

立法會
Legislative Council

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(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

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**Public Works Subcommittee of the Finance Committee
of the Legislative Council**

**Minutes of the 15th meeting
held in the Chamber of Legislative Council Building
on Thursday, 3 May 2001, at 2:30 pm**

Members present :

Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, JP (Chairman)
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Kenneth TING Woo-shou, JP
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon Eric LI Ka-cheung, JP
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHAN Kam-lam
Hon SIN Chung-kai
Hon Andrew WONG Wang-fat, JP
Hon LAU Kong-wah
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon LAW Chi-kwong, JP
Dr Hon TANG Siu-tong, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP
Hon Henry WU King-cheong, BBS
Hon Michael MAK Kwok-fung
Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon IP Kwok-him, JP
Hon LAU Ping-cheung

Non-Subcommittee Member attending:

Dr Hon YEUNG Sum

Members absent:

Prof Hon NG Ching-fai
Hon CHAN Yuen-han
Hon WONG Yung-kan
Hon Mrs Miriam LAU Kin-ye, JP
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP

Public officers attending:

Miss Elizabeth TSE	Deputy Secretary for the Treasury
Mr S S LEE	Secretary for Works
Mr Gordon SIU, JP	Secretary for Planning and Lands
Mr Rob LAW, JP	Director of Environmental Protection
Mr James HERD	Principal Assistant Secretary of the Treasury (Works)
Mr M L WAN	Principal Assistant Secretary for Housing (Project Management)
Mr R K S CHAN	Director of Civil Engineering (Acting)
Mr Y F MOK	Assistant Director (Civil)/Land Development, Civil Engineering Department
Mr S P LAU	Deputy Director (Acting), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
Ms Michelle LI	Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and Manpower (1)
Mr Jack CHAN	Deputy Secretary-General, University Grants Committee
Mr K S SHUM	Chief Technical Advisor/Subvented Projects, Architectural Services Department
Mr H K WONG, JP	Director of Territory Development
Mr D J CLIMAS	Deputy Project Manager/New Territories East Development Office, Territory Development Department
Mr C J CHIVERS	Chief Engineer/New Territories West Development Office, Territory Development Department
Mr Patrick LI	Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and Manpower (2)
Mr Peter P Y LEUNG	Assistant Director of Education (Special Duties)

Clerk in attendance:

Miss Polly YEUNG	Chief Assistant Secretary (1)3
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Staff in attendance:

Ms Pauline NG
Ms Anita SIT

Assistant Secretary General 1
Senior Assistant Secretary (1)8

HEAD 711 - HOUSING

PWSC(2000-01)15 571CL Site formation at Lung Wah Street

Members noted that the present proposal had been discussed at the Housing Panel on 5 March 2001.

2. Mr IP Kwok-him conveyed the past objection of the Central and Western District Council (C&WDC) to designating the subject site for private housing development unless the site was to be used to provide rehousing flats to facilitate urban renewal. Referring to the statement in the discussion paper that the site was intended to facilitate urban renewal in the Western District by providing rehousing flats, he sought assurance from the Administration on the use of the site.

3. The Secretary for Planning and Lands (SPL) confirmed that the Administration had already taken a policy decision that the subject site would be used to facilitate urban renewal by providing rehousing flats. The Administration would liaise with the Urban Renewal Authority (URA), which was established on 1 May 2001, and the Housing Society on the relevant urban renewal and rehousing plans shortly. Unless the URA and/or the Housing Society had other views supported by very strong justifications, their development plans would not depart from the aforesaid policy decision. In reply to Miss Emily LAU's enquiry, SPL advised that the implementation programme for the relevant urban renewal project would be confirmed before end 2001.

4. Dr YEUNG Sum stated his view that the subject site should not be put up for sale and should be used to meet the rehousing needs arising from urban renewal. To address Dr YEUNG's concern, SPL re-assured members that the site would be used to meet rehousing needs arising from urban renewal.

