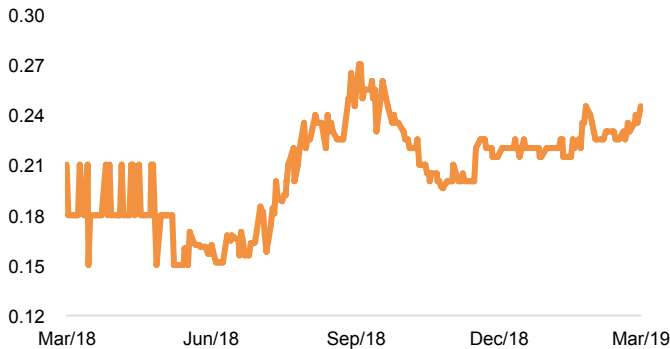
Date: 4 March 2019

BUY
(Maintained)

Target Price: S\$0.51
(+104%)

HLHG SP

Price: S\$0.250 (as at 1 March 2019)



Share price	1M	3M	6M	1Y
Hong Lai Huat	8.7%	25.0%	-7.4%	38.9%
Catalist Index	-2.3%	-6.8%	-21.9%	-51.1%

Market capitalisation	S\$55.5 million		
Current Price	S\$0.250		
Shares outstanding	221.9million		
Free Float	60.5%		
Top shareholders	Dato' Dr. Ong Bee Huat	15.0%	
	Dr. Wong Wen-Young Winston	6.2%	
Recommendation of other brokers	N/A		

Source: Company data, Bloomberg, SAC Advisors

Analyst

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Key Financials

Year ended December (S\$m)	FY2015A	FY2016A	FY2017A	FY2018E	FY2019E	FY2020E
Revenue	5.7	10.3	12.6	52.7	105.1	29.9
% Growth	N/A	80.7%	21.8%	318.5%	99.3%	-71.6%
Gross Profit	4.5	7.8	6.4	31.1	59.3	19.6
Gross Profit margin (%)	77.8%	75.9%	50.5%	58.9%	56.4%	65.8%
Profit before tax	7.4	7.0	4.9	18.8	48.5	10.6
Profit after tax	5.5	6.3	2.1	15.0	38.8	8.5
% Growth	516.7%	14.85%	-67.48%	633.02%	158.09%	-78.13%
Profit after tax margin (%)	95.9%	60.9%	16.3%	28.5%	36.9%	28.4%
Basic EPS (S\$ cents)	2.47	2.84	0.92	6.77	17.47	3.82
Diluted EPS (S\$ cents)	2.40	2.76	0.90	6.57	16.97	3.71
P/E (x)	6.59	5.74	17.65	2.41	0.93	4.26
Net Debt/Equity (%)	5.8%	Net cash	2.5%	Net cash	Net cash	Net cash

N/A: Not applicable

FY18 profit up 287% on strong property sales in Cambodia

Strong property sales at D'Seaview drove FY18 results with profit up 287% year-on-year ("y-y"). Hong Lai Huat Group Limited ("Hong Lai Huat", or the "Group") reported FY18 results that saw revenue rose to S\$34.8 million or 176% y-y for the period under review, up from S\$12.6 million a year ago on the back of stronger property sales at the Group's signature D'Seaview project development in Sihanoukville, Cambodia. The property segment accounted for 89% of the Group's total revenue in FY18.

D'Seaview has achieved good take-up (>80% of the commercial and residential units sold) and the Group guided that they continue to expect positive sales response for the balance units in the D'Seaview mixed development project in Sihanoukville, Cambodia as they look to complete the entire construction project in 2019, and we believe they will look to complete this by the 1st half of 2019.

Target to launch new joint cooperation project with Royal Group of Companies. We wrote [previously](#) about the Group's collaboration with Cambodia's premier investment and development company, The Royal Group to jointly develop a mixed-use development in Phnom Penh, the capital city of Cambodia. Hong Lai Huat has guided that they target to launch their new joint cooperation project with The Royal Group of Companies in 2Q2019. The new mixed-use project will be developed at the heart of Toul Kork district, a high-end residential and commercial zone in the capital city of Cambodia, Phnom Penh.

