

立法會

Legislative Council

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(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration and
cleared with the Chairman)

Ref : CB1/PL/TP/1

Legislative Council Panel on Transport

**Minutes of Meeting held on
Monday, 7 May 2001, at 10:45 am
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

Members present : Hon Mrs Miriam LAU Kin-ye, JP (Chairman)
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon David CHU Yu-lin
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, JP
Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-ye, JP
Hon CHAN Kwok-keung
Hon LAU Chin-shek, JP
Hon LAU Kong-wah
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Dr Hon TANG Siu-tong, JP
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon LAU Ping-cheung

Member absent : Hon Andrew WONG Wang-fat, JP

**Public officers
attending** : **Agenda Item I**
Transport Bureau

Ms Shirley LAM
Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport (5)

Transport Department

Mr Y M LEE
Chief Traffic Engineer/New Territories West

Highways Department

Mr Adrian NG
Deputy Project Manager/Major Works

Mr C W CHOW
Chief Engineer

Agenda Item II

Transport Bureau

Ms Shirley LAM
Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport (5)

Transport Department

Mr Tony SO
Chief Engineer/Strategic Roads

Highways Department

Mr Adrian NG
Deputy Project Manager/Major Works

Mr C W CHOW
Chief Engineer

Mr H C WONG
Chief Engineer

Agenda Item III

Transport Bureau

Mr William SHIU
Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport (4)

Transport Department

Mr William CHUNG
Chief Engineer/Priority Railway Division

Highways Department

Mr L T MA
Government Engineer/Railway Development

Mr Duncan SIU
Chief Engineer/West Rail

Clerk in attendance : Mr Andy LAU
Chief Assistant Secretary (1)2

Staff in attendance : Ms Alice AU
Senior Assistant Secretary (1)5

I Reconstruction and improvement of Tuen Mun Road

(LC Paper No. CB(1) 1076/00-01(01) - Information paper provided by the Administration)

At the invitation of the Chairman, the Deputy Project Manager/Major Works (DPM/MW) briefed members on the salient points of the proposal as set out in LC Paper No. CB(1) 1076/00-01 (01).

2. Members generally considered that there was a need to carry out improvement works to Tuen Mun Road so as to improve traffic operation and enhance safety.

3. Noting that shortly after the operation of the completed climbing lanes at Tuen Mun Road, the Administration had to commission another consultancy study to undertake the investigation and preliminary design of the proposed reconstruction and improvement of Tuen Mun Road, Mr TAM Yiu-chung queried whether the Administration had taken all relevant factors into consideration before proceeding with a planned project.

4. Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport (5) (PAS for T(5)) replied that Tuen Mun Road was approaching the end of its service life and was beyond economical repair. The only cost-effective measure to extend the service life of the at-grade sections of Tuen Mun Road was by reconstruction. Regarding the additional climbing lanes in the uphill sections of Tuen Mun Road, PAS for T(5) said that the climbing

lanes had provided certain relief to the congested corridor and Transport Department would closely monitor the traffic situation there.

5. Members expressed grave concern about the sub-standard design of Tuen Mun Road which had given rise to numerous accidents in the past. To improve the situation, Mr Albert CHAN suggested that the scope of the proposed consultancy for the investigation and preliminary design for the project should include the following:

- (a) the feasibility of widening the full length of Tuen Mun Road from dual 3-lane to dual 4-lane;
- (b) the need to improve the steep gradient and sharp bends of the road;
- (c) the feasibility of providing landscape works such as tree planting along the alignment and central divider of the road; and
- (d) the need to provide noise barriers along the improved Tuen Mun Road in accordance with the policy for provision of noise mitigation measures at new roads.

6. PAS for T(5) replied that the Administration would consider the member's suggestions in the context of the consultancy study. She however remarked that the proposed widening of the full length of Tuen Mun Road to dual 4-lane might involve enormous technical difficulties, given the site constraints along the alignment. However, the Administration would further examine the feasibility of the proposal. On the need to provide noise barriers along the improved Tuen Mun Road, PAS for T(5) advised that based on the new policy to address the noise impact of existing roads, the Administration had already identified a few sections of Tuen Mun Road for retrofitting. She noted the member's concern about the possible abortive works due to the reconstruction of Tuen Mun Road and advised that Highways Department would co-ordinate the relevant works projects to avoid wastage of resources.

7. Mr TAM Yiu-chung also asked the Administration to consider improving the lighting system of Tuen Mun Road and deploying low noise and anti-skid material on the reconstructed road.

8. On the implementation programme of the project, Mr TAM Yiu-chung and Mr Albert HO queried why it took so long for the project to complete. Mr Albert HO also expressed concerns about the traffic disruptions caused to the travelling commuters during the construction stage.

