

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. PWSC42/00-01

(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 6th meeting
held in the Chamber of Legislative Council Building
on Wednesday, 13 December 2000, at 8:30 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

Hon CHAN Kam-lam

Hon SIN Chung-kai

Hon Andrew WONG Wang-fat, JP

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 IP Kwok-him, JP

Hon LAU Ping-cheung

Members absent:

Prof Hon NG Ching-fai

Hon James TO Kun-sun

Hon CHAN Yuen-han
Hon WONG Yung-kan
Hon Henry WU King-cheong, BBS
Hon Michael MAK Kwok-fung
Hon WONG Sing-chi

Public officers attending:

Miss Elizabeth TSE	Deputy Secretary for the Treasury
Mr Y C LO	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 Jonathan MCKINLEY	Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs
Mr Alex Y W NG	Principal Environmental Protection Officer
Mr Edward LAW Wing-tak, JP	Assistant Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Administration and Planning)
Mr Paul CHEUNG	Assistant Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Leisure Services)1
Mr Hugh PHILLIPSON, JP	Director of Water Supplies
Mr KWAN Sek-yiu	Assistant Director/New Works, Water Supplies Department
Ms Shirley LAM	Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport
Mr R H LLOYD, JP	Director of Highways
Mr Y C TSE	Chief Engineer/Major Works 2-1, Highways Department
Mr Y M LEE	Chief Traffic Engineer/New Territories West, Transport 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

HEAD 705 - CIVIL ENGINEERING

PWSC(2000-01)74

236RS

Provision of a multi-purpose grass pitch on Sai Tso Wan former landfill

Members noted that the Panel on Home Affairs had discussed the present proposal at its meeting on 14 November 2000.

2. On the reason(s) for employing a third party instead of deploying in-house staff to oversee the design and construction works for the proposed multi-purpose grass pitch, the Director of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Principal Environmental Protection Officer (PEPO) highlighted the need to ensure that the design and construction works would take into account landfill gas control and future ground settlement at the landfill site, as well as the interface with the maintenance and operation of the restoration facilities. The Administration considered that given the short duration of the project, it would be more cost-effective to appoint a third party to oversee the project works than for the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) to set up a special team for the purpose. DEP added that the same approach had been adopted in a number of Government projects tendered in the form of "design-build-and-operate" (DBO) contracts and had proved effective.

3. Mr Kenneth TING suggested that as there were plans to carry out similar projects at other landfill sites in future, the Administration should draw on the experience gained in this project and deploy in-house staff to oversee similar projects in future to reduce costs and develop in-house expertise. In response, PEPO undertook to seriously consider Mr TING's suggestion.

Admin

4. Mr Fred LI and Mr IP Kwok-him sought clarification on the future management and operational arrangements for the proposed facility. They were particularly concerned whether user needs would be adequately taken care of as the facility would be operated by the DBO contractor under the supervision of EPD, and whether there would be potential risks of landfill gases at the site.

5. In response, DEP advised that the maintenance works for a restored landfill site might require decades to complete until the landfill gas had exhausted. However, with proper monitoring of the works, a landfill site could be used for the provision of sporting and recreational facilities without giving rise to safety problems, as had been proven by overseas experience. As EPD would continue to supervise the restoration contractor who had ongoing obligation to maintain the landfill site, the Administration considered it appropriate for EPD to also supervise the DBO contractor during the operation of the proposed facility to avoid interface problems between the two contractors. He assured members that the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (L&CSD) would also be responsible for overseeing the management of the proposed facility through the joint management committee to be set up for the proposed facility.

6. The Assistant Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Leisure Services)1 (AD(LS)1, L&CSD) confirmed that the booking arrangements and charges for the proposed facility would be the same as those for other sporting and recreational facilities under L&CSD's management. The DBO contractor would have no say in determining the charges for the facility.

7. Mr LAU Ping-cheung considered the annual recurrent expenditure of \$3.6 million estimated to arise from the project for high vis-à-vis the estimated construction cost of \$39.9 million. In response, PEPO and AD(LS)1, L&CSD advised that the estimate had been derived with reference to the actual recurrent expenditure of other natural grass pitches under L&CSD's management and covered mainly staff cost and maintenance cost. Members noted that the \$3.6 million was only an estimate and the actual recurrent expenditure for the proposed facility would depend on the terms of the management contract to be negotiated between EPD and the DBO contractor at a later stage.