5. Miss Cyd HO stated her view that if another site in the Wanchai District would be designated for rehousing households affected by urban renewal projects in the district, she would accept the arrangement of designating the subject site to cater solely for the rehousing needs arising from the urban renewal projects in the Western District. In reply to her enquiry, SPL advised that the 710 flats to be developed at the subject site should be adequate for meeting the rehousing needs in the Western District as some people affected by urban renewal might choose other forms of compensation arrangements.

6. Mr IP Kwok-him was pleased to note that the Administration had addressed the concerns of C&WDC over the preservation of an old banyan tree at the center of the subject site by revising the development scheme to preserve the tree. He said that although the preservation of the banyan tree would require an additional cost of \$7 million, the additional expenditure was warranted having regard to the benefits of its preservation for the surrounding environment and nearby residents.

7. Miss Emily LAU concurred that the additional cost for preserving the old banyan was warranted. She considered that the preservation arrangement on this occasion would carry a symbolic meaning that the community attached great importance to the preservation of the environment. In reply to her enquiry about the basis for the estimated cost of \$7 million for preserving the tree, the Director of Civil Engineering (Acting) (DCE(Atg)) advised that as the tree grew on a slope, and there was a difference of a few metres in height between the location of the tree and the planned development platforms, it was necessary to construct a permanent retaining wall to preserve the tree. The provision of \$7 million mainly covered the estimated construction cost for the retaining wall.

8. The Chairman considered that the old banyan tree was of high preservation value and remarked that it was worthwhile to keep in view the community's response to the preservation arrangement.

9. Dr YEUNG Sum expressed support for preserving the banyan tree. He sought confirmation on whether it was Government policy to preserve old trees affected by development projects as far as practicable. In response, SPL said that he was not in a position to give a definite answer as the matter straddled other policy areas not under his purview. However, from a sustainable development viewpoint, the Government should, as a matter of principle, attach due importance to the preservation of the natural environment in its development plans.

10. Mr Albert CHAN queried whether the high cost required for preserving the banyan tree was partly attributed to the fact that the decision to preserve the tree was taken at a very late stage such that a costly approach for preserving the tree had to be adopted in order not to cause significant changes to the planned development scheme. In response, DCE(Atg) clarified that irrespective of the timing of the decision to preserve the tree, the cost required to preserve the tree would be the same as there was no alternative to the construction of a permanent retaining wall for the purpose.

11. Miss Emily LAU enquired about the design of the public open space of 1 300 square metres (m²) to be provided at Smithfield as part of the planned development scheme. DCE(Atg.) and the Assistant Director (Civil)/Land Development, Civil Engineering Department advised that the detailed design

for the open space had not been drawn up, but in line with the usual practice the design would include both hard and soft landscaping features. They also advised that some 68 new trees and 1 400 shrubs would be planted at the landscaped area at the project site, while 17 existing trees would be transplanted and 26 new trees would be planted along Lung Wah Street. Moreover, about 160 new trees would be planted at the development platforms by the future developer. In reply to Mr IP Kwok-him's enquiry, DCE(Atg) advised that except for decayed trees and plants, the existing vegetation at the landscaped area would be preserved.

12. Miss Emily LAU opined that opportunities should be maximized to plant more trees and other plants at the open space and hard structures should be avoided as far as possible. The Chairman remarked that if bricks were used for the ground surfacing of the open space, care should be taken to ensure good workmanship as uneven surfacing would pose a safety hazard. Mr Albert CHAN urged the Administration to review the overall design approach for open spaces. He observed that recent designs for open spaces involved a lot of artificial landscaping features such as stone hills, which he considered were aesthetically unappealing, yet costly to construct and maintain. He suggested that a simple and natural design approach should be adopted instead. The Administration agreed to take members' views into account when drawing up the design for open spaces under the present and future proposals.

Admin

13. On Miss Cyd HO's concern about the traffic impact of the proposed works, DCE(Atg) advised that the additional traffic generated from the proposed works would be about six construction vehicle trips per hour, which would not cause significant traffic impact on the area concerned. To improve road traffic in the area, the existing priority junction at Lung Wah Street/Smithfield would be converted into a signalized junction. Furthermore, improvement works had already been completed by HyD at the two junctions of Smithfield/Pokfield Road and Pok Fu Lam Road/Mount Davis Road/Smithfield Road to cope with the increased traffic arising from the developments on the subject site and other planned developments in Central and Western District.