9. PAS for T(5) advised that prior to actual implementation, there was a need to carry out associated ground investigations to obtain relevant site data to facilitate subsequent construction works. According to the present timetable, improvement works to Tuen Mun Road would only commence after the widening of Castle Peak Road in 2005. DPM/MW added that in order to minimize traffic disruption, there was a need to carry out the works in phases. Given the existence of high slopes on both sides

of Tuen Mun Road, the Administration would need to take extra care in implementing the project. This also explained why it took a longer time to complete.

10. On members' concern about the traffic impact during the construction stage, PAS for T(5) advised that this would be one of the subject matters to be examined in the proposed consultancy study. A detailed traffic impact assessment study would also be conducted. DPM/MW advised that during construction, three traffic lanes would be maintained in each direction during the peak hours of weekdays. The Chief Traffic Engineer/New Territories West added that Transport Department would closely monitor the traffic situation during construction and implement suitable temporary traffic arrangements accordingly.

11. Regarding the alignment of the Route 10 project and its interface with Tuen Mun Road, PAS for T(5) replied that the Administration was still considering the subject matters, having regard to members' views expressed at previous meeting. The proposed link road to Tuen Mun Road would be further considered in the context of the Route 10 project.

12. The Chairman concluded that members had no objection for the Administration to put forward the related funding proposal to the Public Works Subcommittee for consideration on 16 May 2001.

II Route 9 - Section between Tsing Yi and Cheung Sha Wan and Section between Cheung Sha Wan and Sha Tin

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1077/00-01(01) - Information paper provided by the Administration)

13. At the invitation of the Chairman, DPM/MW briefed members on the proposed implementation of the remaining sections of Route 9 under two projects: Route 9 between Tsing Yi and Cheung Sha Wan (Route 9 - TYCSW) and Route 9 between Cheung Sha Wan and Sha Tin (Route 9 - CSWST) as set out in LC Paper No. CB(1) 1077/00-01(01).

Tolling strategy

14. Mr CHENG Kar-foo expressed grave concern about the Administration's intention to impose a toll for the tunnel portion of Route 9 - CSWST. Given the substantial investment of around \$24 billion for the whole project, he opined that the new highway should be able to attract sufficient vehicular traffic and help alleviate the traffic congestion problems at other critical corridors such as Lion Rock Tunnel and Tate's Cairn Tunnel. However, he observed that even with the proposed Route 9 - CSWST in place, the forecast peak hour v/c ratios at Lion Rock Tunnel and Tate's Cairn Tunnel in 2007 would still stand at 1.2 and 1.0 respectively. Against this background, he urged the Administration to review the overall tolling strategy with a view to spreading out traffic among different tunnels and maximizing utilization of valuable tunnel resources. He also queried the justifications for imposing a toll for the tunnel

portion of Route 9 - CSWST whilst the other sections of Route 9 such as the Nam Wan Tunnel and Stonecutters Bridge were free from tolls.

15. Mrs Selina CHOW and Mr Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan also expressed concerns about the need to set an appropriate toll level for Route 9 to ensure traffic diversion among different tunnels. They pointed out that as cost recovery would be one of the major factors in deciding the toll level, the Administration should clarify which portion of the capital cost for the project would be taken into account for the purpose. To ensure traffic diversion, Mr Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan also opined that the Administration should not increase the toll levels for Lion Rock Tunnel and Tate's Cairn Tunnel to achieve traffic diversion purpose.

16. Mr LAU Chin-shek opined that the initial toll and its subsequent adjustments should be scrutinized and approved by the Legislative Council in the form of subsidiary legislation as for other Government tunnels.

17. PAS for T(5) replied that the Administration intended to impose a toll for the tunnel portion of Route 9 - CSWST as a toll was charged for the other three tunnels connecting Sha Tin and Kowloon/Tsuen Wan. On the other hand, the Administration did not have plan to charge for Route 9 - TYCSW including Stonecutters Bridge. As Route 9 would be completed only in 2007, a decision had yet to be made on the exact level of tolls to be levied for the Route 9 tunnel. As a matter of principle, a basket of factors including toll level of alternative routes and the need to set the toll level to ensure traffic diversion would be considered when deciding the toll level for Route 9. She also said that unlike other "Build-Operate-Transfer" tunnels, the present project was funded by public monies, and hence, Government had a say on the exact level of tolls to be levied. She also confirmed that the tolls to be levied would be subject to Legislative Council's approval.

18. At members' request, PAS for T(5) undertook to provide further information on the tolling strategy for Route 9.

19. The Chairman advised that the Administration was undertaking a review on the tolling strategy for various tunnels in Hong Kong. The concerns expressed by members at the meeting could be discussed further when the subject item was discussed by the Panel.