8. The Chairman enquired about the soil settlement situation of the landfill site in question. PEPO advised that the landfill was disused in 1980 and completely restored in 1998. The extent of ground settlement over the past two years was about 100 millimetres. DEP supplemented that the DBO contractor would be required to carry out the necessary re-leveling works at the proposed grass pitch in view of possible soil settlement in future and the situation would be monitored by EPD.

9. Pointing out that the landfill site was akin to a flat-top small hill, Mr Fred LI was concerned about its accessibility and enquired about the provision of access facilities for users. The Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (PAS/HA) advised that the landfill site was in the proximity of the Lam Tin Mass Transit Railway (MTR) Station and the Lam Tin bus terminus. PEPO supplemented that a footpath would be provided alongside the vehicular access road connecting Sin Fat Road and the site and that the gradient of the access road would not be too steep. It would therefore take only a few minutes' walk to reach the proposed grass pitch from the Lam Tin MTR Station. Mr CHAN Kam-lam referred to the discussion at the Kwun Tong District Council and suggested that a staircase should be provided at a location near the Lam Tin MTR Station for more direct access to the facility. In response, PEPO advised that having considered the cost for maintaining such a staircase at a landfill site and the easy accessibility provided by the said footpath, the Administration was of the view that the provision of an additional staircase was not justified in this case.

10. Mr Fred LI pointed out that the landfill site in question was close to residential developments and urged the Administration to strictly monitor the implementation of environmental mitigation measures during the construction period. The Administration noted his concern.

11. Regarding the progress of the development of sporting and recreational facilities on the landfill sites at Tseung Kwan O (TKO), Shuen Wan and Jordon Valley,

PAS/HA advised that a feasibility study for the TKO site would be completed in one to two months, while the feasibility studies for the other two sites were scheduled for completion in mid 2001. Subject to the results of the studies, the Administration would put up relevant funding proposals in due course.

12. The item was voted on and endorsed.

HEAD 709 - WATERWORKS

PWSC(2000-01)75	224WF	Mainlaying between Sham Tseng and Yau Kom Tau
	238WF	Mainlaying between Sham Tseng and So Kwun Tan

13. Members noted that an information paper on the present proposal had been circulated to the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works on 24 November 2000.

14. Mr Albert CHAN enquired whether the proposed waterworks had taken into account the committed and planned developments in the Sham Tseng and Tuen Mun East areas. He was concerned whether further upgrading works would be required to cater for the population growth in these areas in the foreseeable future. In response, the Director of Water Supplies explained that the main purpose of the proposed waterworks was to reinforce the reliability of the water supply systems for the Sham Tseng and Tuen Mun East areas by linking up the systems rather than to extend the systems to new developments. He however assured members that the increase in demand for water treatment and distribution facilities arising from the planned developments in these areas would be taken into account in other relevant waterworks projects.

15. The item was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2000-01)73	365TH	Castle Peak Road improvement between Area 2 and Sham Tseng, Tsuen Wan
	553TH	Castle Peak Road improvement between Sham Tseng and Ka Loon Tsuen, Tsuen Wan

16. Members noted that the Panel on Transport had taken note of the present proposal at its meeting on 24 November 2000.

17. Miss Emily LAU queried whether the proposed road widening works were justified in view of the serious impact of the project on the surrounding environment and landscape. Noting that the main objectives of the project were

to enhance the safety of road users and to increase the capacity of Castle Peak Road (CPR) to cater for future traffic demand, she queried whether widening CPR was the only option, and whether the safety situation of CPR was so deplorable as to necessitate the proposed works.

18. In response, the Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport (PAS/T) and the Chief Traffic Engineer/New Territories West, Transport Department (CTE/NTW) advised that although traffic between Northwest New Territories and the urban areas could use Tuen Mun Road (TMR) and Route 3, residents of the developments along CPR relied heavily on CPR for access to the urban areas and other places. The existing single two-lane carriageway between Ka Loon Tsuen and Area 2 in Tsuen Wan could not meet the future traffic demand of planned developments along CPR including the future residents of the 16 000 new flats to be built at Tuen Mun Town Lots 423 and 429 and some future residents of the San Miguel Site redevelopment. Miss Emily LAU considered that more precise information on the future traffic demand should be provided to justify the proposed road works.

