

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. PWSC169/00-01

(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/F/2/2

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

**Minutes of the 20th meeting
held in the Chamber of Legislative Council Building
on Wednesday, 13 June 2001, at 10:45 am**

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

Prof Hon NG Ching-fai

Hon CHAN Yuen-han

Hon CHAN Kam-lam

Hon SIN Chung-kai

Hon Andrew WONG Wang-fat, JP

Hon WONG Yung-kan

Hon LAU Kong-wah

Hon Mrs Miriam LAU Kin-yee, JP

Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP

Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo

Hon LAW Chi-kwong, JP

Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, 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:

Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong

Member absent:

Hon James TO Kun-sun

Public officers attending:

Miss Elizabeth TSE	Deputy Secretary for the Treasury
Mr S S LEE, JP	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 John LEUNG	Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and Manpower (9)
Mr Peter P Y LEUNG	Assistant Director of Education (Special Duties)
Mr P L KWAN, JP	Deputy Director of Architectural Services
Mr William SHIU	Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport (4)
Mr Y C LO, JP	Director of Highways
Mr L T MA	Government Engineer/Railway Development, Highways Department
Mr William CHUNG	Chief Engineer/Priority Railway, Transport Department
Ms Shirley LAM	Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport (5)
Mr K K NG	Deputy Project Manager/Major Works (3), Highways Department
Mr Tony SO	Chief Engineer/Strategic Roads, Transport Department
Mr Daniel CHENG	Principal Assistant Secretary for Planning and Lands (Planning)
Mr H K WONG, JP	Director of Territory Development
Mr K H CHU	Chief Engineer (New Territories West 2), Territory Development Department
Ms TAI Yuen-ying, Alice	The Ombudsman
Mr LAI Kwok-ying, Albert, JP	Government Property Administrator
Ms CHANG King-yiu, JP	Deputy Director of Administration
Mr HUI Chiu-kin	Chief Property Services Manager, Architectural Services Department
Ms Michelle LI	Principal Assistant Secretary for Education Manpower (1)

Mr Jack CHAN	Deputy Secretary-General (1), University Grants Committee
Mr K S SHUM	Chief Technical Advisor/Subvented Projects, Architectural Services Department

Clerk in attendance:

Miss Polly YEUNG	Chief Assistant Secretary (1)3
------------------	--------------------------------

Staff in attendance:

Ms Pauline NG	Assistant Secretary General 1
Ms Anita SIT	Senior Assistant Secretary (1)8

The Chairman said that before the Subcommittee commenced the consideration of funding proposals, he would like to seek members' views on the Financial Secretary (FS)'s recent comments on the work of the Subcommittee as reported by the press. He referred to the press article circulated to members before the meeting (vide LC Paper No. 146/00-01) and the information sheet tabled at the meeting setting out the attendance rate of members, number of agenda items and number of items dealt with at each of the meetings held in the 2000-01 legislative session so far. He highlighted that the Subcommittee had originally scheduled 11 meetings and had already scheduled nine additional meetings. The time slot and venue have also been reserved for a 10th additional meeting, if necessary. Despite the high frequency of meetings, the attendance rate of members had generally been very high. He said that in contrast to FS's comment that the Subcommittee was able to deal with only two items at each meeting, the Subcommittee had been able to deal with about five items at each meeting on average, and for the 2000-01 legislative session, the Subcommittee had dealt with 91 items up to the last meeting on 6 June 2001, compared to a total of 93 items processed in the entire 1999-2000 session.

2. The Chairman stressed that it was the duty of members to seek clarification on any points of doubt in public works proposals, and he considered it necessary to allow members to raise queries relevant to the proposals. In fact, the time spent on the examination of each item varied according to the complexity of the project, the adequacy and clarity of information provided in the discussion paper, the usefulness of the answers of Government officials to members' questions etc. He also observed that the Subcommittee had been asked to consider quite a number of large-scale and complicated projects items during this session.

3. Mr Albert CHAN said that he was very surprised at and disappointed with FS's comments, which were factually incorrect and unfair to the Subcommittee, as well as

the civil service staff involved in various areas of work. Mr CHAN pointed out that if the comments as reported by the press had actually been made by FS, FS would owe the Subcommittee an open apology. He suggested that the Chairman should write to FS to convey members' views and explain the work of the Subcommittee to FS.

4. Miss Emily LAU said that she was shocked by FS's comments. According to the press reports, he had made the comments after a meeting of the Task Force on Employment and after a meeting with some Legislative Council Members on another occasion. She considered that the comments had adversely reflected on the work of the Subcommittee and were detrimental to the relationship between the legislature and the executive government. Miss LAU said that after reading the relevant press articles, she had contacted the Chairman and the Clerk to the Subcommittee. As she was given to understand that FS had not sought relevant information from the Chairman or the LegCo Secretariat before making the comments, she agreed with Mr Albert CHAN that the Chairman should raise the matter with FS.

