



Workers from SP Group doing cabling work on May 13 to prepare a building in Genting Lane to house quarantined Covid-19 patients. ST PHOTO: ALPHONSUS CHERN

Power supply reinstated at more than 4,000 unused sites for Covid-19 purposes

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More than 4,000 sites have been re-connected to the national power grid since the coronavirus outbreak alert level was raised to orange in Singapore on Feb 7, according to national grid power operator SP Group.

The sites have been used as government quarantine facilities, community recovery facilities and for other purposes related to the Covid-19 outbreak.

These premises include former dormitories, factories that are no longer in operation and Housing Board flats that had been vacated but not yet demolished under the Selective En bloc Redevelopment Scheme.

The scheme allows HDB to buy back public housing sitting on land with high redevelopment potential from residents.

In April, for instance, 21 HDB blocks in Redhill Close that were vacated in

2018 under the scheme were refurbished to house healthy foreign workers employed in essential services.

Four vacant HDB blocks in Taman Jurong that formerly served as temporary homes for families waiting for their new Build-To-Order flats to be ready were also refurbished to provide interim housing for similar workers.

Senior Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam, who is MP for the Taman Jurong ward in Jurong GRC, had previously said there was a need for these workers to be temporarily housed away from existing worker dormitories, while the spread of Covid-19 in their living quarters was being stemmed.

Other sites that have also had their electricity supply reactivated include a cluster of six factory units in Genting Lane that could be used as community recovery facilities, and a dormitory in Ju-

rong that has been converted to a quarantine facility.

A spokesman for SP Group told The Straits Times that a site or unit is typically disconnected from the grid upon request by the occupant or owner, when the place is no longer in use.

He added that about 100 workers have been deployed since Dorscon orange to expedite the activation of electricity supply for these sites that the Government identified to be used as community recovery facilities and accommodation.

Officers on the ground had to comply with safe distancing measures and twice-daily temperature checks, said the spokesman. For quarantine facilities, they had to don personal protective equipment, goggles and face shields as a safety precaution, he added.

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