Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2011-12

Reply Serial No.

THB(T)071

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTION

Question Serial No.

1431

Head: 60 - Highways Department Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (3) Railway Development

Controlling Officer: Director of Highways

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Housing

Question:

Regarding the Northern Link project, please advise:

(a) the current progress of the review of the Northern Link project; and whether any public consultation has been carried out for the project in the past three years (i.e. 2008-09 to 2010-11); if yes, please provide details of the consultation exercise, as well as the expenditure and manpower involved each year; and

(b) the progress of the Government's review of the Northern Link project, as well as the expenditure and manpower involved in each of the past three years (i.e. 2008-09 to 2010-11).

Asked by: Hon. WONG Sing-chi

Reply:

(a) The planning of the Northern Link (NOL) needs to tie in with the implementation of the New Territories New Development Areas (NDAs). Currently the Planning Department and the Civil Engineering and Development Department are carrying out a study on the NDAs, which will address issues related to the overall planning of the NDAs, the development programme, the planned population and employment in the planning areas. The study is expected to be completed in 2011. We will take note the study findings in the review of the NOL.

(b) In the last three years, we have been keeping a close track of the development proposals that may affect the implementation of the NOL. The planning and preparation work has been carried out by internal resources involving two professional officers working part time and hence we do not keep separate breakdown for its expenditure. We also plan to commission a consultancy study to review and update the Railway Development Strategy 2000 in the second quarter of 2011, which will look at expansion needs for the railway network including the proposed NOL. When we have findings from the study, we will consult the public, inviting the community to express views on the railway development in Hong Kong.

Signature _____

Name in block letters K K LAU

Post Title Director of Highways

Date 17.3.2011