5. The Chairman confirmed that prior to the press report, FS had not discussed with him about the Subcommittee's work. He informed members that he had contacted the Secretary for the Treasury on Saturday, 9 June 2001, and had notified her that he would raise the matter at this meeting. On the following Monday, FS had approached him. During the telephone conversation, FS mentioned that his colleagues had informed him that the Subcommittee only processed about two items at each meeting. The Chairman further remarked that his impression was that FS was deeply concerned about the timely implementation of public works projects and hoped that all parties concerned, including the Subcommittee, would work in close collaboration in this regard.

6. Miss Emily LAU remarked that as briefly reported by the Chairman, there was no doubt that FS had actually mentioned that the Subcommittee had processed only two proposals per meeting in general. She considered that instead of criticizing the Subcommittee, the Administration should work to streamline its own cumbersome administrative procedures in order to expedite the implementation of projects.

7. The Deputy Secretary for the Treasury (DS/Tsy) said that she was not in a position to comment on the relevant press reports since she was not present and did not know what the context was when the reference to two items per meeting was made. However, as a representative of the Administration attending PWSC meetings, she would like to make the following points -

- (a) As the Chairman had pointed out, the Subcommittee had convened a number of special meetings to enable timely consideration of proposals and so far, the Subcommittee had already dealt with as many items as for the entire 1999-2000 session. She fully appreciated members' efforts in scrutinizing the public works proposals.

- (b) The Administration fully recognized that in the course of seeking funding approval, it had the duty to provide adequate information and thorough explanation for each and every proposal.
- (c) To facilitate the deliberation of this Subcommittee, the Finance Bureau (FB) had urged various bureaux to consult the relevant LegCo Panel(s) on all major/controversial projects before submission to this Subcommittee. FB had reminded bureaux and departments to endeavour to provide, before the relevant meeting of this Subcommittee, supplementary information in response to Panel members' concerns and queries. Bureaux and departments had also taken the initiative to approach individual members to obtain their views on some funding proposals before they were considered by this Subcommittee.
- (d) Seeking funding approval was only one important stage of the entire project implementation process. To enable timely and expeditious implementation of capital works projects, the Administration would continue its efforts to streamline the various planning and implementation procedures for public works projects.

8. In this connection, the Chairman advised that to enable members to have sufficient time to peruse PWSC proposals, at the start of this session, he had explicitly requested the Administration to provide discussion papers for this Subcommittee five clear days before the relevant meeting in accordance with the relevant provision in the PWSC Procedure.

9. Mr IP Kwok-him concurred that FS's comments as reported by the press were not factually correct. He however opined that it would be prudent for the Subcommittee to first seek clarification from FS on the reasons and background for those remarks before the Subcommittee took a firm view.

10. Miss CHAN Yuen-han agreed that the Chairman should seek clarification from FS. She pointed out that as a result of changes in political culture over the past years, the implementation of public works projects had inevitably aroused a lot of concern in the society as a whole and in local communities. In this regard, DS/Tsy concurred with Miss CHAN's concern and stressed that the Administration attached much importance to public consultation for public works projects and where practicable, had strived to advance the consultation process to a much earlier stage.

11. Mr Fred LI recalled that FS had also expressed concern about the pace of the Subcommittee's deliberation on public works proposals at a recent meeting with Members of the Democratic Party. He suggested that the Chairman should express regret for FS's comments on behalf of this Subcommittee, and provide FS with the information tabled at this meeting.

12. Mr Henry WU said that LegCo Members were responsible for monitoring the use of public funds. He expressed regret about FS's comments as reported in the press and considered it appropriate for the Subcommittee to seek clarification. He also remarked that discussion at the Subcommittee had proved to be useful in bringing about improvements to some proposals.

13. Mr LAU Ping-cheung said that some Government officials had expressed concern to him in private about the pace of the Subcommittee's scrutiny of public works proposals. Hence, he considered it a good opportunity for the Subcommittee to explain the Subcommittee's work to the public and to the Administration.

14. Summing up, the Chairman pointed out that the construction industry in general shared the view that public works projects were often taken on board very slowly. The delay was mainly attributable to cumbersome administrative procedures and land resumption problems, rather than to the deliberations of this Subcommittee. The Chairman then sought members' view on the position to be taken by the Subcommittee in his letter to FS.

15. Miss Emily LAU opined that in his letter to FS, the Chairman should highlight the fact that FS had not sought verification with the Chairman or with the LegCo Secretariat on the Subcommittee's work before making his comments and that the Subcommittee was very dismayed and regretful about this approach.

16. Mr IP Kwok-him reiterated his view that the Chairman should seek clarification from FS on the background and context of his comments before the Subcommittee took a position on the matter. Mr LAU Ping-cheung and Mr Kenneth TING shared Mr IP's view.

17. Mrs Miriam LAU agreed that FS should first be given the opportunity to provide clarification on the matter. She considered that to a certain extent, this incident reflected the thinking of some Government officials on the Subcommittee's work. However, the Administration should find ways to improve the situation rather than making criticisms.

