

LCQ11: Study on the construction of the MTR Siu Sai Wan extension

Following is a question by the Hon Christopher Chung and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Professor Anthony Cheung Bing-leung, in the Legislative Council today (November 7):

Question:

Regarding the aspiration of the residents of Hong Kong Island East for the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) to construct an extension to Siu Sai Wan, will the Government inform this Council:

(a) whether the Government or MTRCL has conducted a feasibility study on construction of the Siu Sai Wan extension; if yes, of the details and findings, and if the findings of the study show that the feasibility is not high, whether the Government will consider constructing a smaller-scale railway system in Siu Sai Wan (e.g. the Light Rail system in Tuen Mun and Yuen Long, or the monorail system poised to be built in the Kai Tak Development Area) and linking the system to the existing stations on the MTR Island Line; if no study has been conducted, whether it will consider doing so;

(b) of the current population of Siu Sai Wan, as well as the respective figures of the projected population growth in the next five and ten years; and

(c) given that the Government published in April this year the first-stage public consultation document for the Review and Update of the Railway Development Strategy 2000, proposing to conduct a study on three regional railway corridors (namely the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Express Line, the Northern Link and the Coastal Railway between Tuen Mun and Tsuen Wan), when the Government will carry out the second-stage public consultation, and whether it will consider including the Siu Sai Wan extension as one of the items for study and discussion in that stage of public consultation?

Reply:

President,

My reply to the various parts of Hon Chung's question is as follows:

(a) The Government has conducted preliminary studies on the feasibility of connecting the Island Line (ISL) to Siu Sai Wan in the past, including an ISL extension from Chai Wan Station to Siu Sai Wan and an ISL bifurcation from Heng Fa Chuen Station to Siu Sai Wan. As Siu Sai Wan is a well developed community, space available for railway development is very limited. Both alignments would be in conflict with various existing buildings in the district, rendering it technically extremely difficult to connect the ISL to Siu Sai Wan.

The ISL is a heavy rail system with entirely different standards and specifications from those adopted by a light rail system or monorail system. Tracks, depot and other railway facilities for maintenance purposes etc. cannot be shared among these systems. If a light rail system or monorail system were constructed to connect Siu Sai Wan with an existing ISL station, additional land would be required to establish a depot and other maintenance facilities. These proposals are expected to result in a greater land requirement and higher community impact, thus are of lower feasibility.

(b) For town planning purpose, the whole territory of Hong Kong is currently divided into 289 Tertiary Planning Units (TPUs) by the Planning Department. Each of the TPU is identified by a unique three-digit number. Under this demarcation system, Siu Sai Wan is located in TPU 167.

According to the results of the 2011 Population Census conducted by the Census and Statistics Department, the population of TPU 167 as at June 2011 is 59,729.

With reference to the projected population figures published by the Planning Department in 2010, the projected population of TPU 167 for mid-2015 is 59,600. The department currently does not have any projected population figures beyond 2015, but is updating the projected population figures for 2015 and beyond based on the results of the 2011 Population Census.

(c) In March 2011, the Government commissioned consultants to conduct a study for the Review and Update of the Railway Development Strategy 2000, with a view to updating the long-term railway development blueprint of Hong Kong in the light of the latest development of the society. The study reviews the railway schemes

identified in the Railway Development Strategy 2000 which are not yet implemented, as well as other railway proposals suggested by the Government or the public. The entire study is expected to be completed in mid-2013.

We conducted the Stage 1 public engagement exercise from April to July 2012 to consult the public on the proposals of three major regional railway corridors (viz. the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Express Line, the Northern Link, and the Coastal Railway between Tuen Mun and Tsuen Wan), and are planning to launch the Stage 2 public engagement exercise early next year to discuss proposals of local enhancement schemes. We will consider whether to include the Siu Sai Wan extension as an item for further discussion in the Stage 2 public engagement exercise in view of the study recommendations made by our consultants.

Ends/Wednesday, November 7, 2012

Issued at HKT 12:01