



香港城市設計學會
Hong Kong Institute of Urban Design

PRESS RELEASE:

HKIUD’s views on Development Proposal for New Territories North New Town and Ma Tso Lung

Legco Paper:- [LC Paper No. CB\(1\)1741/2024\(01\)](#)

Consultation Website: <https://nm-ntnorth.hk/en/index.html>

Issues	HKIUD Views
DEVELOPMENT POSITIONING	
<p>An industry driven planning approach is adopted <i>“ It can be developed into a BCP business district and a base for emerging industries, achieving complementary development with the Luohu District in Shenzhen (SZ)”</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This area has the potential to undertake a great many opportunities due to BCP. Coherent planning research and policy exploration maybe required to designate this to emerging industries. 2. There should be certain alignments with the planning needs and vision of the government of Shenzhen and more information, if available, shall be provided for public inspection. 3. There appears to be a need for much more careful mapping of existing valuable resources, an analysis of their economic, environmental and societal importance together with considerations on how to best conserve, protect and enhance land assets to generate the highest surrounding land values and public service. 4. The unique character, history and assets of the area shall carefully identified, studied and incorporated into the land-use planning. Generic and standardized land use and approaches shall be avoided. 5. There are concurrent studies being undertaken by CEDD related to rural -urban development and nature based systems. The predominance of the land under planning will need to reflect the guidance of these important documents which should have significant bearing on the approach to broad land use planning for the area. 6. Globally competing city economies are utilizing innovative and strategic community and stakeholder engagement periods, prior to planning, to generate project consensus, buy-in and envisioning that involve broad, shared community values. Being engaged early, continually and directly without pre-conceptions allows civic populations, including a full society spectrum to direct meaningful development approaches. Examples of civic visioning include Brisbane, Bristol, Copenhagen, Christchurch, Detroit, Dublin, Edinburgh, New York, and Vancouver. 7. We would propose that the development positioning should correlate with the approaching integration of the two cities in their joint aspirations. This would be to <i>“Conserve and enhance the unique land and cultural heritage of the area to provide globally noteworthy development assets that can drive supporting industries in high end tourism, entertainment, leisure, agriculture and education”</i>. Development aims should be threefold: - <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. ECONOMIC- Prioritise cross border integration, activities and consumption opportunities. b. SOCIAL- Cherish and enhance cultural heritage assets as industry drivers c. ENVIRONMENTAL- Enhance existing green and blue resources to structure development framework

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<p>Gateway Economy <i>It is proposed to develop the areas around Heung Yuen Wai and Man Kam To BCPs (around 225 ha) into Boundary Mixed Use Areas, where business, financial and professional services etc. that HK enjoys clear competitive edges can be provided alongside leisure, retail etc. services for locals and cross-boundary visitors to boost the gateway economy</i></p>	<p>8. We have doubts about the designation of these BCP Mixed Use Areas for primarily serving the southbound customers.</p> <p>9. Since Heung Yuen Wai is identified as the first available zone that is available for development and already well served by an existing highway, which might be more beneficial to HK than “gateway economies”.</p>
<p><i>Modern Logistics Food-related Uses Green Industry Advanced Construction Advanced Manufacturing</i></p>	<p>10. Reserving certain amount of land for these industries is understandable but they should be strategically located such that they will not heavily consuming urban area infrastructure and affecting the livelihood of the residents.</p>
<p>Cultural, Education And Sports Hub</p>	<p>11. In planning university towns, residential, recreation, retail, business, research and sports facilities should all be planned within, similar to many of the world’s leading universities, which is what drives investment and attracts talent. These leading institutions, such as MIT in Boston, Stanford in Palo Altos, Columbia in New York, recognized the need to immerse themselves into a town or city-setting, to allow interaction between industries/businesses with educators, researchers and students.</p> <p>12. There is already a University Campus planned at Ngau Tam Mei, which has already been highlighted as being too small. How is this one different in function and character? The current proposal includes a similar sized 40ha campus. We are afraid that the current planning and the planned size is not conducive for integrating residential, industry, business, cultural, sports and public facilities. We shall avoid single-use zoning which notoriously leads to sterile and unsuccessful development.</p>

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<p>Blue-Green Network : Beyond Green River Valley</p>	<p>13. The emphasis on creating the central river valley is welcomed but we noted that land in the flood zone next to the Shenzhen River, which has been held under the closed border area is given over to mixed-use development, construction and manufacturing. This important flood zone should be incorporated as part of the blue-green network.</p> <p>14. Quality green space is well recognized as being a primary driver for enhancing land value. The land values around all the worlds urban parks are the highest in those cities. The current planning concept would appear to deliberately place the cultural node and sports hub right next to the green spine and at what is potentially the most valuable land. Government may consider dispersing part of the cultural and sports facilities within residential and/or business zone to provide more “breathing spaces” within areas of higher density.</p> <p>15. The single level, green belt planning hierarchy is insufficient to frame development. An extensive mapping of the existing green and blue infrastructure assets should be undertaken and inter-connectivity reinforced through positive land use allocation. Suitable land development areas can then be clearly identified in more detail. We believe that a blue-green “network” is more appropriate than “spline or valley” planning approach.</p> <p>16. Land in the former closed border area should be incorporated into a significant east-west river park framing development on both sides of the Shenzhen River, and prioritizing tourism, entertainment, leisure, hospitality and high-end services industries.</p>
<p>MAJOR PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN CONCEPTS</p>	
<p><i>City-industry integration, where land will be reserved for different businesses/industries providing economic drivers.</i></p>	<p>17. The city-industry integration concept is puzzling. Rather, we believe that there should be buffers between heavy industries and residential areas. Infrastructure for industries shall be carefully planned. Heavy and polluting vehicles shall be diverted to highways immediately rather than letting them meander through city streets.</p> <p>18. Any business zone shall be planned at the “town centre” to serve the local economy and residents. To enhance the vibrancy of the “town centre”, cultural facilities can also be planned in the vicinity.</p>
	<p>To summarize our comments, we recommend the following amendments to the plan:</p>