18. Taking into consideration members' views, the Chairman concluded that he would write to FS to seek clarification on the background of his comments and to explain to FS the Subcommittee's work. He would also convey the Subcommittee's concerns and its surprise on noting the media reports. Members agreed.

(Post-meeting note: A copy of the Chairman's letter to FS has been circulated to members vide LC Paper No. PWSC150/00-01.)

HEAD 708 - CAPITAL SUBVENTIONS AND MAJOR SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT

PWSC(2001-02)44	29ED	Redevelopment of Hong Chi Pinehill School, Tai Po
	30ED	Redevelopment of Hong Chi Pinehill No. 3 School, Tai Po

19. In reply to Mr Kenneth TING and Prof NG Ching-fai's enquiries about the recurrent expenditure of No. 1 School and No. 3 School after redevelopment, the Assistant Director of Education (Special Duties) (AD/E(SD)) advised that after redevelopment, the estimated annual recurrent expenditure of the two schools would be \$14.5 million and \$28.8 million respectively. He explained that compared to ordinary schools, these two special schools would provide more comprehensive care services including residential accommodation and physiotherapy for students. Hence, the special schools would incur relatively higher recurrent expenditure.

20. Noting that the total floor area of the existing No. 1 School and No. 3 School was 72% and 75% less than that of the standard provision respectively, Mr Henry WU queried the reasons for the substantial shortfall. In reply, AD/E(SD) explained that the significant difference was mainly due to the gradual improvements made to the standard designs for both regular and special schools over the past few decades. He remarked that the total floor area of those schools built in the early 90s was also some 30% to 40% less than that of the current standard provision. He also informed members that the existing total floor area of No. 1 School and No. 3 School was about 1 200 square metres (m²) and 1 600 m² respectively. The total floor area of a standard Year 2000 design school for moderately mentally handicapped children was about 4 500 m² and for severely mentally handicapped children was 6 500 m². Miss Emily LAU shared Mr Henry WU's concern. They urged the Administration to expedite its work on improving the facility provision for existing special schools.

21. In reply to Prof NG Ching-fai, AD/E(SD) advised that in drawing up the Year 2000 design for special schools, the Administration had taken into account the special needs of mentally and physically handicapped children and had made reference to the design of special schools in overseas countries. He informed members that the facility provision under the Year 2000 design was indeed one of the best school designs worldwide.

22. In reply to Mr Henry WU's enquiry about the provision of soft landscaping facilities such as green corners for the two schools, AD/E(SD) advised that at present, there were already a lot of trees and plants in the Pinehill Village where the two schools and other institutions run by voluntary agencies were located. AD/E(SD) also advised that the two parking areas shown on the layout plan attached to the discussion paper

would be used as lay-bys for the loading and unloading of passengers. There would be adequate carparking spaces provided within the school premises.

23. Noting that after redevelopment, No. 3 School would provide 80 school places for severely mentally handicapped children but only 60 boarding places, Mr Henry WU sought clarification on the apparent shortfall in boarding places. AD/E(SD) explained that the current policy was to allocate special school places according to the place of residence of students. Where practicable, parents were encouraged to take care of their mentally handicapped children, especially the younger ones, after school hours. Hence, not all students attending No. 3 School would require a boarding place. The planned provision of boarding places should be sufficient to meet the demand for the facility.

24. Noting that improvements to No. 2 School would be carried out under the School Improvement Programme (SIP), Miss Emily LAU enquired about the current space provision for the school and the improvement plan for the school. AD/E(SD) advised that the total floor area of No. 2 School was also some 70% less than the current standard provision. The school had been included in the last phase of the SIP. Whether the improvement option or the redevelopment option would be pursued for the school would depend on the results of the feasibility study to be carried out under the SIP.

25. On the arrangements for temporary accommodation for No. 3 School during the construction period, AD/E(SD) advised that renovation works costing about \$10 million were being carried out at No. 2 School and the Hong Chi Pinehill Advanced Training Centre to provide temporary accommodation, including boarding facilities, for No. 3 School. He clarified that the renovation works at No. 2 School did not form part of the improvement works under the SIP.

26. Mr Henry WU noted that No. 1 School had already been reprovisioned to the former Tai Po Government Primary School on 1 September 2000 and the No. 1 School premises had not been put to any use since then. He suggested that for future school redevelopment projects, the related reprovisioning arrangements should tie in with the timing of funding proposals to avoid wasting resources. The Administration took note of the suggestion.

Admin

27. In reply to Miss Emily LAU's enquiry about the demand and supply of special school places, AD/E(SD) advised that the current demand and supply of special school places for moderately mentally handicapped children in the Tai Po and the North District region were some 180 places and 200 places respectively. As regards school places for severely mentally handicapped children, the current demand and supply in the region were 94 places and 110 places respectively. It was estimated that upon redevelopment, the provision of special school places for moderately and severely mentally handicapped children in the region would be sufficient to meet the demand up to year 2004-05.