The Group announced a dividend of S\$0.5 cents. The Group remains in a healthy cash position, with cash and cash equivalents of S\$25.2 million as at the latest financial year. The Group's gearing also remained at a comfortably low at 1.2%, which is an improvement of 3.2% in the previous period. Consequently, the Group's net asset value on a per share basis has increased from S\$0.58 to S\$0.62. On the back of this, they have announced a final dividend of S\$0.5 cents for FY18, representing about 14% of their FY18 earnings and a yield of 2%.

We maintain BUY. We expect Hong Lai Huat to build on the momentum created in 2019 as it recognises incremental sales from D'Seaview. We are also positive on the Group's MOU with The Royal Group to develop a freehold plot of land at Phnom Penh. The stock is trading at an attractive 0.9x FY19 P/E and 0.40x FY18 P/BV versus sector average of 0.9x. We value Hong Lai Huat at S\$0.51 per share after applying a 40% discount to its RNAV. This translates to an implied FY18 P/BV of 0.8x. We have not factored in any contribution from potential property earnings in Singapore, and cooperation with a third party to expand its cassava business in Cambodia. Despite jumping over 23% since our initiation of coverage on 29 June 2018, we see the Company as deeply undervalued, we maintain BUY.

Company background

Hong Lai Huat was founded by Dato Dr Johnny Ong Bee Huat in 1988 and started as a construction company, named Hong Lai Huat Construction. In 1997, the group was graded by Building and Construction Authority (“**BCA**”) as G8 building contractor after demonstrating a good track record of construction of HDB housing projects, shopping malls, community centres and industrial projects. The G8 grading allows the group to tender for public projects of unlimited values.

S\$ cents	FY18	FY17
Earnings/ share	3.58	0.92
NAV/ share	61.79	57.52

In 2000, the Group was listed on the mainboard of SGX under the name of “Hong Lai Huat Group Limited”. The Group launched its maiden project, D’Ecosia at Still Road in 2001 and took pride that the project was completely sold within a year after completion in 2003. Having tasted the success of D’Ecosia, the company went on to develop several projects in Singapore, namely D’Fresco, D’Almira, D’Lithium, D’Centennial, D’Kranji Farm Resort, D’Castilia from year 2003 to 2013.

In 2015, the Group expanded its property development arm to Cambodia after 2 years of careful study.

In Cambodia, it also owns one of the largest cassava plantations in Cambodia with a combined land size of approximately 10,000 hectares and a maximum annual production capacity of 225,500 ton of fresh cassava. The starch factory, which is located within the farm, has a maximum production capacity of 36,000 ton of native tapioca starch per annum.

The group has two core businesses:

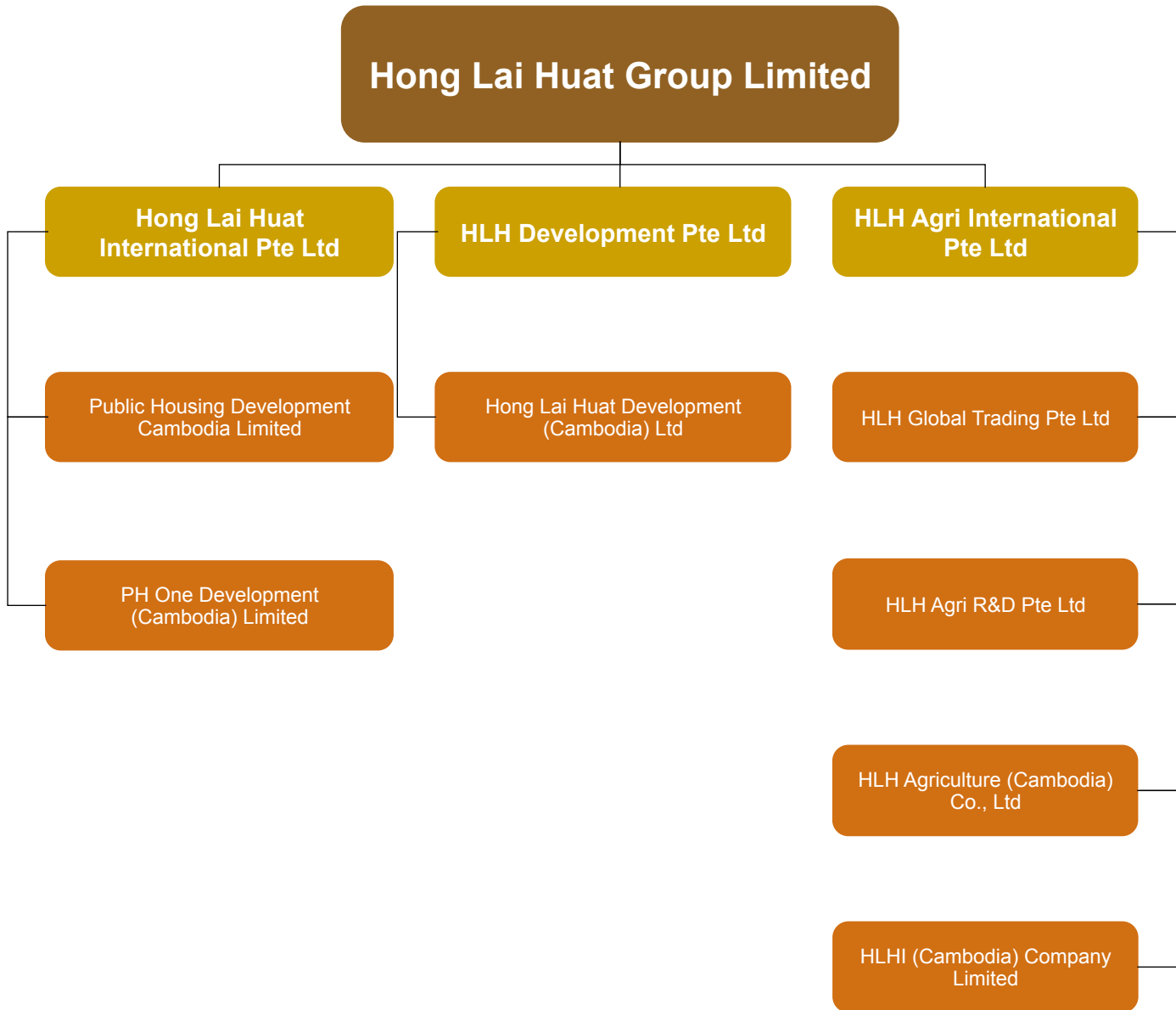
Property development

With a vast experience in the property and real estate business in Singapore, it is currently developing its first freehold mixed development in Cambodia known as D’Seaview, a project with 737 residential units and 67 commercial units comprises office buildings, commercial retail shops and a hotel.

Agriculture

The Group cultivates fresh cassava for the production of native tapioca starch for local and the export market. HLH has a 70-year concessional rights to the agriculture land with total land area of approximately 10,000 hectares, located at Aoral District, Kampong Speu Province, Cambodia (“**Aoral farm**”).

Group Structure



Source: Company data, SAC Advisors

Recommendation

Hong Lai Huat is trading at attractive FY17 P/BV of 0.28x and forward P/E of 0.9x, based on our earnings forecast for 2019. We value Hong Lai Huat at S\$0.51 per share after applying a 40% discount to its RNAV to factor in the lack of project in the pipeline although D'Seaview is expected to underpin the group's earnings in the next 2-3 years. The target price of S\$0.51 translates into a FY18 P/BV of 0.8x versus sector average of 0.9x. With a substantial potential share price upside of more than 104%, we maintain BUY for Hong Lai Huat.

We believe the market is currently undervaluing the stock. We have not factored in any contribution from potential property launch in Singapore and a possible cooperation with a third party to expand its cassava business.

RNAV breakdown	
Property development surplus (S\$ m)	59.97
NAV - as at end-Dec 2017 (S\$ m)	127.67
RNAV (S\$ m)	187.64
Shares outstanding (m)	221.93
RNAV per share (S\$)	0.85
RNAV discount (%)	40.0%
Discounted RNAV per share (S\$)	0.51
Current share price (S\$)	0.25
Upside	104.0%
Implied P/BV (x) - FY18	0.79

Source: SAC Advisors

Income Statement (\$\$ m)