14. Miss Cyd HO pointed out that since Lung Wah Street was a road with high curvature and steep gradient, local residents were concerned that the construction vehicles using the road would pose a safety hazard to pedestrians. They had suggested that bumps be constructed on the road to reduce the speed of vehicles and that the vehicular access to the project site should be within the sight of pedestrians. In response, DCE(Atg) said that according to the Highways Department (HyD), it might not be appropriate to construct bumps on Lung Wah Street as it was a public road. He however agreed to further examine the safety aspect of the road with HyD taking into account Miss HO's comments.

15. The item was voted on and endorsed.

HEAD 708 - CAPITAL SUBVENTIONS AND MAJOR SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT

PWSC(2000-01)14 8EL Student hostel (527 places), The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

16. Miss Emily LAU referred to the policy for the provision of publicly-funded student hostel places at UGC-funded institutions, and questioned that given present-day transport facilities in the territory, the eligibility criterion of daily travelling time exceeding four hours might be too stringent.

17. In response, the Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and Manpower (PAS(EM)) advised that according to the survey on the student profile of UGC-funded institutions conducted in 1996, there were a number of undergraduates whose daily home-university travelling time exceeded four hours. Under the current hostel policy, these undergraduates would be provided with hostel places. She also clarified that apart from these undergraduates, all research postgraduates and non-local students would be provided with hostel places. Moreover, all undergraduates would have the opportunity to live in hostels for at least one year. It was on the basis of the aforesaid criteria that the Administration had worked out the approved provision of student hostels for the institutions. She added that due to time and resource constraints, the Administration had not conducted any further survey since 1996 among UGC-funded institutions for the purpose of determining the provision of student hostels.

Admin

18. Miss Emily LAU maintained her concern that the criterion of daily travelling time of four hours might be too stringent. At her request, the Administration agreed to provide a breakdown of the approved provision of 2 875 hostel places for the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) based on the aforesaid eligibility criteria. The Chairman suggested that the eligibility criteria for hostel places should be further discussed at the Education Panel, if members so wished.

19. Expressing concern about the availability of suitable facilities for fostering community life in student hostels, Miss Emily LAU enquired about the provision of common and recreation areas under the present proposal, in particular the availability of an area which could facilitate the gathering of a few hundred students. In reply, the Deputy Secretary-General, University Grants Committee (DS-G,UGC) confirmed that one major objective of the policy on hostel provision was to promote community life through which students' communications skills and leadership qualities etc. could be nurtured.

According to the standard schedule of accommodation for student hostels agreed among the UGC-funded institutions, the University Grants Committee and the Architectural Services Department, the total construction floor area for a standard 300-place student hostel should be about 5 400 m², of which 580 m² should be allocated for students' recreational uses. The Chief Technical Advisor/Subvented Projects, Architectural Services Department (CTA/SP,ArchSD) supplemented that under this project, a large recreation area of some 500 m² would be provided on the first floor of the hostel and a common room would be provided on each floor. As regards the availability of facilities that could accommodate a few hundred students, DS-G,UGC said that since facilities with such a capacity were available in the campus of UGC-funded institutions, it might not be cost-effective to provide such a facility at each student hostel.

20. Mr Andrew WONG supported the provision of more hostel places for university students. Pointing out that the canteen within a student hostel could also serve as the venue for large-scale student gatherings, he enquired about the standard of provision in this regard. DS-G,UGC advised that under the standard schedule of accommodation, a student hostel with 300 places or more would be provided with a canteen. Hence, a canteen was included in this project. In reply to Mr WONG's further enquiry, DS-G,UGC confirmed that UGC had not received any request from UGC-funded institutions for the provision of a canteen at existing hostels currently without any canteen. In this regard, the Chairman commented that as the provision of canteen facilities in existing hostels was not directly related to the present proposal, members should pursue the issue at the relevant Panel if they so wished.

21. In reply to Mr Kenneth TING's enquiry, CTA/SP,ArchSD advised that under the current standard of provision, the hostel rooms for undergraduates were double rooms and those for research postgraduates were single rooms.