28. Mr LAU Ping-cheung noted that prefabricated building elements would be used for the proposed redevelopment works to reduce the generation of construction and demolition (C&D) materials and enquired whether the Administration would consider using these elements in other school projects. In reply, the Deputy Director of Architectural Services advised that in those school projects where three or more schools were built concurrently, the Architectural Services Department had already actively considered the use of prefabricated building elements and required the contractor to adopt the prefabrication approach under the contract.

29. Miss Emily LAU said that although the Administration had explained in the discussion paper that the high proportion (35%) of C&D waste generated under the two school projects was due to the complete demolition of two existing school premises, she still considered the proportion too high to be acceptable. She recalled that the Administration had agreed at the meeting on 31 May 2001 to provide information on the cost incurred for disposal of C&D waste at landfills in future submissions to PWSC. She enquired when the information would be available and whether the cost would be counted towards the overall project cost. In reply, DS/Tsy confirmed that the relevant information would be included in the submissions for the next and future meetings. The cost estimate would be provided for reference only and would not be included as part of the project estimate. The Chairman said that the Subcommittee might further discuss the issue having regard to the information to be provided in the forthcoming proposals.

30. The item was voted on and endorsed.

HEAD 706 – HIGHWAYS

PWSC(2001-02)47	40TR	West Rail (Phase 1) - essential public infrastructure works for the Kam Tin section - remaining works
------------------------	-------------	--

31. Members noted that the present proposal had been discussed at the Panel on Transport on 7 May 2001.

32. The Chairman and Mr LAU Ping-cheung declared interest that the firms they worked for had been engaged by the Kowloon Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC) to provide consultancy services for some capital works projects.

33. In reply to Mr Albert CHAN and Miss Emily LAU's enquiries about the measures to prevent flooding caused by the proposed essential public infrastructure works (EPIW), the Director of Highways (DHy) advised that for all public works projects, the contractors concerned were responsible for ensuring that the relevant works would not cause flooding or aggravate the flooding situation in the areas

concerned. Relevant provisions were included in the works contracts to require the contractor to undertake all necessary measures for such purposes. He added that the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC) would be entrusted the proposed EPIW and the drainage works in the same area under a separate project. If the contractor, under the supervision of KCRC, complied with the relevant requirements in the works contracts, the proposed works should not cause flooding or aggravate the flooding situation in the area.

34. In this connection, the Chairman informed members that the issue of flooding control had been discussed at a special meeting of the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works held at 9:00 am on the same day.

35. Mr LAU Ping-cheung enquired whether there would be architectural input in drawing up the design for the proposed footbridge. In reply, DHy advised that the KCRC, to which the proposed EPIW would be entrusted, would be required to submit the design and the specification of construction materials for the proposed footbridge to the Advisory Committee on the Appearance of Bridges and Associated Structures for approval. The said committee included representatives from the architectural profession.

36. Mr LAU Ping-cheung recalled that in another proposal (PWSC(2001-02)36) for the construction of seven schools in Area 86 in Tseung Kwan O, members were informed that the Mass Transit Railway Corporation Limited (MTRCL) had agreed to absorb the associated on-costs arising from the school projects. Noting that an on-cost at 16.5% of the project base cost would be payable to KCRC for undertaking the technical studies, design and construction supervision of the proposed EPIW, he sought clarification on the circumstances under which the payment of on-cost for entrustment projects would be required.

37. In reply, DS/Tsy advised that normally, an on-cost would be payable to the party to which a Government project was entrusted and the on-cost would be included in the relevant project estimate. The proposal for the seven schools in Area 86 of Tseung Kwan O was an exceptional case. In consideration that the seven schools would form an integral part of MTRCL's Tseung Kwan O depot development within Area 86, MTRCL had agreed to absorb the associated on-costs for the design and construction supervision for the schools under that project.

38. Miss Emily LAU enquired whether apart from the proposed footbridge, other pedestrian crossing facilities would be provided along the proposed new road. In reply, DHy and the Chief Engineer/Priority Railway, Transport Department (CE/PR,TD) advised that there was heavy pedestrian traffic between Ng Ka Tsuen and Po Tei Road at present and the proposed footbridge would cater for this pedestrian traffic. Apart from the footbridge, there would be pedestrian crossing facilities provided at the junction of the proposed new road and Kam Sheung Road and at another junction near the planned public transport interchange at Kam Sheung Road Station of the West Rail.

Consideration would be given to providing additional pedestrian crossing facilities between these two junctions if there was such a need in future. Miss Emily LAU urged the Administration to closely monitor the situation with a view to ensuring adequate pedestrian crossing facilities.

39. Miss Emily LAU queried why only indirect noise mitigation measures would be provided for the Lutheran Kam Sheung Church, village house of Ng Ka Tsuen and Kam Kwong Kindergarten. In reply, DHy advised that under this project, noise barriers of varied heights would be provided at different locations along the proposed new road. However, due to various reasons such as fire safety, road entrance, possible sight blockage for road users, the presence of bus stops etc, it was not feasible to erect noise barriers at the road sections in front of the aforesaid premises. Hence, indirect noise mitigation measures would be provided at these premises instead.

