

SDEV speaks to media on quarterly land sale programme for July to September 2018

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, at the question-and-answer session of the media session today (July 3) on the quarterly land sale programme for July to September 2018:

Reporter: Mr Wong, the Government is reallocating a few more numbers of plots from private residential sites to public housing. How would this balance the proportion of private and public housing? As there is going to be a reduction of the number of flats ..., how are you going to make up for those in the longer run? It leads me to the question of how are you going to work with Mr Stanley Wong, the Chairman of the Task Force on Land Supply (Task Force), before the Policy Address?

Secretary for Development: You asked me three questions. I will try my best to answer them one by one. For the first question about the split between public and private housing, the target was actually set in 2014 when the Government decided upon the 10-year long-term strategy for public housing. That proportion and that split have not been changed this time. I think the Chief Executive explained it quite clearly in her announcement earlier on. It remains 28 000 units of public housing, and private development at 18 000 units. That remains unchanged.

On measures to increase land supply in the longer term, we are working very hard. That is why the Task Force on Land Supply is working full steam to discuss various strategies. On the Government's part, the Development Bureau is also spearheading efforts to align the standards between our three departments: the Planning Department, the Lands Department and the Buildings Department. At the moment, for some work procedures, sometimes they are looking at the same procedures separately, sometimes the standards applicable are different. Within the Development Bureau, the Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands), Ms Bernadette Linn, is leading a task force to look at how to speed things up, how to simplify the procedures and how to align the standards. So, we do think that in the medium term, that would help.

Your last question is about Mr Stanley Wong and me. We are on the phone practically almost daily. You might have heard that some Task Force members, after hearing what the Chief Executive has said, have also suggested the Task Force to hold a meeting in the near future to discuss how best they can facilitate the Policy Address process. Stanley himself has said that in terms of broad direction, there might be something that the Task Force can do. The Task Force has scheduled to produce a full report around Christmas time this year. But before that, it might be possible, in terms of broad direction and

some preliminary findings, the Task Force may be able to contribute towards the Policy Address preparation process. So, that is something that we will work on.