22. Mr Albert CHAN considered that hostel life was an important part of university education and urged the Administration to allocate sufficient resources to provide the required student places as soon as possible. Noting that this project would provide 527 hostel places at a total estimated cost of \$152.58 million (money-of-the-day prices), he expressed grave concern about the high cost per hostel place and enquired about the costs for similar projects. In response, CTA/SP,ArchSD advised that the construction cost, represented by building and building services costs, per student place for this project was around \$191,000 while the average construction cost per student place for four other recent student hostel projects was around \$180,000. The higher construction cost per student place for this project was mainly attributed to its smaller scale. He further advised that if other costs, i.e. the costs for site formation, consultants' fees and furniture and equipment, were also taken into account, the cost per student place for this project was about \$274,000 and the average cost per student place for the four recent hostel projects was about

\$280,000.

23. Miss Cyd HO also expressed concern about the high cost for student hostel projects. She was particularly concerned that the estimated cost for furniture and equipment under this project was as high as \$24,000 per student place. She observed that a single room at an existing student hostel in HKUST was only provided with one bed, one desk, one chair and one sink and there were no sanitary and kitchen facilities in the room. In comparison, the construction cost for each public housing unit provided with kitchen and sanitary facilities was also about \$280,000. She therefore queried the reasons for the high cost per student place under this project.

24. CTA/SP,ArchSD advised that when compared with the existing student hostels in HKUST, the facility provision under this project had generally been upgraded. Apart from a canteen and a laundry, other new facilities such as cables and connection facilities for computer systems, smoke detectors and sprinklers, and a smart-card system for air-conditioning and room door locks would also be provided under this project. The size and the facility provision for the exhibition display and recreation areas had also been upgraded.

Admin

25. At Miss Cyd HO's request, PAS(EM) agreed to provide a comparison of the construction cost for this project with those for comparable Government building projects and a further breakdown of the estimated cost for furniture and equipment under this project. The Chairman suggested that since the cost for site formation could vary significantly for different projects, this cost item should be discounted in making the aforesaid cost comparison. As regards the standards of facility provision for publicly-funded student hostels, members noted that an information note covering this subject had been issued to members earlier on. (PWSCI(2000-01)17)

26. The item was voted on and endorsed. Miss Emily LAU and Miss Cyd HO indicated that they had reservation on the proposal pending the provision of further information by the Administration.

HEAD 707 - NEW TOWNS AND URBAN AREA DEVELOPMENT

**PWSC(2001-02)19 277CL Tseung Kwan O development,
phase II, remaining engineering
works**

27. Mr Andrew CHENG concurred that there was an urgent need to implement the proposed road scheme to meet the traffic demand in Tseung Kwan O, but expressed grave concern about the noise impact of the operation of the road scheme. He informed the meeting that the residents of On Ning Garden (ONG) and Nan Fung Plaza (NFP) had lodged a complaint to the

Legislative Council about the noise impact of the operation of the proposed road scheme. At the case conference held on 13 May 2001 to discuss the issue, the Administration had informed Members that if the proposed cantilever noise barriers at the section of Wan Po Road in front of ONG and NFP were replaced by semi-enclosed noise barriers, the noise level at some affected dwellings in ONG and NFP could be further reduced by some 6dB(A) to 8.1dB(A) and the additional cost required for such replacement would be about \$31 million. Mr CHENG recalled that in connection with the project "643TH - Trunk Road T7 in Ma On Shan", the Administration acceded to the request of affected residents by replacing proposed cantilever noise barriers with semi-enclosed noise barriers for Kam Ying Court. Pointing out that affected dwellings in ONG and NFP would still be subject to high traffic noise impact with the provision of cantilever noise barriers, Mr CHENG considered that the circumstances of ONG and NFP were similar to those of Kam Ying Court and therefore should also warrant the provision of semi-enclosed noise barriers. He stressed that although the provision of cantilever noise barriers could mitigate the traffic noise impact to below 70dB(A) in compliance with the relevant environmental standard, the affected residents would still be subject to a much higher noise impact than before. Hence, the Administration should adopt a flexible approach to provide enhanced noise mitigation measures where technically and financially viable. Mr CHENG said that unless the Administration would agree to replace the cantilever noise barriers along Wan Po Road with semi-enclosed noise barriers, Members of the Democratic party would not support the present proposal.