40. Noting that the traffic noise impact of the proposed new road had been assessed on the basis of the traffic projections up to year 2018, Miss Emily LAU enquired whether the same basis was being used for assessing the noise impact of other road projects. In reply, the Director of Environmental Protection (DEP) advised that generally speaking, the noise impact assessment for a new road was made on the basis of the highest potential impact when the road would be operating at peak capacity. The timing of the optimum situation varied from case to case and in the case of the presently proposed new road, the findings of the EIA report indicated that some noise sensitive receivers along the proposed road would be exposed to traffic noise exceeding the established standards and criteria by 2018.

41. In reply to Mr Albert CHAN's enquiry about the planting of trees along the road divider of the proposed new road, DHy advised that the width of the road divider would be two to five metres. Trees would be planted at five-metre intervals while shrubs would be planted wherever feasible. He added that planting trees at shorter intervals might cause sight blockage to road users.

42. The item was voted on and endorsed.

**PWSC(2001-02)52 711TH Route 9 between Tsing Yi and Cheung
Sha Wan**

43. Members noted that the present proposal had been discussed at the Panel on Transport on 7 May 2001.

44. Miss Emily LAU sought elaboration on the assessment that the provision of seven-metre high noise barriers in lieu of three-metre high ones would reduce the noise levels at Sites Nos. 6 and 10 at the northern part of West Kowloon Reclamation by only less than one dB(A). In response, DEP explained that the predicted noise levels of 70 dB(A) and 69.5 dB(A) at the two sites with the provision of three-metre high noise

barriers and seven metre high ones respectively revealed that the provision of higher noise barriers would only bring about minimal reduction in noise level. This was because the two sites were already subject to high ambient noise impact caused by existing traffic in the area and it would not be feasible to retrofit noise barriers on the existing roads. Hence, it was considered appropriate to provide three-metre high noise barriers for both sites. The Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport (PAS(T)) added that installation of seven-metre high noise barriers in lieu of three-metre high ones would cause greater adverse visual impact for the future residential developments, in particular the housing flats at lower storeys. The Chairman concurred that the height of noise barriers was not proportionate to their noise mitigation effect. He remarked that apart from visual impact, high noise barriers might impede air circulation. He also expressed his personal view that it was more desirable to adopt other noise mitigation measures, such as re-alignment of the roads concerned.

45. Mr TAM Yiu-chung conveyed the concern of the local community about the adequacy of the proposed noise mitigation measures and enquired whether further noise mitigation measures would be taken. PAS(T) advised that the Administration had liaised with the Housing Authority (HA), the developer of Sites Nos. 6 and 10, on the matter. HA had confirmed that the traffic noise factor had been taken into account in determining the orientation of the planned housing blocks so as to minimize the noise impact on the future housing units. Besides, low-noise road surfacing would be provided on the proposed Route 9. With implementation of these mitigation measures, the noise impact on the future residential developments would not exceed the statutory noise limit.

46. Noting that the Sham Shui Po Provisional District Board (SSPDB) was last consulted on the project in September 1999, Miss Emily LAU enquired about the long time gap between the consultation and the submission of the present proposal. She also sought clarification on the view of SSPDB on the provision of three-metre high noise barriers vis-a-vis seven-metre high ones. In reply, the Deputy Project Manager/Major Works (3), Highways Department (DPM/MW(3),HyD) advised that the consultation with SSPDB was conducted before the commencement of the detailed design for the project. As at present, the Administration had substantially completed the detailed design for the Phase 1 works, with which the present proposal was concerned. He also confirmed that in September 1999, the Administration had explained to the Environmental Committee of SSPDB that the proposed noise mitigation measures would be adequate to bring the noise level to 70dB(A) or below, and that the provision of seven-metre high noise barriers in lieu of three-metre high ones would only result in minimal reduction in the noise impact. The committee had taken note of the explanation but the majority of the committee members still held the view that seven-metre high noise barriers should be installed. They also asked that their views be presented to the Finance Committee for information.

47. Miss Emily LAU referred to the section plan at Enclosure 2B and enquired why the western side of proposed Ramp G and the planned Mass Transit Railway (MTR)

track to the west of West Kowloon Highway would not be provided with noise barriers. In reply, DHy advised that the Tung Chung Line of the MTR would connect with the West Rail at Nan Cheong Station and therefore two additional MTR tracks would be constructed, one on each side of the existing MTR tracks. Noise barriers would be installed on the eastern side of proposed Ramp G and the planned MTR track to the east of West Kowloon Highway to mitigate the traffic noise impact on Sites Nos. 6 and 10. According to the land use plan, most of the sites to the west of the MTR tracks were noise non-sensitive receivers. At Miss Emily LAU's request, DHy agreed to check and report on the land use of these sites and review the need for noise barriers for these sites if necessary.

