

\$187m set aside for private estate upgrading since 2000

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The House heard from Minister of State for National Development Koh Poh Koon, who gave the figures yesterday, that the pace of implementation depended on the resources available, and whether there were any upgrading plans by other agencies. ST FILE PHOTO

About \$187 million has been set aside for the Estate Upgrading Programme (EUP), since the scheme was launched in 2000.

The amount will go towards upgrading 63 private estates over nine batches, and projects under the programme have already been completed in estates such as Serangoon Gardens, Mount Sinai and Braddell Heights.

Minister of State for National Development Koh Poh Koon, giving these figures in Parliament yesterday, said the pace of implementation would depend on the resources available, and whether there are any upgrading plans by other agencies.

He was responding to Ms Sylvia Lim (Aljunied GRC), who had asked about the budget and schedule for the programme, which renews private estate facilities through improvement works such as landscaping, widening of footpaths and the provision of playground equipment.

Dr Koh said the average budget for each batch - covering five to nine estates - is about \$20 million.

He added that the programme has "no current fixed schedule", and its rollout depends on the availability of financing and manpower, among other things.

"We also have to coordinate with other government agencies in terms of planning upgrading works to minimise inconvenience to residents and to the public," Dr Koh added.

He said the Ministry of National Development (MND) will "invite nominations for future projects once we have a timeline for implementation". Before the upgrading projects take place, neighbourhood committees or citizens' consultative committees will gather residents' views and ideas.

Ms Lim suggested that MND inform the MPs overseeing the estates during the call for projects, as "we would also have feedback that we can share with the ministry".

She also noted that there are more than 20 estates which are over 30 years old and have not benefitted from the upgrading programme, according to a written response to a parliamentary question in March.

She asked if these estates, some of which are within her constituency, could be placed on the list for the programme.

Dr Koh replied that estates in Aljunied have undergone the EUP.



“We also have to coordinate with other government agencies in terms of planning upgrading works to minimise inconvenience to residents and to the public... There's no current fixed schedule at the moment.

MINISTER OF STATE FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT KOH POH KOON.”

He said that while the MND would want to upgrade as many estates as possible, factors such as the age and physical characteristics of an estate, resources, and ongoing works by other agencies also have to be taken into account.

"We try to coordinate all these together and it's not a hard and fast rule that just because the estate is of a certain age, EUP will have to be done," he said.

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