19. From the safety and traffic engineering point of view, CTE/NTW pointed out that nearly the whole section of CPR in question was sub-standard. For instance, the width of some 3.1 kilometres of the carriageway was below the standard of 7.3 metres, and there were about 12 sharp bends along the road with curvature below the minimum standard. Besides, roadside footpaths were either unavailable or too narrow, posing a safety hazard to pedestrians. The proposed improvement works sought to upgrade the CPR to meet the current standards and, as a result, to enhance road safety.

Admin 20. Miss Emily LAU was not convinced and referred to many other roads in the territory which also had sharp bends. She requested statistics on traffic accidents on CPR and CTE/NTW agreed to provide the information after the meeting. Pending the provision of further information on traffic accidents and traffic demand in respect of CPR, Miss Emily LAU maintained her reservation on the proposed road works.

21. On the environmental aspects, PAS/T emphasized that the Administration was fully aware of the need to strike a balance between meeting traffic demand and environmental preservation, and would therefore implement a series of mitigation measures, notably the provision of noise barriers and the planting of trees along the widened CPR, under the project. The Director of Highways (DHy) added that under this project, some 7 200 trees would have to be felled while some 1 250 existing trees would be retained. However, some 72 000 trees would be planted along the widened CPR and compensatory amenity facilities would be provided to compensate for the required land alienation at the six beaches along CPR.

22. Mr TAM Yiu-chung considered it necessary to carry out the proposed road works lest traffic congestion on CPR would be aggravated by the increased traffic demand. On the other hand, he shared the concern about the environmental

impact of the project and urged the Administration to strictly implement mitigating measures to minimize the impact.

23. Pointing out that there were some container back-up facilities along CPR and the transport trade had called for the widening of CPR to meet increasing freight traffic demand, Mrs Miriam LAU expressed support for the project. She noted that the environmental impact assessment for the project had been endorsed by the Director of Environmental Protection, and therefore trusted that the proposed works should not cause undue environmental impact.

24. On the duration of the construction works, DHy advised that the current plan was to implement the proposed works concurrently under three contracts, commencing in May/June 2001 for completion in mid 2005. Mr TAM Yiu-chung enquired whether some of the proposed road works would affect the visitors to the six gazetted beaches along CPR. The Chief Engineer/Major Works 2-1, Highways Department advised that as far as possible, the road works within the gazetted beaches would be carried out between the months of September and March. The beaches would remain open for swimming during the construction period. Noting that the proposed road works would require permanent alienation of 6 750 square metres (m²) and temporary alienation of 12 620 m² of land from the six gazetted beaches, Mr TAM Yiu-chung enquired about the relevant percentage of land alienation of each beach. The Administration agreed to provide the information after the meeting.

Admin

25. Mr CHAN Kam-lam noted that even with the proposed improvement works, traffic congestion on CPR west of the Sham Tseng Interchange (STI) would again rise in 2011 with a projected volume/capacity (V/C) ratio of 1.17. He thus enquired about plans to address the future congestion problem. Mr Albert CHAN echoed Mr CHAN Kam-lam's concern and commented that the projected V/C ratio of 0.85 for CPR west of STI in year 2005 had been underestimated. He pointed out that as most people using CPR would continue to use STI to change to TMR even after the widening of CPR, congestion at STI would deteriorate if no additional interchange was provided along CPR.

26. In response, CTE/NTW advised that the Administration was undertaking a separate transport study for the Tuen Mun and Yuen Long districts and various options to improve the connection between CPR and other transport networks in the region would be explored. One option considered was to provide an additional interchange at Tsing Lung Tau but preliminary findings revealed substantial engineering difficulties due to the significant height difference of about 60 to 70 metres between TMR and CPR at Tsing Lung Tau. Enlarging the capacity of STI had also been looked into but was found not viable in view of the traffic impact on TMR and Ting Kau Bridge. Indeed, it was in recognition of the need to ease the traffic congestion at STI that the Administration now proposed to widen the section of CPR east of STI to facilitate through traffic between Tuen Mun East and Tsuen Wan via CPR.

27. Mr Albert CHAN declared interest that he was a resident of Belvedere Garden. He noted that while partial enclosures would be provided along the section of Hoi On Road facing Bayview Garden, no mitigation measures had been planned for Belvedere Garden, which was adjacent to Bayview Garden, under this project. He pointed out that both Bayview Garden and Belvedere Garden would be subject to excessive traffic noise impact upon widening of the CPR, and opined that the absence of any provision of noise mitigation measures for Belvedere Garden was unfair and unreasonable.

