

# Transcript of remarks by SDEV at media session

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Development, Ms Bernadette Linn, at a media session after attending a radio programme today (September 16):

Reporter: Secretary, you mentioned about the Redhill Peninsula is not on the list of proactive inspection, so do you think there is a negligence involved? And for the large-scale inspection of unauthorised building works, when will it start and how long will it take? And will authorities prioritise those located on the seaside and hillside after the Redhill incident? As for the drainage system, what will be done to improve our infrastructure and do you think that the torrential rain has caught Hong Kong off guard because the drainage system can only withstand once in 200 years rainstorm?

Secretary for Development: First of all, on the case of the Redhill Peninsula, your question is whether some government colleagues have been negligent because that particular housing estate has not been included in the list of estates for proactive inspections in the past. And I wouldn't say so. I would not say so because all of our government colleagues, they act in good faith. Because each year they have to prioritise the caseload involving unauthorised building works on hand and with that prioritisation list, they act according to the priority and do the inspection work. So they are not sitting there and do nothing but it is a matter of prioritisation. On the way forward for the proactive inspection in that estate, the two departments, Buildings Department and Lands Department, they are now making the necessary preparation for the relevant operation. And I cannot say for sure how long it will take because it depends on what they will see during the inspections and the complexities involved. But in short, the operation should be able to start very shortly.

As regards your question about the drainage system, I think in the design of our drainage system, we have adopted standards which are comparable and in some areas exceed the standards adopted by our neighbouring jurisdictions, which also have to compact heavy rain. The heavy rainstorm that we had last week and in the past few days in selected locations reminded us that climate change can really be very extreme, and can come at a time well before our expectation. So this means that we have to proceed earnestly with our study looking ahead to assume different extreme weathers and what we should do. And on this study, we have already commenced the work back in 2022 and we expect this study to be completed in the latter half of next year. So it's already a study that we have started and we will look into that.

Reporter: So officials prioritise the inspection of those located on the seaside and hillside given that most of the work done in the past in urban areas?

Secretary for Development: In terms of these kinds of houses, I think it is logical that for the prioritisation, we will accord priority to those facing the sea and also on the slope because for houses built on the slope, if there are any unauthorised building works, there will be a slope stability angle. So the public safety angle is an important factor that we have to take into account.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)