28. In response, the Director of Territory Development (DTD) informed members that in view of the local community's concern over the traffic noise impact of the proposed road scheme, the Administration had completed a supplementary noise impact assessment (NIA) study in November 2000 to review the previous assessment made in the environmental impact assessment report completed and approved in 1999. Taking into account the relatively heavy flow of heavy vehicles on Wan Po Road at present and the latest traffic forecasts, the NIA study recommended the provision of cantilever noise barriers of 5.5 metres high along the north and the central divider of the section of Wan Po Road in front of ONG and NFP to replace the existing vertical noise barriers along this road section. As a result of such enhanced mitigation measures, the noise impact at all affected dwellings in ONG and NFP would be kept at a level not exceeding of 70dB(A) and the average noise level at the affected dwellings would be 65dB(A). It was also anticipated that the traffic noise impact generated by the flow of heavy vehicles would be considerably reduced following the gradual completion of various development projects in Tseung Kwan O.

29. On Mr Andrew CHENG's suggestion of providing semi-enclosed noise barriers along the section of Wan Po Road in front of ONG and NFP, DTD advised that semi-enclosed noise barriers would not bring about significant

reduction in traffic noise impact as a major source of the traffic noise impact at NFP was the existing Wan Po Road/Chiu Shun Road interchange, which was outside the scope of this project. He concluded that the proposed noise mitigation measures were adequate in meeting the current environmental standards. Given that the use of public funds were involved, DTD said that the overall arrangements had achieved the right balance among all relevant considerations.

30. Mr Andrew CHENG referred to the information provided by the Administration at the aforesaid case conference and pointed out that at some dwellings of NFP, the provision of semi-enclosed noise barriers could further reduce the noise level from above 65dB(A) to below 60dB(A). He stressed that the noise level at these dwellings was close to 70dB(A) and therefore a reduction of 6 to 8dB(A) was indeed a significant improvement. He reiterated his view that it was justified to provide semi-enclosed noise barriers, instead of cantilever barriers, along the section of Wan Po Road in front of ONG and NFP given that the additional cost was only \$31 million. DTD responded that even with the semi-enclosed noise barrier the further noise reductions to most NFP residents were not significant.

31. The Chairman stated his personal view that noise barriers were not the most desirable noise mitigation measure. He further pointed out that the cost of providing noise mitigation measures, notably noise barriers, already accounted for about 25% of the total estimate for the project in question.

32. Mr Fred LI declared interest that he was a resident of NFP. He pointed out that the housing blocks of NFP were very high-rise buildings with 49 storeys and therefore semi-enclosed noise barriers would be much more effective than cantilever noise barriers for noise mitigation. Taking into account also the proximity of ONG and NFP to the bus depots nearby and the heavy flow of heavy vehicles on Wan Po Road, he considered it justified to provide a more effective mitigation measure, i.e. semi-enclosed noise barriers, for ONG and NFP at an additional cost of \$31 million.

33. Regarding the noise impact of bus trips to the bus depots near the subject interchange, DTD advised that the Administration would liaise with bus companies on measures, such as reducing the driving speed or using the at-grade road instead of the elevated road, to reduce the traffic noise generated by bus trips especially during night time.

34. Regarding some members' concern about the current standards relating to traffic noise impact adopted by the Administration, the Director of Environmental Protection (DEP) advised that the current standards for assessing traffic noise impact and for determining the need for noise mitigation measures had been approved by the Executive Council. The standard of 70dB(A) applicable to residential developments was in line with the relevant

international standard and Hong Kong was not out of step with other developed countries in this regard. He remarked that for a densely-populated place like Hong Kong, pursuing a more stringent traffic noise standard might have significant financial implications on the Government in relation to road projects.