	Fiscal Year Ended				
	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018F	FY2019F	FY2020F
Revenue	10.3	12.6	52.7	105.1	29.9
Cost of goods sold	-2.5	-6.2	-21.7	-45.8	-10.2
Gross Profit	7.8	6.4	31.1	59.3	19.6
Other income	0.5	1.8	0.5	0.5	0.5
Administrative expenses	-4.5	-6.2	-6.0	-6.0	-4.5
Distribution and selling expenses	-1.5	-1.6	-1.7	-1.7	-1.5
Other operating expenses	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Depreciation and amortization	-1.7	-3.5	-4.8	-4.9	-4.9
Finance costs	-0.7	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5
Interest income	0.0	0.0	0.3	1.8	1.9
JV/associate income	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Exceptional item	7.0	8.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Profit before tax	7.0	4.9	18.8	48.5	10.6
Income tax	-0.7	-2.9	-3.8	-9.7	-2.1
Minority Interest	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Profit for the year/ period	6.3	2.1	15.0	38.8	8.5

Balance Sheet (\$\$ m)

	Fiscal Year Ended				
	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018F	FY2019F	FY2020F
PPE	35.6	94.9	91.1	87.2	83.3
Investment properties	89.4	37.9	37.9	37.9	37.9
Others	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Total Non-Current Assets	125.1	132.8	129.0	125.1	121.2
Development properties	18.3	15.1	24.8	28.9	0.0
Inventories	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Trade receivables	7.8	0.6	2.1	4.2	1.2
Cash and short term deposits	6.7	2.0	16.4	74.0	85.8
Others	1.2	11.6	14.6	15.1	15.6
Total current assets	34.8	29.8	58.4	122.7	103.1
Trade payables	1.5	7.3	10.8	22.9	5.1
Loans and borrowings	1.7	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3
Others	5.8	2.9	9.1	18.8	4.5
Total Current Liabilities	9.0	13.5	23.2	45.0	12.9
Deferred tax liabilities	14.9	16.4	16.4	16.4	16.4
Loans and borrowings	4.5	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9
Convertible bonds	0.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Others	0.7	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Total Non-current Liabilities	20.1	21.5	21.5	21.5	21.5

Shareholder's Equity

Share capital	94.6	94.6	94.6	94.6	94.6
Reserves	48.0	42.8	42.8	42.8	42.8
Accumulated (losses) profits	-11.8	-9.8	5.3	44.0	52.5
Total equity attributable to shareholders of the company	130.8	127.7	142.7	181.5	190.0
Non-controlling interests	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total Equity	130.8	127.7	142.7	181.5	190.0

Cash Flow Statement (\$\$ m)

	Fiscal Year Ended				
	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018F	FY2019F	FY2020F
Profit before tax	7.0	4.9	18.8	48.5	10.6
Depreciation & amortisation	1.7	3.5	4.8	4.9	4.9
Interest income	0.0	0.0	-0.3	-1.8	-1.9
Interest expense	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Change in working capital	-7.9	-6.2	-4.5	15.0	-0.6
Others	-7.8	-10.8	-4.0	-8.4	-0.7
Net Cash (used in)/ from operations	-6.3	-8.2	15.4	58.6	12.8
Purchase of PPE	-0.2	-0.3	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0
Others	0.8	2.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Net Cash (used in)/ from investing	0.6	2.5	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0
Net change in equity	12.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Net change in debt	-3.8	-1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Others	12.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Net Cash (used in)/ from financing	9.0	-1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0

Ratios

	Fiscal Year Ended				
	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018F	FY2019F	FY2020F
Profitability (%)					
Operating profit margin	5.9%	-25.6%	36.1%	44.9%	30.9%
Profit before tax margin	67.5%	38.9%	35.6%	46.1%	35.5%
Profit after tax margin	60.9%	16.3%	28.5%	36.9%	28.4%
Liquidity (x)					
Current ratio	3.88	2.20	2.51	2.73	7.97
Quick ratio	1.76	1.05	1.42	2.08	7.93
Interest coverage ratio	0.90	-6.87	36.39	90.26	17.64
Net Debt to Equity	Net cash	2.5%	Net cash	Net cash	Net cash
Valuation (x)					
P/E	5.74	17.65	2.41	0.93	4.26
Core P/E	-50.67	-5.57	2.41	0.93	4.26
P/B	0.28	0.28	0.25	0.20	0.19
Returns					
Return on equity	5.3%	1.6%	11.1%	23.9%	4.6%
Return on asset	0.4%	-2.0%	10.9%	21.7%	3.9%
Dividend payout ratio	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

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