28. In response, PAS/T and DHy advised that the section of Hoi On Road facing Belvedere Garden was an existing dual-two-lane road outside the boundaries of the proposed road works gazetted under the Roads (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance. They therefore suggested that the provision of noise mitigation measures along this road section should be pursued under the recently announced policy to mitigate the noise impact of existing roads. As in the case of the section of Yuen Shin Road facing Wang Fuk Court (raised by members during the discussion on project 720TH on Tolo Highway and Fanling Highway widening at the meeting on 22 November 2000), the Administration would positively consider the retrofitting of noise barriers along the section of Hoi On Road facing Belvedere Garden in conjunction with this project, subject to the outcome of the consultation on the new policy.

29. Mr Andrew WONG opined that existing roads which would generate excessive traffic noise in the foreseeable future upon completion of planned road works, as in the case of the section of Hoi On Road facing Belvedere Garden, should also be taken into account in drawing up the noise barrier retrofitting programme under the aforesaid new policy. He sought clarification in this regard.

30. In response, DEP advised that a study had been carried out to identify existing roads for retrofitting of noise barriers based on the criteria of engineering feasibility, noise levels and the number of people affected. He confirmed that the study had examined all the roads which generated excessive traffic noise at present or which were likely to generate excessive traffic noise as a result of traffic plans. A list of all the sites so identified would be attached to the information paper for the joint meeting of the Panel on Transport and Panel on Environmental Affairs scheduled for 15 December 2000. DEP also recapitulated that having regard to members' views expressed at the meeting of this Subcommittee on 22 November 2000, the Administration would recommend to Members to consider refining the retrofitting programme to synchronize the timing for retrofitting noise barriers at certain roads with that of the planned road works to be carried out in close proximity. The Chairman advised that details relating to the retrofitting of noise barriers at existing roads should be pursued at the aforesaid joint Panel meeting.

31. Mr Albert CHAN pointed out that the section of CPR in question was along a coastline that provided some of the best scenic views of the territory. The provision of a cycle track along this road section was thus important for sightseeing

purposes and for providing a premium recreational facility. He recapitulated that the Administration had undertaken at the early planning stage to examine the feasibility of providing a cycle track in conjunction with the CPR widening works. Accordingly, he recalled that a cycle track had been included in the preliminary plans presented to the then Tsuen Wan District Board (TWDB) when the latter was consulted on the CPR widening project. However, he noted that the provision of a cycle track had not been included in the project works subsequently gazetted. Mr CHAN further said that on being consulted by him, the chairman and deputy chairman of the Tsuen Wan District Council (TWDC), and the chairman of the Traffic and Transport Committee (TTC) and the Environmental Affairs Committee of TWDC unanimously considered that the present proposal should be rejected and that the Administration should revise the project to re-instate the provision of a cycle track along CPR.

32. In response, PAS/T and DHy clarified that when the Administration presented the findings of the feasibility study for the project to TWDB in March 1997, no cycle track was included under the project. However, Mr Albert CHAN did make a request for the Administration to consider the provision of a cycle track on that occasion. The issue was also raised at the meeting of this Subcommittee in May 1997 when funds were sought for the detailed design for the project. In the subsequent study, an online option and an offline option of providing a cycle track along CPR had been examined. The online option would require resumption of some 3 000 m² of private land, alienation of gazetted beach areas of some 2 500 m², and an estimated construction cost of \$132 million. The offline option would require resumption of private land of some 900 m², alienation of gazetted beach areas of about 5 000 m², and an estimated construction cost of \$186 million. Under either option, at least 20 households would be affected. Moreover, it was found that some 1.2 km length of road would have a gradient of over 4% which was considered too steep for safe cycling according to the relevant standard of the Transport Department. As such, the Administration considered the provision of a cycle track along CPR not viable and had informed TWDB members accordingly at the meeting of the TTC of TWDB on 19 January 1998. According to the notes of the said meeting, TWDB members had not expressed further views on the provision of a cycle track under the project after taking note of the Administration's explanation. Instead, towards the end of the meeting, the chairman of the committee concluded that members were in support of the proposed road widening works, and requested the Highways Department to take into account residents' practical needs in designing the pedestrian crossing facilities along CPR. Thereafter, the Administration proceeded to gazette the proposed road works in June and July 1998.