Admin

48. In reply to Mr LAU Ping-cheung's enquiry on the feasibility of splitting the road works into two or more contract packages, DHy referred to the works items set out in paragraph 14 and advised that the works for "roads and drains", "elevated highway structures", "noise barriers" and "landscaping works" were basically civil engineering works. To ensure better interfacing and to avoid disputes between different contractors working on the same site, these works items would be awarded under one contract. The works for "road lighting" however would be awarded under a separate contract.

49. Mr LAU Ping-cheung suggested that information on whether and how the relevant proposed works would be split into contract packages be provided in future proposals. Miss CHAN Yuen-han shared Mr LAU's view. Mr Albert CHAN opined that it would be more appropriate to include such information in respect of large-scale projects only.

50. Mr Andrew CHENG recalled that the Administration had provided supplementary information on, inter alia, the contract packages under the Route 9 projects subsequent to the Panel discussion on 7 May 2001. He considered that members might take the opportunity of Panel discussion to request the provision of additional information on funding proposals if considered necessary or appropriate.

51. In this connection, the Chairman considered that there was a need to strike a balance between the provision of comprehensive information and the need to maintain conciseness of proposals. He said that it might be more appropriate for the Administration to decide whether information on contract packages should be provided in individual proposals having regard to the nature and scale of the projects concerned. Members agreed.

Admin

52. In reply to Mr Andrew CHENG's enquiry about the timing of the funding proposals for other sections of Route 9, PAS(T) advised that Route 9 would be implemented under two projects, namely, 711TH - "Route 9 between Tsing Yi and Cheung Sha Wan" (Route 9 - TYCSW) and 694TH - "Route 9 between Cheung Sha Wan and Sha Tin". The current plan was to complete both projects in 2007. Funding was hereby sought for the construction of the Ngong Shuen Chau Viaduct (NSCV) in advance of other parts of project 711TH to enable better interfacing with the West Rail

project. The Administration planned to seek funds in October 2001 for part of the works under project 694TH which would also involve interfacing with the East Rail - Ma On Shan Extension project.

53. Mr Albert CHAN expressed concern that part of the proposed transport facilities might become abortive due to the possible delay of the Container Terminal No. 9 (CT9) development project which would result in a substantial reduction of the future traffic flow on Route 9. He thus sought information on how the CT9 project would affect the Route 9 projects.

54. In response, DHy advised that a supporting tower of the northern section of the Stonecutters Bridge would be built within the CT9 site. Construction of the southern section of the bridge would commence in 2003 while construction of the northern section could only commence after the developer of CT9 had handed over the relevant site which was scheduled for 2004. In view of the relatedness of the Route 9 and CT9 projects, the Administration would closely monitor the progress of the CT9 project.

55. Reiterating his concern that the possible delay of the CT9 project would have an impact on the Route 9 projects, Mr Albert CHAN requested and the Administration agreed to provide, before the relevant Finance Committee meeting, information on the present position of the CT9 project and on how the possible delay of the latter would affect the Route 9 projects.

Admin

56. Mr Albert CHAN remarked that the estimated cost for the proposed works appeared to be lower than the cost for other projects of a similar scale. In reply, DHy advised that the estimated unit construction cost for the proposed NSCV, which was about \$18,000 per m², had been worked out based on recent tender prices. It was slightly lower than the construction cost of recent similar projects. He added that the Administration had provided a cost breakdown of the two Route 9 projects in the supplementary information paper provided to the Transport Panel (LC Paper No. CB(1)1408/00-01(01)).

57. Noting that the forecast peak hour volume/capacity (V/C) ratios in Ting Kau Bridge (TKB) in 2011 and 2016 would be 1.0 and 1.1 respectively with Route 9 - TYCSW, Mr Henry WU sought clarification on the circumstances under which TKB would be converted to dual 4-lane configuration. He also queried whether it would be more desirable to convert TKB to dual 4-lane operation at an earlier stage to ensure that it had sufficient capacity to cope with the increased traffic.

58. In reply, PAS(T) and the Chief Engineer/Strategic Roads, Transport Department (CE/SR,TD) advised that with Route 9 - TYCSW, the local traffic in Tsuen Wan and Lai Chi Kok would be improved as some traffic would be diverted to Route 9 and TKB. Although the traffic volume of TKB would increase with Route 9 - TYCSW, TKB would still have sufficient capacity to cope with the increased traffic until 2016 when the V/C ratio would reach 1.1, which indicated the onset of

congestion. As the conversion of TKB to dual 4-lane configuration would not require a long time, the Administration considered that there was no immediate urgency to carry out such conversion works. They assured members that the Administration would closely monitor the traffic condition of TKB and carry out the conversion works in a timely manner, if necessary.

59. Mr LAU Ping-cheung enquired about the traffic arrangements at the Container Port Road South during the construction of the new roads at Stonecutters Island. In reply, DHy advised that the proposed elevated carriageways would be constructed using the segmental launching method. The construction of the road segments would be carried out off site and the erection of the completed segments would be carried out during night time. Hence, the works would not cause disruption to the normal operation of the Container Terminal No. 8 (CT8) and the Container Port Road South. He further advised that upon completion of the elevated carriageways, works would be carried out for the realignment of the Container Port Road South and other associated road works. The existing Container Port Road South would remain in operation during these construction works.