35. Miss Emily LAU recalled that according to the information provided by the Administration earlier on, there were about 300 000 households in the territory which were subject to excessive traffic noise impact at present. Highlighting the adverse impact of traffic noise on people's health and productivity, she cautioned that new road projects must not cause additional households to suffer from excessive traffic noise. She noted with concern that the overall noise level for some dwellings at King Lam Estate would still exceed 70dB(A) after the provision of the proposed noise mitigation measures and sought clarification in this regard. She also enquired whether there were plans to mitigate the high noise impact of the Wan Po Road/Chiu Shun Road interchange on NFP. Miss LAU was of the view that as the traffic flow of the interchange would increase due to the proposed road scheme, the increased noise impact of this interchange should also be addressed in conjunction with the proposed road works.

36. Miss Emily LAU also recalled that in the case of the project on T7 referred to by Mr Andrew CHENG, the Administration had indicated that under some special circumstances, such as a substantial difference in noise impact before and after a road project, the provision of enhanced noise mitigation measures might be considered. She thus queried that the rigid approach for the provision of noise mitigation measures under the present proposal, which only aimed at not exceeding the relevant limit, was a regressive step on the way towards a more sensible approach for addressing the traffic noise problem.

37. Regarding the noise impact of the existing Wan Po Road/Chiu Shun Road interchange, DTD advised that the issue should be pursued under the newly promulgated policy to mitigate the noise impact of existing roads. As the interchange was some distance away from the boundary of the proposed project, it would not be feasible to incorporate the works for the provision of noise mitigation measures, if any, at this interchange into the proposed project. As regards the traffic noise impact at King Lam Estate, DTD explained that the proposed mitigation measures could not reduce the noise level at some dwellings in the estate to below 70dB(A) mainly because these dwellings were already subject to excessive traffic noise generated from an existing interchange at Po Shun Road. He informed members that the Administration would consider retrofitting noise barriers at this interchange and along King Lam North Road in conjunction with another road project under the aforesaid new policy.

38. DTD stressed that the noise standards adopted under the new policy, including the standard of 70dB(A) for residential developments, were the same as those adopted for new road projects. On whether special circumstances such as the existence of a substantial difference in the noise level before and after a road project should be taken into account in the policy on the provision of noise mitigation measures, DTD said that the issue would be considered by the relevant policy bureaux in their review of the existing policy. He remarked that pending the completion and outcome of the review, the existing policy should be followed in planning for new road projects.

39. Taking note of DTD's response, Miss Emily LAU commented that the Administration had put members in a very difficult position, as on one hand, the proposed road works were urgently required to meet traffic demand but on the other hand, the Administration had refused to accede to affected residents' request for more effective mitigation measures, which she considered reasonable.

40. The item was put to vote. Four members voted for the proposal, 11 voted against and none abstained-

For:

Mr Kenneth TING Woo-shou
Mr CHAN Kam-lam
Mr Andrew WONG Wang-fat
Mr IP Kwok-him
(4 members)

Against:

Miss Cyd HO Sau-lan	Mr Eric LI Ka-cheung
Mr Fred LI Wah-ming	Mr SIN Chung-kai
Miss Emily LAU Wai-hing	Mr Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Mr LAW Chi-kwong	Mr Abraham SHEK Lai-him
Mr Michael MAK Kwok-fung	Mr Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Mr WONG Sing-chi	

(11 members)

41. The item was negatived.

PWSC(2000-01)17

177CL

**Sha Tin New Town - remaining
engineering works**

42. Members noted that the present proposal had been discussed at the Planning, Lands and Works (PLW) Panel on 5 March 2001.

43. Mr Albert CHAN sought information on the aircraft noise level at the project areas in question. DTD advised that the Administration had provided supplementary information (issued by the Panel Clerk vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1035/00-01 dated 19 April 2001 and copied to all non-Panel Members.) on the issue for the PLW Panel. He briefly explained that since the opening of the Hong Kong International Airport at Chek Lap Kok in July 1998, the flight path for aircraft descending to the airport had crossed over Sha Tin area. The Civil Aviation Department (CAD) had set up a noise monitoring terminal at Tai Wai, which was underneath and close to the flight path, to monitor aircraft noise in the area. Recent records showed that 70% of the aircraft noise levels recorded at the terminal were below 65dB(A) and 2% were between 70dB(A) and 75dB(A) which were the highest noise levels recorded. As the project areas were some distance away from the flight path, the future developments at these areas would be subject to lower levels of aircraft noise than at the terminal.

