# Prime US REIT

Navigating through the storm

# SINGAPORE | REAL ESTATE | 1H23 Results

- 1H23 DPU of 2.46 US cts (-30.1% YoY) was in line with our estimates at 50% of FY23e forecast. The decline of was due to Prime increasing management fees paid in cash from 20% to 100%, higher interest expense, lower occupancy, and higher operating expenses. Excluding the change in management fees paid in cash, DPU is still down c.24% YoY.
- Portfolio occupancy dropped to 85.6% from 88.6% in 1Q23, with overall rental reversions of +9.5%.
- Maintain BUY, DDM-TP lowered from US\$0.46 to US\$0.39. Our cost of equity increased from 13.75% to 15.95% due to the inherent weakness of the US office sector. Catalysts include improved leasing and a greater return to the office. Prime is currently trading at 0.25x P/NAV, and we believe that most of the negatives are already priced in. The current share price implies FY23e/FY24e DPU yield of 25/27%.

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(US\$ mn)	1H23	1H22	ΥοΥ	Comments
Gross revenue	79.5	81.8	-2.9%	Lower due to occupancy decline, slightly offset by higher parking and recoveries income.
Net property income	47.2	50.8	-7.2%	Higher property operating expenses, largely due to increase in office physical occupancy.
Distributable Income	29.2	41.3	-29.3%	1H23 finance expenses is 34.9% higher y-o-y due to higher interest rates; 100% of manager's base fee settled in cash vs 20% in 1H22.
DPU (US cts)	2.5	3.5	-30.1%	
Portfolio Occupancy	85.6%	89.6%	-4.0%	

Source: Company, PSR

Results at a glance

#### **The Positive**

**+ Extension of debt maturities.** During the quarter, Prime extended the maturity of its term loan and revolver under its main credit facility (c.34% of total loans) by one year to July 2024. As a result, Prime has no refinancing obligations till July 2024. This gives Prime more time to secure refinancing and some respite amid the credit crunch situation in the US.

+ Gearing decreased 0.9ppts QoQ to 42.8%. 80% of debt is either on fixed rate or hedged (79% in 1Q23), with 63% of debt hedged or fixed through to 2026 or beyond. Prime's effective interest cost for the quarter increased marginally QoQ from 3.7% to 3.8%, and its interest coverage ratio is at 3.4x. Prime has a buffer of c.5.1% and c.15% from 2022 year-end asset valuations before gearing hits 45% and 50% respectively.

#### **The Negatives**

- Portfolio occupancy decreased to 85.6% from 88.6% in 1Q23. The biggest contributors to the decline were 171 17th Street (-14.5ppts QoQ to 80.5%) and Park Towers (-11.4ppts QoQ to 74.3%).

- Leasing activity remained weak. Prime signed 66.8k sq ft of leases in 2Q23 (-22% YoY and +3.7% QoQ). Leases signed were with law firms, financial services, tech, and corporate dealerships. However, Prime renewed the lease of its largest tenant, Charter Communications (94k sq ft) in July 2023, for an extension of three years. Portfolio rental reversions for the quarter were +9.5%, an improvement from -2.6% in 1Q23.9% of leases are set to expire in 2023, with 5.3% of that total attributed to the third-largest tenant, Sodexo, which is expected to vacate upon the expiration of their lease in December 2023.



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#### 14 Aug 2023

# BUY (Maintained)

TOTAL RETURN	128.3%
TARGET PRICE	USD 0.39
FORECAST DIV	USD 0.049
LAST CLOSE PRICE	USD 0.192

#### COMPANY DATA

BLOOMBERG CODE:	PRIME SP
O/S SHARES (MN) :	1,187
MARKET CAP (USD mn / SGD mn) :	228 / 228
52 - WK HI/LO (SGD) :	0.67/0.16
3M Average Daily T/O (mn) :	4.20

