

Topical Note 1 – Strategic Roles of NDAs

Purpose of the Topical Note

The main purpose of the Stage 1 Public Engagement of the “North East New Territories New Development Areas Planning and Engineering Study” is to enable the public to appreciate the Study objectives and key issues relating to the development of the Kwu Tung North, Fanling North and Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling New Development Areas (NDAs), and to express their visions for the NDAs. It is the intention to solicit public views through discussion on four topics, namely, strategic roles of NDAs, people-oriented communities, sustainable living environment and implementation mechanism. This topical note is prepared to provide background information on strategic roles of NDAs with a view to facilitating public discussion on this topic.

1 Background

“The Planning and Development Study on North East New Territories” (the NENT Study) commissioned in the late 1990’s, identified Kwu Tung North (KTN), Fanling North (FLN) and Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling (PC/TKL) as suitable New Development Areas (NDAs). It recommended that KTN, FLN and PC/TKL could proceed as one scheme (Three-In-One Scheme), i.e. an integral whole with shared community facilities, infrastructure and reprovisioning arrangements.

In the light of the slower population growth and housing demand, the NDA proposals were shelved in 2003 pending further consideration on the need for strategic development areas in the Study on “Hong Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy” (the HK2030 Study). The HK2030 Study was completed in 2007. It recommended to proceed with some NDA developments to address the long-term housing demand and provide employment opportunities. The HK2030 Study recommended that the Three-in-One Scheme should be given priority for implementation. The Chief Executive announced in his 2007-2008 Policy Address the planning for NDAs as one of the major infrastructure projects for economic growth. Subsequently, the “North East New Territories New Development Areas Planning and Engineering Study” (the NENT NDAs Study) was commissioned in June 2008 to formulate a revised proposal for the KTN, FLN and PC/TKL NDAs.

2 Previous Recommendations

According to the NENT Study, the specific role of each NDA was recommended as follows:

- *Kwu Tung North (KTN) NDA* – rail-based new town development centred around the future Kwu Tung Station of the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line.
 - i. New Town Development to Accommodate Large Population Growth
 - ii. Development Theme: A Boundary Town
 - iii. Accommodate population of 100,000
 - iv. Create 16,000 jobs

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- *Fanling North (FLN) NDA – new town development/residential extension of Sheung Shui and Fanling.*
 - i. New Town Development to Accommodate Large Population Growth
 - ii. Development Theme: A Riverside Town
 - iii. Accommodate population of 80,000
 - iv. Create 2,500 jobs
- *Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling (PC/TKL) NDA - reception area for industrial and open storage uses displaced by the development of Kwu Tong North and Fanling North NDAs.*
 - i. Rural Industrial and Open Storage Development
 - ii. Create 2,300 jobs

The above proposals were formulated in the late 1990's. They may not be able to meet the contemporary requirements. The current NDAs Study is tasked to formulate a revised proposal for the KTN, FLN and PC/TKL NDAs, taking into account latest planning circumstances and changing public aspirations. To start with, let's go through the strategic context of the NDAs.

3 Strategic Context

Strategic Location – Increased Cross-Boundary Activities

The KTN, FLN and PC/TKL NDAs are situated at the northeastern part of the New Territories and to the south of the Frontier Closed Area. Given the strategic location of the NDAs nearing the boundary-crossing facilities, there is opportunity for the development of NDAs to capitalise on increasing economic interactions between Hong Kong and the Mainland.

On-going Studies and Major Infrastructure Development

There are a number of on-going studies and major infrastructure developments in northern New Territories, which may have implications on the NDAs. They are:

(a) *Land Use Planning for the Closed Area*

This is an ongoing government study to formulate a planning framework to guide the conservation and development of about 2,400ha of land to be released from the existing Closed Area progressively from 2010. Statutory town plans will be prepared based on themes of Strengthening Nature Conservation, Conserving Cultural and Heritage Resources, and Promoting Sustainable Uses.

(b) *Planning and Engineering Study on Development of Lok Ma Chau Loop:*

A public engagement exercise to collect community views and aspirations on possible future land uses for the Lok Ma Chau Loop was recently completed. The result of the public engagement exercise will provide input to the planning and engineering study on development of Lok Ma Chau Loop to be commissioned in the near future to investigate development options in line with the HK2030 Study.