60. Mr Henry WU enquired whether any form of compensation would be paid to the operator of CT8 for the permanent alienation and temporary occupation of land along CT8. In reply, DHy advised that a total of 150 000 square metres of land on Stonecutters Island and in West Kowloon would be acquired for the proposed transport facilities. The land would be acquired in phases in the course of works to avoid causing undue disruption to the operation of CT8. To compensate for the permanent alienation of land, the Government would re-provision some land acquired under the West Rail project for CT8. The Government would also pay rent to the operator of CT8 for the temporary occupation of 4 660 m² of land in CT8.

61. Mr Henry WU enquired whether the proposed works during and after construction would affect the operation of the barracks on Stonecutters Island and whether the Administration had liaised with the relevant authority in this regard. In reply, the Deputy Project Manager/Major Works (3), Highways Department (DPM/MW, HD) advised that the proposed works would only occupy some land along the northern part of the existing Container Port Road South on Stonecutters Island. Hence, it was not envisaged that the proposed works would cause disruption to the operation of the barracks. He however agreed to notify the relevant authority of the proposed works as appropriate.

62. In reply to Mr SIN Chung-kai's enquiry, DHy and DPM/MW,HyD advised that the navigational clearance of the proposed Stonecutters Bridge would be 73.5 metres. The design for the bridge, which had taken into account the navigational clearance requirement for the future third-generation container vessels, had been cleared with the Marine Department and the Pilotage Advisory Committee

63. The item was voted on and endorsed.

HEAD 707 - NEW TOWNS AND URBAN AREA DEVELOPMENT

**PWSC(2001-02)45 225CL Hung Shui Kiu development, stage II -
remaining engineering infrastructure
and site formation works**

64. On the impact of the proposed works on the existing vegetation in the Hung Shui Kiu area, the Director of Territory Development (DTD) advised that after further examination with the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), it was found that some existing trees grown in the area designated for the proposed district open space (DOS) in Area 1 could be retained. Hence, the number of existing trees to be removed for the proposed works could now be reduced from 97 to 62 trees. He further advised that while the Administration would maximize opportunities to provide landscape planting under this project, due to space constraints, it was not feasible to plant trees or shrubs along the proposed new roads.

65. Mr Henry WU enquired about the age of the existing trees to be removed and that of the 20 trees and shrubs to be planted under this project. Miss Emily LAU echoed the concern of Mr Henry WU. In reply, the Chief Engineer (New Territories West 2), Territory Development Department (CE(NTW2),TDD) advised that according to the results of a recent survey, most of the existing trees in the area were fruit trees and were below eight metres in height. Of the 62 trees proposed to be felled, most were not in healthy condition and the chance of their successful transplantation was slim. The 20 trees to be planted under this project would be about three metres high and based on past experience, these trees would grow rapidly. He added that apart from these 20 trees, LCSD would provide further landscape planting when developing the DOS.

66. In reply to Miss Emily LAU's enquiry on whether there were sites reserved for the construction of schools in the Hung Shui Kiu area, the Principal Assistant Secretary for Planning and Lands (Planning) advised that a site marked with "E" adjacent to Road L1 on the layout plan in Enclosure 1 to the discussion paper had been reserved for construction of a school. He also confirmed that there would be sufficient school places to meet the demand in the Yuen Long and Tuen Mun districts.

67. The item was voted on and endorsed.

68. It was 12:50 pm at this juncture. Members agreed that the Subcommittee would consider item PWSC(2001-02)49 and that the remaining item PWSC(2001-02)51 would be carried over to the next meeting or a special meeting to be arranged.

HEAD 708 - CAPITAL SUBVENTIONS AND MAJOR SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT

PWSC(2001-02)49 16EJ Student hostel - phase 3 (523 places), City University of Hong Kong

69. The Chairman declared interest that was an ex-Council chairman of the City University of Hong Kong (CityU).

70. Mr LAU Ping-cheung declared interest that he was a Council member of CityU.

71. Noting that CityU would contribute 25% of the total project cost for the proposed student hostel, Mr LAU Ping-cheung enquired about the relevant funding arrangement. The Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and Manpower (1) advised that under the existing policy for the provision of publicly-funded student hostel places at UGC-funded institutions, the Government would fund up to 75% of the capital cost of the approved student hostel provision, with the remainder to be met by the respective institutions using private funds. This funding arrangement had been agreed between the Government and the University Grants Committee and had worked well so far. For the project in question, CityU had confirmed that it had secured sufficient funds for the project.

72. In reply to Mr Henry WU's enquiry, the Chief Technical Adviser/Subvented Projects, Architectural Services Department advised that the estimated capital cost per student place under this project was some \$269,000, which was slightly lower than the average capital cost of \$299,000 per student place of recent student hostel projects.

