

CE visits URA preservation- revitalisation and redevelopment projects (with photos/video)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, visited the Urban Renewal Authority (URA)'s preservation-revitalisation project 618 Shanghai Street in Mong Kok and the Peel Street/Graham Street Development Scheme project in Central this morning (January 9) to learn more about their latest developments.

Accompanied by the Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, and the Managing Director of the URA, Mr Wai Chi-sing, Mrs Lam first visited the preservation-revitalisation project 618 Shanghai Street in Mong Kok involving a cluster of tenement buildings. The 14 pre-war and post-war tenement buildings have been turned into commercial and cultural spaces after their preservation and revitalisation. They are managed and operated by the URA and opened in the end of December last year.

Mrs Lam was briefed by officers of the URA on the project background and ways to preserve the architectural features of old tenement buildings while offering new life and purposes for historical buildings and reintegrating them into the community. She then visited a food court operated by a social enterprise in the buildings and listened to the founder's introduction on how his enterprise provides training and job opportunities for the socially disadvantaged and persons with disabilities. She also chatted with the staff members there. Praising the work of the social enterprise, Mrs Lam said she hoped that all of its members will continue to work hard to unleash the potential of the socially disadvantaged and persons with disabilities and to boost their confidence and employability.

Mrs Lam then visited the Peel Street/Graham Street Development Scheme project in Central to view the Graham Market after its redevelopment. She also spoke with shopkeepers to learn about their business conditions. She expressed appreciation to the URA for its provision of a market block in which some shops are rented out to traditional industries in the district or old brands with district characteristics in order to preserve the allure of the open-air market in Graham Street.

Mrs Lam said the URA has spared no effort in urban renewal. It has also gained plenty of successful experience in heritage conservation as well as participated proactively in building rehabilitation in recent years. She added that the URA will be given more new missions, pointing out that she has invited the URA to assist in redeveloping sites under the Civil Servants' Co-operative Building Society Scheme in her Policy Address in 2018. In addition, she also entrusted the URA in her Policy Address in 2019 to proactively provide more Starter Homes or other types of subsidised sale flats. She expressed the hope that the Government and the URA will join hands to improve the living environment of the public.