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- (c) *Planning Study on Liantang/ Heung Yuen Wai Cross-boundary Control Point and its Associated Connecting Road in Hong Kong.*

In September 2008, the Government of the HKSAR and Shenzhen Municipal Government decided to implement a new control point at Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai, which is expected to be in operation in 2018. The new connecting road linking up the new boundary-crossing control point with Tolo Highway via Fanling Highway will change the route choice of cross-boundary traffic in the North East New Territories and provide a convenient access to the proposed Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling New Development Area.

There is potential for integrated planning of the NDAs with the Closed Area to be released as well as with the Lok Ma Chau Loop. The development of NDAs could also capitalise on the opportunities provided by the new cross-boundary control point at Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai since it would greatly enhance the movement of people in the region.

Restructuring of Port Back-Up Land

In considering the strategic role of the KTN, FLN and PC/TKL NDAs, it is also necessary to give due consideration to existing open storages uses proliferated in the northern New Territories. Whilst it has been suggested in the previous NENT Study to consolidate existing dispersed open storage uses into well-organised container back-up or storage zones at PC/TKL, the HK2030 Study points out that according to the "Study on Hong Kong Port - Master Plan 2020", despite the total demand for port back-up land will increase with port throughput, there is a trend for these uses to move over the boundary nearer the cargo centres in the Pearl River Delta. If this trend is to continue, there would be opportunities for the restructuring of land uses and/or release of land for other uses in the northern New Territories in the long term.

4 The Strategic Guide from the HK2030 Study

The HK2030 Study recommends that the NDAs should be developed for a mixture of uses, emphasising the creation of a quality living and working environment to meet the long-term needs of the population. The HK2030 Study also provides the following strategic planning guidance - *other than providing housing land, NDAs could also serve to meet other land use requirements such as value added, special, non-polluting industries and higher educational uses, which will also provide employment.*

Higher Education Uses/Research Park

The HK2030 Study envisages a need to reserve land for the development of tertiary educational facilities. These facilities are targeted to provide a supportive learning environment in order to attract more Mainland and international students and skilled professionals to study and work in Hong Kong.

As stated in the HK2030 Study, a preliminary assessment finds that Kwu Tung North would be a desirable location for this purpose given its serene rural setting and convenient access to the Mainland.

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Special Industries

According to the assessment of the HK2030 Study, the net requirement for special industries would amount to 2.9 million m² by 2030. The HK2030 Study states that to ensure a strong and diversified economic base for Hong Kong, we need a strategic reserve of land for special industries so that our infrastructure would not lag behind opportunities as and when they arise, and to cater for land-extensive operations or investments which are of major, if not strategic, importance to Hong Kong.

The HK2030 Study suggests that opportunities for strategic land reserves suitable for special industries should be explored and this could be incorporated as part of the NDA development. In this connection, Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling NDA could be considered for the provision of land reserves for special industries in the long term. Appropriate changes to the road transport system should be planned to cater for any associated increase in commercial vehicles in this area.

Taking into account the latest planning circumstances including the opening up of a large part of the Closed Area, the future development in Lok Ma Chau Loop and the proposed new boundary control point, we may consider the need and suitability for any strategic land use requirements within the NDAs in a comprehensive manner. These uses should be able to provide balanced employment opportunities in the area.

5 Your Views

The next step of the Study is to design the appropriate land uses to be provided within the NDAs, taking into account the public aspirations and the territorial/ local needs. To facilitate the next step of work, we hope to know your views with regard to the Strategic Roles of the NDAs as a whole (i.e. the Three-In-One scheme) and individually. Specifically,

- Being strategically located near Shenzhen/ Pearl River Delta, and with convenient access to the urban area of Hong Kong, what roles can NDAs play to serve wider regional needs?
 - Commercial Node
 - Entertainment Node
 - High-Value Added Activities/Logistic Centre
 - Educational Uses
 - Residential Node
 - Tourism Node
 - Professional Services Node for Business
 - Others

- How can we capture the opportunities to satisfy territorial and local needs in the development of NDAs?
 - Housing
 - Employment
 - Education
 - Recreation
 - Others

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- What's your vision for the Development Theme of each NDA?
 - Housing Uses
 - Educational Uses
 - Logistics Centre
 - Research Park
 - Others