73. The item was voted on and endorsed.

74. At this juncture, Mr IP Kwok-him suggested that the Subcommittee should proceed to consider the remaining item PWSC(2001-02)51 on the purchase and fitting-out of office accommodation for the Office of The Ombudsman (the Office). In support of his suggestion, he said that the proposal in question was a re-submission with revised estimates and there had already been substantial discussion on 16 May 2001, when the proposal was first considered.

75. Mr Albert CHAN supported Mr IP's suggestion and said that he would only raise a few questions on the present proposal.

76. Miss Cyd HO said that it had been agreed earlier on that the meeting would end after the consideration of item PWSC(2001-02)49 and some members including Miss Emily LAU had left the meeting on this understanding. It would not be fair to these members if the Subcommittee now proceeded to consider item PWSC(2001-02)51.

77. Mr IP Kwok-him informed the meeting that he sounded out his suggestion with Miss Emily LAU outside the Council Chamber. Miss LAU had told him that while she would not support the proposal under item PWSC(2001-02)51, she would not object to the Subcommittee proceeding to consider the item if the other members present agreed to the arrangement.

78. Mr Andrew WONG said that so long as the meeting was in progress, the Subcommittee could decide whether it should proceed with the deliberation of agenda items. Since he and Ms Alice TAI, The Ombudsman, would not be able to attend the next meeting on 20 June 2001, he would prefer to deal with item PWSC(2001-02)51 at this meeting.

79. Mr CHAN Kam-lam said that if it was anticipated that deliberation of the remaining item PWSC(2001-02)51 would not take a long time and subject to members' agreement, he would prefer to deal with the item, which was mainly a re-submission, at this meeting instead of deferring it to another meeting.

80. Miss Cyd HO requested that her objection to the arrangement of overturning the earlier agreement and continuing to consider item PWSC(2001-02)51 be recorded.

81. The Chairman asked members present to indicate whether they would agree to the suggestion of continuing the meeting to consider item PWSC(2001-02)51 by a show of hands. Seven members agreed to the suggestion and one member objected. The Chairman therefore said that the Subcommittee would proceed to consider item PWSC(2001-02)51.

HEAD 703 - BUILDINGS

PWSC(2001-02)51	70KA	Purchase and fitting-out of office accommodation for the Office of The Ombudsman
------------------------	-------------	---

82. Mr Albert CHAN sought assurance from the Administration that it would not insist on purchasing Grade A offices, but would also consider Grade B offices if the requirements of the new office could be met. He also stated his view that purchasing two carparking spaces at \$2 million was excessively high and urged the Administration to seriously consider the option of leasing.

83. Mr Eric LI said that as the revised financial provisions under the present proposal were comparable to the standards of office accommodation for similar government offices and represented the expenditure ceiling, he considered the present proposal acceptable. He suggested that the Administration should tender the design and fitting-out for the new office to ensure cost-effectiveness. While he also found the proposed provision of \$2 million for the purchase of two carparking spaces on the high

side, he opined that in deciding between the renting and purchase options, the Administration should not deviate significantly from the yardstick of a payback period of 16 years, which was quoted by the Administration as the yardstick for the proposed purchase of office accommodation for the Office.

84. Mr IP Kwok-him said that Members of the Democratic Alliance for Betterment of Hong Kong supported the proposal in principle but shared some other members' concern about the cost-effectiveness of purchasing two carparking spaces at a price of \$2.0 million.

85. In response, The Ombudsman affirmed that the cost estimates in this proposal represented the upper financial limits for the proposed purchase and fitting-out of the new office accommodation. Having regard to members' views expressed during the discussion on 16 May 2001 and with the assistance of the Government Property Agency (GPA), she had viewed some potentially suitable office premises and the present proposal had been drawn up based on the asking prices of these premises. She assured members that upon the approval of this funding proposal, the Office would continue its search for suitable office premises with the assistance of GPA.

86. As regards carparking spaces, the Government Property Administrator clarified that the estimate of \$2.0 million for two carparking spaces was arrived at by reducing the estimate of \$2.4 million in the previous proposal by 20% to tie in with the same percentage of reduction in the estimate for the purchase of office accommodation. He concurred with members' view that in deciding between the purchase and the renting options, due regard should be given to the length of the payback period.

87. The Ombudsman assured members that she would actively consider, together with the Finance Bureau and GPA, renting carparking spaces if this option was available and was found to be more economical than the purchase option. She confirmed that the Administration would make reference to the anticipated 16-year payback period as the yardstick and agreed to report to this Subcommittee after the decision to purchase a carparking space or not was made.

Admin

88. Miss Cyd HO reiterated her disagreement to members' decision to continue discussion of the item at this meeting. Whilst she did not support the present proposal, she was of the view that if members found the provision of \$2.0 million for purchasing two carparking spaces unjustified, they should not support the proposal unless the Administration agreed to modify it.

89. The item was voted on and endorsed.

90. The meeting ended at 1:13 pm.

Legislative Council Secretariat
5 July 2001