44. Mr Albert CHAN noted with concern that there were occasions on which the aircraft noise levels recorded in the Sha Tin area were above 70dB(A). He also pointed out that although the aircraft noise level did not exceed the 70dB(A) limit most of the time, the future developments the project areas would be subject to significant aircraft noise impact particularly during late night and early morning hours. He opined that the Administration should seriously address the aircraft noise issue before implementing the developments at the project areas.

45. In response, DTD advised that according to the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines, certain noise sensitive uses should not be located within the Noise Exposure Forecast (NEF) 25 contour. Since the whole of Sha Tin New Town including Kau To and Shui Chuen O was outside the NEF25 contour, the project areas in question would not be subject to the above limitation. He further remarked that while he could not comment on behalf of CAD on the issue of flight paths, from a general development viewpoint, he considered that it would not be practicable to exclude all areas in the territory which were affected by a certain level of aircraft noise from residential development.

46. Mr Albert CHAN said that as in the case of the previous item, he did not accept the noise standards adopted by the Administration. He also considered that many people in the community did not accept the NEF25 standard. He reiterated that the Administration should take heed of the community's call for more stringent noise standards and take active measures to address issues relating to noise pollution in planning for new developments.

47. In response, DEP stressed that the standards of NEF25 and 70dB(A) were in line with the relevant international standards, which had been devised on the basis of extensive research. He pointed out that when setting planning

standards relating to noise, it was the responsibility on the part of the government to balance the needs of the community vis-à-vis the cost involved in applying more stringent standards.

48. Miss Emily LAU sought information on the landscaping works to be carried out under the present proposal. DTD advised that a large number of trees would be planted and hydroseeding would be applied to the slopes in the project areas, most of which were soil slopes suitable for hydroseeding. He confirmed that hydroseeding was a very mature technique for slope stabilization and landscaping. Miss Emily LAU urged the Administration to maximize opportunities for the planting of trees and other plants in the project areas.

49. Miss Emily LAU was pleased to note that consideration had been given to reserve school sites at the early planning stage of this project and the project under the following item PWSC(2001-02)11. Noting that population intake in Shui Chuen O would commence in 2005 and the construction of the two schools in Shui Chuen O was scheduled for completion in 2005, she sought confirmation on whether the schools could be completed to tie in with the population intake. In reply, DTD advised that to ensure the timely supply of formed land for the planned developments, the Administration first sought funding approval for the site formation works without awaiting the completion of the statutory procedures for the associated road works, for which funding approval would be sought at a later stage. He assured members that the Administration would try its best to ensure the timely completion of the schools to tie in with the population intake in Shui Chuen O.

50. Mr Albert CHAN said that Members of the Democratic Party would abstain from voting. The item was voted on and endorsed.

**PWSC (2000-01)11 681CL Formation, roads and drains in
Area 54, Tuen Mun - phase 2**

51. Members noted that the paper on the present proposal had been circulated to the PLW Panel on 28 February 2001.

52. In reply to Miss Emily LAU's enquiry about the land contamination assessment to be carried out at the project area, Area 54 of Tuen Mun, DTD advised that some sites in the project area had been used for open storage of construction materials and container truck parking. Visible staining and apparent contamination at some localized spots were observed. If the land contamination assessment revealed serious contamination, the contaminated ground materials would be removed and disposed of in accordance with the requirements stipulated in the approved EIA report for the project. Addressing Miss Emily LAU's concern about potential hazards of the land contamination to human health, DTD assured members that the Administration

would ensure that the land contamination would be properly tackled and the future formed site for the project would not pose any health hazard.

53. As to whether the estimates under the present proposal had included funds for dealing with the land contamination, DTD explained that as the present proposal covered mainly the site investigation works and the detailed design for the engineering works, the estimates did not include funds for such purpose. The Administration would put up a separate funding proposal for the site formation works and other associated works and the cost for dealing with the land contamination would be included therein.