MAJOR SHAREHOLDERS (%)	
KBS PROPERTIES REIT III	18.3%
KEPPEL CORP LTD	5.3%
STEPPE INVESTMENTS PTE. LTD.	5.3%

#### PRICE PERFORMANCE (%)

	1MTH	3MTH	YTD
COMPANY	(14.7)	(6.3)	(49.4)
STTF RETURN	5.1	3.4	4.5





Source: Bloomberg, PSR

#### **KEY FINANCIALS** Y/E Dec (USSm FY21 FY22 FY23e FY24e Gross Revenue 156.7 163.0 171.8 179.2 NPI 100.7 97.9 100.3 104.6 Dist. Inc. 75.6 77.2 58.3 62.9 P/NAV (x) 0.23 0.25 0.25 0.25 DPU (US cents) 6.78 6.55 4.92 5.30 Dist. Yield (%) 35.31 34.11 25.61 27.62

Source: Company, PSR

# VALUATION METHOD

DDM (Cost of Equity: 15.95%; Terminal g: 1.75%)

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#### Outlook

Leasing activity remains weak, and management strategy going forward will be to prioritize net effective rents over headline rents. The momentum towards returning to office remains strong, as an increasing number of companies are now requiring their employees to work from the office for a minimum of three days per week. Prominent tenants in Prime's portfolio like AGG, Goldman Sachs, Matheson, and Teleflex, have instituted mandatory return-to-office policies. Consequently, Prime's physical occupancy has shown improvement, reaching a current level of 58%. While in-place rents remain c.6.7% below asking rents, the potential for favourable rental reversions remains promising.

**Maintain BUY, DDM TP lowered from US\$0.46 to US\$0.39.** We raise our cost of equity by 2.2% on the continued weakness in the US commercial market. However, even though the US commercial market continues to face headwinds with higher vacancies and tighter credit, Prime is trading at 0.25x P/NAV, and we believe that most of the negatives are already priced in. Catalysts include improved leasing and a greater return to the office. Risks include equity fund raising to bring gearing down. The current share price implies FY23e/FY24e DPU yield of 25/27%.

#### **Financials**

#### Income statement Y/E Dec, (US\$'000) FY20 FY21 FY22 FY23e FY24e Gross revenue 143.557 156,741 163.012 171,804 179.172 (74,591) Property expenses (48,568) (56,043) (65,078) (71,524) Net property income 94,989 100,698 97,934 100,281 104,581 Net Finance (Expense)/Inc. (14,868) (16,982) (21,599) (26,962) (27,069) Manager's fees (7,977) (7,714) (7,872) (7,722) (8,968) Other items (1,614) (2,053) (2,820) (2,885) (3,001) (1,052) FV change, derivatives & ppties (45,291) (106.450) Net income before tax 25.239 72.897 (40.807) 62.712 65.543 13,890 (6,554) Taxation (2,030) (4,709) (6,271) Net income after Tax 23,209 68,188 (26,917) 56,441 58,989 Distribution adjustments 48,869 7,413 104,067 1,812 3,909 Income available for distribution 72,078 75,601 77,150 58,253 62,898

Per unit data					
Y/E Dec	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23e	FY24e
NAV (US\$)	0.86	0.85	0.75	0.76	0.76
DPU (US cents)	6.94	6.78	6.55	4.92	5.30

Cash Flow					
Y/E Dec, (US\$'000)	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23e	FY24e
CFO					
Net income before tax	25,239	72,897	(40,807)	62,712	65,543
Adjustments	60,899	21,105	132,808	20,545	22,428
WC changes	3,754	1,724	(2,783)	858	862
Cash generated from ops	89,892	95,726	89,218	84,115	88,833
Others	406	345	534	6,121	6,397
Cashflow from ops	90,298	96,071	89,752	90,236	95,230
CFI					-
Acquisition of investment properti	(164,190)	(244,267)	(631)	-	-
Capex, net	(11,737)	(16,097)	(29,489)	(15,422)	(15,576)
Others	3	4	15	15	16
Cashflow from investments	(175,924)	(260,360)	(30,105)	(15,407)	(15,560)
CFF					
Proceeds from issuance of units	120,000	80,000	-		-
Loans, net of repayments	32,829	132,044	15,530	(13,138)	(25,207)
Distributions	(65,004)	(69,441)	(76,852)	(58,253)	(62,898)
Others	(2,250)	(1,464)	(19)	(19)	(19)
Cashflow from financing	85,575	141,139	(61,341)	(71,410)	(88,124)
Net change in cash	(51)	(23,150)	(1,694)	3,419	(8,454)
Cash at the start of the period	37,862	37,442	13,873	11,581	15,003
FX changes	73	(38)	(28)	-	-
Ending cash	37,884	14,254	12,151	15,000	6,549