33. Mrs Miriam LAU said that according to her understanding, even some residents of the developments along CPR considered the proposed road widening necessary. In this connection, she sought clarification on whether it was a consensus view among TWDC that unless a cycle track was provided, they would object to the project. She also stated her view that while the benefits of providing

a cycle track along CPR should be duly examined in conjunction with the proposed road works, it should be recognized that delay in the proposed road works would aggravate the traffic congestion problem which in turn would cause significant economic loss to the community.

34. Mr TAM Yiu-chung remarked that based on the information he had gathered from some TWDC members, it seemed that there was no consensus among TWDC members that they would object to this project unless a cycle track was included.

35. Mr Albert CHAN recalled that TWDB had discussed the project at a number of meetings and had passed a motion on two occasions requesting the Administration to provide a cycle track along CPR. Thereafter, TWDB/TWDC had not withdrawn or revised the request. He considered it misleading to make reference to the records of only one meeting and draw a conclusion that TWDB/TWDC members were in support of the project notwithstanding the absence of the provision of a cycle track. He reiterated that he had consulted the four aforesaid TWDC members and they all considered that the reasons given by the Administration for not providing a cycle track along CPR (i.e. the land resumption requirement and the steep gradients at some sections of CPR) were untenable. Mr CHAN also opined that the slightly steep gradients at certain sections of CPR should not pose insurmountable engineering problems on the provision of a cycle track.

Admin

36. To address members' concern about the views of TWDC on the project, the Chairman requested and the Administration agreed to provide all the relevant records of the discussions on this project by TWDB/TWDC and its Committees for members' reference. In this connection, members also noted that Legislative Council Members would meet TWDC members on 14 December 2000 to discuss issues of mutual concern. Mr SIN Chung-kai suggested that attending Members might take the opportunity to seek clarification from TWDC members about their views on the project.

37. Mr SIN Chung-kai stated his view that the present project should be considered from an overall planning perspective, rather than solely from the angle of meeting traffic demand. He pointed out that there were few roads such as the CPR in the territory that stretched along a coastline with scenic views and urged the Administration to critically re-examine the viability of providing a cycle track along CPR. He suggested that the Commissioner for Tourism should also be consulted on the issue.

38. PAS/T agreed to consult the Commissioner for Tourism on the project, but remarked that if a cycle track was to be included in the project, the Administration would need to revise the project scope in consultation with relevant bureaux/departments. The revised road works would need to be gazetted again as there was insufficient space for the provision of a cycle track within the boundaries of the currently gazetted road works.

39. Mrs Miriam LAU enquired about the extent of delay in the road widening works if a cycle track was to be included in the project. In reply, PAS/T advised that taking into account the time required for a revised design, the gazettal of the revised road works and the subsequent handling of objections, the project would be delayed by at least one to two years. Mr Albert CHAN however commented that as the provision of a cycle track had already been examined in the detailed design study, the Administration should already have adequate basic information for revising the project.

40. The Chairman enquired whether it was feasible to implement the proposed road works and the works for the provision of a cycle track under two separate stages. In reply, PAS/T said that the Administration would be prepared to consider this arrangement. She pointed out that even if the present proposal was approved, the possibility of constructing a cycle track as a separate project in future would not be pre-empted.

41. Mr CHAN Kam-lam opined that if the provision of a continuous cycle track was not technically viable, the Administration could explore the viability of providing the facility at those sections of CPR where such provision was viable. He also suggested that additional facilities be provided at appropriate junctures of CPR for overlooking the beautiful scenery.

Admin 42. Taking note of members' comments and concerns, the Secretary for Planning and Lands agreed that the coastline along CPR provided some of the most beautiful scenic views in the territory and that it was prudent planning to consider the provision of facilities for tourism and recreational purposes along CPR. Taking into account safety considerations and the objective of providing a premium recreational facility, he assured members that the Administration would consider members' views and other viable alternatives and would report back in due course.

43. The Deputy Secretary for the Treasury said that having regard to members' concerns and queries, the Administration would withdraw the present proposal for further consideration.

Admin 44. Mr SIN Chung-kai requested that when the proposal was re-submitted to this Subcommittee, the Administration should provide the views of the Commissioner for Tourism on the provision of tourism and recreational facilities along CPR. Mr Albert CHAN requested the Administration to provide the findings and relevant layout plan(s) in the detailed design consultancy report regarding the provision of a cycle track under the project. The Administration took note of members' requests for follow-up action and supplementary information and would revert accordingly.

45. The item was withdrawn by the Administration.

46. The meeting ended at 10:30 am.

Legislative Council Secretariat

11 January 2001