54. In reply to Miss Emily LAU's enquiry, DTD confirmed that two sites had been reserved in the project area for the construction of eight schools. Miss LAU urged the Administration to ensure that the completion of the schools would tie in with the population intake in the area.

55. Mr IP Kwok-him and Miss Emily LAU sought clarification on the proposed re-provisioning of affected village houses referred to in paragraph 3(i) of the paper and the rezoning of an area of 3.4 hectares at the north of Po Tong Ha and Tsz Tin Tsuen from "Green Belt" to "Village Type Development".

56. In response, DTD clarified that 0.4 hectare of private land with existing village house development had to be resumed to facilitate the planned housing developments and thus, re-provisioning of these affected village houses had been included under this project. As regards the land rezoning, he explained that when consulted on this project, the Tuen Mun Rural Committee (TMRC) was concerned that the reduction of land zoned "Village Type Development" in Area 54 to facilitate the planned housing developments would affect the availability of land for building small houses for the indigenous villagers nearby, namely, Kei Lun Wai, Tsz Tin Tsuen, Siu Hang Tsuen and Po Tong Ha. To address their concern, the Administration had rezoned an area of 3.4 hectares at the north of Po Tong Ha and Tsz Tin Tsuen from "Green Belt" to "Village Type Development". According to the assessment of the Lands Department, the rezoned area would be sufficient to meet the demand for small houses from the four villages in question in the next ten years. He further explained that under the relevant policy, the Government would, where necessary, designate land for "Village Type Development" to meet the demand for small houses from indigenous inhabitants.

57. DTD and the Chief Engineer/New Territories West Development Office, Territory Development Department further advised that the rezoning of 3.4 hectares of land from "Green Belt" to "Village Type Development" had been gazetted under the Town Planning Ordinance and four objections had been received in response. The objections had been considered and overruled by the Town Planning Board but had not yet been considered by the Executive Council.

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58. Miss Emily LAU expressed concern about the environmental implications of the land rezoning. At her request, the Administration agreed to provide, before the relevant Finance Committee meeting, information on the current conditions of the area to be rezoned and the details of the four objections.

59. The item was voted on and endorsed.

HEAD 708 - CAPITAL SUBVENTIONS AND MAJOR SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT

PWSC(2000-01)20 18EA A 30-classroom Primary School in Diocesan Boys' School campus at 131 Argyle Street, Kowloon

60. Mr Albert CHAN reiterated his grave concern about the high construction cost for the school projects submitted to this Subcommittee and considered the estimated construction cost of \$129.1 million for the school project under the present proposal exceptionally high. In response, CTA/SP, ArchSD referred to Enclosure 2 to the discussion paper and advised that additional costs were required under this project for the demolition and site formation works and the construction of an elevated road, which normally were not required for new school projects. The higher estimated cost for the piling works was due to the proximity of the site to an existing slope and hence, the need to adopt a special piling method. The estimated costs for the other items of this project were comparable to the reference costs for a standard 30-classroom primary school.

61. The Assistant Director for Education (Special Duties) supplemented that the quarter for the school principal was currently located at the project site, which was not a level ground and was not provided with a proper vehicular access. It was therefore necessary to demolish the quarter and level off the site to provide a platform for the new school building. A new elevated road was also required to provide a proper vehicular access (which would also serve as the emergency vehicular access) for the school.

62. Mr Albert CHAN questioned whether the present project design or planned works methods were cost-effective and sought information on the measures taken within the Administration to ensure cost-effectiveness of this project. In reply, CTA/SP, ArchSD advised that at the planning stage of the project, the Administration had asked the consultant engaged by the School Authority to provide design options for the project. Having scrutinized the consultant's proposals, the Administration considered that the project design as currently proposed was the most cost-effective.

63. The item was voted on and endorsed.
64. Mr Albert CHAN stated that although Members of the Democratic Party supported the present proposal, they maintained their grave concern about the high cost for school projects proposed to this Subcommittee.
65. The meeting ended at 4:35 pm.

Legislative Council Secretariat
24 May 2001