Source: Company, Phillip Securities Research (Singapore) Estimates

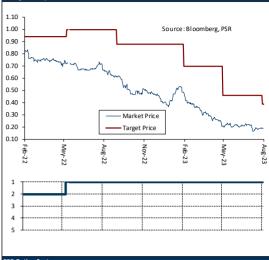
# PRIME US REIT RESULTS

Y/E Dec, (US\$'000)	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23e	FY24e
ASSETS					
Investment properties	1,405,200	1,653,000	1,542,200	1,557,622	1,573,198
Others	-	1,580	29,954	36,372	41,927
Total non-current assets	1,405,200	1,654,580	1,572,154	1,593,994	1,615,126
Trade receivables	1,623	2,997	3,859	1,256	4,078
Cash	37,442	13,873	11,581	15,003	6,552
Others	2,584	1,482	1,462	3,920	1,693
Total current assets	41,649	18,352	16,902	20,179	12,324
Total Assets	1,446,849	1,672,932	1,589,056	1,614,173	1,627,449
LIABILITIES					
Loans and borrowings	-	-	-	449,000	
Trade payables	14,540	15,903	18,126	18,293	19,688
Rent received in advance	6,493	9,329	6,777	6,777	6,777
Others	860	1,253	843	1,635	1,559
Total current liabilities	21,893	26,485	25,746	475,705	28,024
Loans and borrowings	480,352	628,973	665,572	230,396	681,258
Others	36,812	26,390	3,945	9,895	16,509
Total non-current liabilities	517,164	655,363	669,517	240,291	697,767
Total Liabilities	539,057	681 <i>,</i> 848	695,263	715,996	725,791
Net assets	907,792	991,084	893,793	898,177	901,658
Represented by:					
Unitholders' funds	907,792	991,084	893,793	898,177	901,658

Y/E Dec	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23e	FY24e
P/NAV (x)	0.22	0.23	0.25	0.25	0.25
Distribution Yield (%)	36.1	35.3	34.1	25.6	27.6
NPI yield (%)	7.2	6.6	6.1	6.5	6.7
Growth & Margins					
Growth					
Revenue	nm	9.2%	4.0%	5.4%	4.3%
Net property income (NPI)	nm	6.0%	-2.7%	2.4%	4.3%
Distributable income	nm	4.9%	2.0%	-24.5%	8.0%
DPU	nm	-2.3%	-3.4%	-24.9%	7.8%
Margins					
NPI margin	66.2%	64.2%	60.1%	58.4%	58.4%
Key Ratios					
Net Debt or (Net Cash)	442,910	615,100	653,991	664,393	674,705
Gearing	33.2%	37.6%	41.9%	42.1%	41.9%

## PRIME US REIT RESULTS





## PSR Rating System

Tota	al Returns	Recommendation	Rating
> +2	20%	Buy	1
+5%	5 to +20%	Accumulate	2
-5%	to +5%	Neutral	3
-5%	to -20%	Reduce	4
< -2	0%	Sell	5

#### Remarks

We do not base our recommendations entirely on the above quantitative return bands. We consider qualitative factors like (but not limited to) a stock's risk reward profile, market sentiment, recent rate of share price appreciation, presence or absence of stock price catalysts, and speculative undertones surrounding the stock, before making our final recommendation

#### PRIME US REIT RESULTS

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