

## LCQ14: Development planning for land along alignment of Northern Link

Following is a question by the Hon Alice Mak and a written reply by the Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, in the Legislative Council today (October 27):

Question:

The Northern Link (NOL), the construction of which is currently under planning, will run from the new Kwu Tung Station to be constructed on the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line of the East Rail Line to the Kam Sheung Road Station on the Tuen Ma Line, with three intermediate stations at San Tin, Ngau Tam Mei and Au Tau to be provided. While the development planning for the land in the vicinity of San Tin, which is located within the San Tin/Lok Ma Chau Development Node, falls within the scope of the ongoing Study on Phase One Development of New Territories North, land use review studies of a smaller scale will be conducted for the land in the vicinities of Ngau Tam Mei and Au Tau. Regarding the development planning for the land along the NOL alignment, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the reasons why the Government will only conduct land use review studies for the land in the vicinities of Ngau Tam Mei and Au Tau, instead of including such land in a larger-scale new development area (NDA) development planning study;
- (2) whether the adoption of different approaches for development planning for land will result in differences in the arrangements for the development, provision of ancillary transport facilities, compensation for land resumption, etc. of the land concerned in future; if so, of the relevant differences between the aforesaid two approaches; of the criteria for the Government to determine the approach to be adopted for conducting planning;
- (3) whether it will consider including the land in the vicinities of Ngau Tam Mei and Au Tau in a more comprehensive NDA development planning; and
- (4) given that The Boxes in San Tin of a site area of about 40 hectares has closed down, and the site has the supply of fresh water and electricity and has been set up with sewage disposal facilities, whether the Government will consider discussing with the owner of the site the ways to optimise the use of the site, e.g. utilising it for short-term uses of holding activities to boost the economy or developing transitional housing?

Reply:

President,

In consultation with the Transport and Housing Bureau, the reply to the various parts of the Hon Alice Mak's question as follows:

(1) to (3) The land use study of Ngau Tam Mei area originates from the second-phase review of brownfield clusters completed by the Planning Department earlier this year, as the previous review pointed to around 18 hectares of brownfield sites at Ngau Tam Mei area that are suitable for housing development. Having considered the proposed Ngau Tam Mei station along the Northern Link (NOL), the Government suggested then that the Ngau Tam Mei Land Use Review Study (Review Study) should be conducted to examine the land uses of Ngau Tam Mei area more comprehensively, including the prospect of increasing housing sites and unleashing the development opportunities brought about by the NOL. The Government has pressed ahead with the preparation work for the Review Study, which may commence shortly. The target is to complete the Review Study within 2023.

As the Government has started the feasibility study on the San Tin/Lok Ma Chau Development Node (STLMC DN) in 2019 and made arrangements for its detailed study to be carried out at the next stage, it is more appropriate to look into the circumstances of Ngau Tam Mei area under a separate study. After all, the scope of the Review Study is relatively wide, covering a total of around 80 hectares of land, including brownfield clusters, squatter areas, as well as some active and fallow farmland. The Review Study will examine the infrastructural constraints of the area and the potentials for comprehensive development, with a view to offering preliminary suggestions on land uses, development parameters and technical feasibility as soon as possible. The recommendations of the Review Study may help the Government consider the development mode of Ngau Tam Mei area and arrange any subsequent study in a more refined manner in due course. At this stage, the Government does not rule out the possibility of any suitable development model (including the "New Development Area" model) to seek to develop the relevant sites covered by the Review Study in future. It is too early now to talk about the exact development model, land resumption, or compensation.

As for the land in the vicinity of Au Tau, the area is mostly covered by private development projects, studies for public housing development, and completed private residential developments. As such, the Government has no plan to include Au Tau in the Review Study for Ngau Tam Mei.

(4) The Boxes, as referred to in the question, was located at the northern part of the STLMC DN. Under the initial land use plan formulated in the feasibility study of the STLMC DN, the site at which The Boxes was located is proposed for the uses of an Enterprise and Technology Park. The land use proposal and relevant design for the works is subject to further fine-tuning in the course of an investigation study which will commence shortly. Having considered the views of the community about expediting that development, the Development Bureau has signalled the intention to seek to commence as early as in 2024 the construction works of the STLMC DN in phases, with a view to advancing the intake of population and businesses. The aforementioned Enterprise and Technology Park is part of the works that may start early. Before we kick-start the works, if the relevant landowner has any plan to put the site to a suitable short-term use by making a planning or land application, the relevant authority will assess individual situations, consult relevant departments and consider as appropriate.