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	<p>新界北新市鎮的概括土地用途概念圖 New Territories North New Town Broad Land Use Concept Plan</p>
<p>LAND USE BUDGET AND MAJOR DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS</p>	
<p>Proposed land use budget</p>	<p>19. We would like to suggest a comprehensive review of the land use budget. Once again, area dedicated to infrastructure exceeds the amount dedicated for Open Space, yet the area has significant hydrological, agricultural, hillside and woodland assets that will be essential in tackling climate emergency and providing high surrounding land values.</p> <p>20. We suggest planning strategies should firstly prioritize areas requiring protection from development together with green and blue infrastructure assets that create a development framework. Suitable development areas can then be identified and land budgets allocated.</p>
<p>MA TSO LUNG (MTL)</p>	
<p>Revisit the Suitability for MTL for Mass Residential Development</p>	<p>21. There is no mass transit facility proposed for MTL. Large scale residential development may not be appropriate here. Alternatively, innovative mass transit facilities such as BRT shall be planned.</p> <p>22. MTL's proximity to Shenzhen's I&T ecosystem and border crossings makes it ideal for a world-class university town. This would catalyze innovation, attract international talent, and synergize with the HSITP. As MTL will become available in 2029, the government shall consider making MTL a university town. We understood that there is a university town planned in Ngau Tam Mei and the site for which can also become available in 2029; however, it has often been criticized that the 46 Ha available in Ngau Tam Mei is only big enough to house</p>



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	one university. If this is adopted, the university town being planned in NTN may not be necessary.
OTHER OBSERVATIONS & SUGGESTIONS	
Incremental and Strategic Development	23. The NTN's vast 1,420-hectare area demands a phased approach to avoid overextension.
Transport Planning: Beyond NM	24. With the vast population being planned and better greater bay area integration. The current planning seems to be calling for the extension the existing railways for serving the area. Whether this is sufficient shall be demonstrated.
Urgent Need for Village Zone Integration	25. Despite widespread support for urban-rural integration, the study neglects concrete proposals for village zones. HKIUD advocates for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptive reuse of heritage villages as cultural/community hubs. • Allowing a belt of higher development density between urban area and village area for supporting growing village and certain urban needs, e.g. student housing. • Providing collective planning supports and Incentives for rural enterprises to align with NM's economic goals. (P.S. HK government shall study efforts on how Mainland municipal governments are helping rural village regeneration.)
Integrating Urban Design framework into "large-scale land disposal" mechanism	26. While "large-scale land disposal" mechanism will help speeding up development progress while reducing the government's initial capital investment, the government shall ensure there is an overarching urban design framework on top of master planning proposals by individual developers undertaking those large-scale land plots. Certain essential urban design elements such as linkage between urban nodes, pedestrianized streets, nature corridors must be planned in a network in order to be effective.
Ordinance, Planning & Building Code Modernization	27. Outdated regulations (e.g., industrial development restrictions) hinder Advanced Manufacturing. HKIUD calls for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate review of Town Planning Ordinance and Building Regulations to accommodate modern industries - Example one: the current requirements of 13.5m wide emergency vehicle access on both sides of "industrial" developments will be sterilizing significant amount of lands. "High-tech" research usages shall be re-classified instead of being classified as "industrial-use" such that they can be mixed with other non-industrial usages.) - Example two: We understand that CEDD is studying "Nature Base Solution" (NbS) for San Tin Technopole. HKIUD fully support such a study and urge early integration of such concept for the whole of NM as it is surrounded by "nature". Certain town planning terms need to be upgraded to accommodate NbS concepts such as upgrading "Green Belt" with incorporation of the concept of "Eco-tone". • Sandbox Developments: Pilot zones exempt from legacy rules to test innovative designs (e.g., modular construction, mixed-use complexes).

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Design Competitions	<p>28. International design competitions for key NM nodes (e.g., University Town) would elevate Hong Kong's global profile, attract investment, and foster local innovation.</p> <p>29. Smaller-scale design competition on urban design aspects shall also be organized to foster young local talents, and encourage the young generation to buy-in Government's vision on NM.</p>
Economic Study Updates	<p>30. The PwC economic study (critical for "industry-led planning") requires regular updating to reflect post-pandemic realities and GBA dynamics. NMCO must clarify how projected industries (e.g., biotech, fintech, digital industry, etc.) will be anchored in the NM.</p>
Call for Collaboration and Clarity	<p>31. The NM's success hinges on attracting global capital. ITIB's participation in public consultation process is essential for the public to understand the outline strategies for foreign investment and long-term economic sustainability.</p>
CONCLUSION	
	<p>NM represents a historic opportunity to redefine Hong Kong's future. Its success demands bold, context-sensitive planning. We shall harness and enhance the environmental and heritage assets of the area rather than adopting traditional planning model of taking care of land-use budget ahead of the environment. We need a blue-green network with a vibrant mixed-use township rather than segregated zones for a sustainable yet vibrant township.</p> <p>HKIUD is ready to collaborate with NMCO, Shenzhen counterparts, and global stakeholders to ensure the NM becomes a beacon of sustainable urbanism, economic innovation, and cross-border synergy.</p>

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