

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

TLB022

(Question Serial No. 0465)

Head: (60) Highways Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (3) Railway Development

Controlling Officer: Director of Highways (YAU Kwok-ting)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Transport and Logistics

Question:

Under this Programme, the Government will continue to take forward the remaining railway schemes recommended under the Railway Development Strategy 2014 as well as other railway schemes set out in the Hong Kong Major Transport Infrastructure Development Blueprint in an orderly manner. In this connection, will the Government advise this Committee of the following:

1. the latest developments, timetables of future projects and expenditure estimates of the projects under the Railway Development Strategy 2014.
2. the latest development of the planning of the East Kowloon Line and its construction schedule.
3. the coverage, construction schedule and expenditure estimates of the Smart and Green Mass Transit System in East Kowloon.

Asked by: Hon LAM Kin-fung, Jeffrey (LegCo internal reference no.: 13)

Reply:

1. The latest developments, timetables and expenditure estimates of the projects under the Railway Development Strategy 2014 are listed in the following table:

Railway projects	Latest development	Project timetables	Expenditure Estimates
1. Tung Chung Line Extension	Construction works commenced in 2023.	Anticipated to be completed in 2029.	The capital cost estimate is \$19.5 billion (in December 2020 prices).

Railway projects	Latest development	Project timetables	Expenditure Estimates
2. Tuen Mun South Extension	Construction works commenced in 2023.	Anticipated to be completed in 2030.	The capital cost estimate is \$15.8 billion (in July 2023 prices).
3. Northern Link (NOL) and Kwu Tung (KTU) Station	<u>KTU Station</u> Construction works commenced in 2023. <u>NOL Main Line</u> Detailed planning and design are underway.	<u>KTU Station</u> Anticipated to be completed in 2027. <u>NOL Main Line</u> Construction works are anticipated to commence in 2025 for completion in 2034.	<u>KTU Station</u> The capital cost estimate is \$5.9 billion (in July 2023 prices). <u>NOL Main Line</u> See Note 1
4. Hung Shui Kiu Station	Detailed planning and design are underway.	Major works are anticipated to commence in 2024 for completion in 2030.	See Note 1
5. South Island Line (West) (SIL (W))	Given the hilly terrains and constrained by the climbing capability of heavy rail, some sections of the SIL(W) have to be built deep underground. The transport benefit and cost effectiveness are both unsatisfactory. In view of this, the Government is exploring suitable alternative transit systems which could meet the transport demand along the alignment as well as improve the technical feasibility and overall cost effectiveness of the project. We target to firm up a suitable technical solution within this year, with the purpose that the project can tally with the programme of the Wah Fu Estate Redevelopment project. When studying different technical schemes, we will also evaluate the implementation programme and construction cost. As such, we need to firm up the technical solution before providing any information on this aspect.		
6. East Kowloon Line	Refer to parts 2 and 3 of the reply.		
7. North Island Line	It is indicated in the Hong Kong Major Transport Infrastructure Development Blueprint that the carrying capacity of the Island Line would be increased with the upgrading of its signalling system. There is no urgency to take forward the North Island Line by 2046.		

Note 1: The Government and its independent consultants are currently conducting assessment based on MTRCL's detailed planning and design with a view to updating the cost estimates.

2. and 3. The proposed Smart and Green Mass Transit System in East Kowloon is an alternative scheme to the originally proposed East Kowloon Line. Spanning about 7 km long, the system will provide convenient feeder service in Kwun Tong uphill areas, including Choi Wan, Shun Lee, Shun On, Sau Mau Ping, Po Tat and Ma Yau Tong, facilitating access to Choi Hung Station and Yau Tong Station and will connect with the Anderson Road area via pedestrian links.

The Government plans to seek funding approval from the Public Works Subcommittee and the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council to appoint consultants for the investigation and design of the Smart and Green Mass Transit System in East Kowloon in the first half of 2024. Subject to funding approval, the relevant work will be commenced in mid-2024. Moreover, the Government plans to invite local suppliers and operators of Smart and Green Mass Transit Systems, as well as those within and outside the Mainland, to submit expressions of interest within the second half of 2024, with a view to finalising the specific requirements and design of the system and its infrastructure. At the same time, we are working hard to speed up the original works schedule and strive to put the construction works of the project out to tender in 2026 for the award of works contract in 2027. The preliminary project cost and the implementation timetable of the project will be confirmed at the investigation and design stages.

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