

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

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Question Serial No.

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Head : 118 - Planning Department Subhead (No. & title) : --

Programme : (2) – District Planning

Controlling Officer : Director of Planning

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands

Question : In 2003-04, the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works said, “The implementation of the Northern Link depends on the development programme of the Strategic Growth Areas along this rail line, which is under review”. Would the department advise on:

- (a) the current progress of the planning and development study on the areas along the Northern Link; and
- (b) the estimated time of completion?

Asked by : Hon. TANG Siu-tong

Reply :

The Northern Link provides rail connections between North West (NW) and North East (NE) New Territories, improves connections to boundary crossing stations, and opens up a new corridor for New Development Areas (NDAs).

In the light of rapid population growth estimated in the mid-nineties, consultancy studies were commissioned in 1999-2000 to identify NDAs in NW and NE New Territories to accommodate about 400,000 population by 2016. Several NDAs were identified. Of these, San Tin/Ngau Tam Mei and Kam Tin/Au Tau were proposed, among other considerations, to take advantage of the Northern Link.

However, the latest round of population projection reveals that our population may not grow as fast as the earlier forecast. As a result, the requirement for extra land to accommodate population growth is no longer that pressing. The timing for all NDAs is currently being reviewed in the HK2030 : Planning Vision and Strategy Study. According to the latest assessment, which is the subject of the on-going HK 2030 Study Stage 3 public consultation, the NDAs in San Tin/Ngau Tam Mei and Kam Tin/Au Tau are unlikely to be required before 2020. The HK2030 Study is expected to be completed in end 2004/early 2005.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

B C K FUNG

Director of Planning

24 March 2004