Contract package

20. Mr LAU Ping-cheung requested the Administration to split the project into a number of contract packages to enable more local contractors to participate in bidding these contracts. PAS for T(5) replied that the Administration would consider Mr LAU's request. She also agreed to provide further information on how the relevant proposed works would be split into separate contract packages.

Traffic forecast

21. Whilst welcoming an additional road link from North West New Territories (NWNT) to North East New Territories (NENT) via Tsing Yi Island and West Kowloon, Mr Albert CHAN expressed concern about the traffic conditions in the vicinity of Container Terminal 9 (CT9) and the inadequate provision of transport infrastructure to and from NWNT, bearing in mind the Administration's proposal to defer the completion of the northern section of Route 10 between So Kwun Wat and Yuen Long, and the increasing cross-boundary activities and container back-up activities in NWNT. He was worried that due to inaccurate traffic forecast, the existing local road network in NWNT might not be adequate to cope with the rising demand. He also requested the Administration to provide further information on the forecast v/c ratios in Ting Kau Bridge, Tuen Mun Road, and Shing Mun Tunnel.

22. PAS for T(5) advised that under the recently introduced Strategic Highway Project Review System, the Administration conducted a thorough review on the need for individual major highway projects at critical milestones in the planning and implementation process, taking into account the latest planning parameters. She also pointed out that with the completion of Route 9 - TYCSW, the traffic condition of Route 3 including Cheung Tsing Highway, Cheung Tsing Tunnel and Tsing Kwai Highway would improve. Route 9 - TYCSW would also provide a route for container traffic to access the CT 9 without the need to go through the Tsing Yi local road network. Regarding the difference between forecast and actual traffic flow, she explained that this might be attributable to the Asian financial turmoil leading to a significant drop in the number of vehicles in the territory. She would provide further information on the relevant traffic forecast as requested by the member.

Implementation timetable

23. Noting that Route 9 - TYCSW was required to relieve the traffic on Route 3 Tsing Yi and Kwai Chung Sections (Cheung Tsing Highway, Cheung Tsing Bridge and Tsing Kwai Highway) as the existing capacity of this section of Route 3 would not be able to cope with the growing traffic demand by 2007, Ir Dr Raymond HO was of the view that for planning purpose, the Administration should aim at advancing the delivery date of Route 9 so as to avoid undesirable traffic disruption due to possible slippage of the project.

Environmental mitigation measures

24. Whilst supporting the construction of Route 9 to improve the traffic link between NWNT and NENT, Mr LAU Kong-wah was concerned about the traffic noise generated during and after the construction and operation stages. He also noticed that the Sha Tin Provisional District Board had expressed concerns about the possible impacts on the surrounding area caused by the noise, dust and vehicle emission during the construction and operation stages. He therefore requested the Administration to provide further information on the predicted traffic noise levels at the relevant noise sensitive receivers along Sha Tin Height and in Site 6 and Site 10 at the northern part of West Kowloon Reclamation.

25. DPM/MW said that the Administration would take into account the views expressed by local district councils in implementing the project. Mr C W CHOW, Chief Engineer of Highways Department added that appropriate mitigation measures would be put in place to bring the noise level below the statutory limit. The Administration would provide further information as requested by Mr LAU.

26. Members sought elaboration on the Administration's 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).

27. Ir Dr Raymond HO remarked that if the use of seven-metre high noise barriers was not cost-effective and would not produce significant overall difference in noise attenuation as compared to three-metre high ones, he would agree that three-metre high noise barriers should be used instead to avoid wastage of public monies. Mrs Selina CHOW also had reservation on the use of seven-metre high noise barriers and requested the Administration to explore other options. Mr LAU Chin-shek however held the view that every efforts should be made to minimize the noise nuisance caused to residents as far as possible. If seven-metre high noise barriers were proved to be effective in reducing the noise level, even by a small proportion, the Administration should take the initiative to adopt the proposed measure as recommended by the Sham Shui Po Provisional District Board (SSPPDB). He also asked if other feasible mitigation measures would be explored to minimize the noise problem faced by residents.

28. Mr CHENG Kar-foo cast doubt on the Administration's assessment of the effectiveness of seven-metre high noise barriers in noise attenuation as compared to three-metre high ones. Given the additional construction costs of \$90 million for a 7-metre high noise barriers vis-à-vis the overall project costs of \$24 billion, the additional financial commitment was not significant. He also opined that in putting forward any infrastructural projects, the Administration should put in place adequate mitigation measures to minimize the noise impacts caused to local residents. As SSPPDB had requested the Administration to convey its views about the provision of three-metre high noise barriers to the Finance Committee, they must be aggrieved by the Administration's decision. Mr CHENG Kar-foo was also concerned about the criteria for the provision of noise barriers and whether a decision on the scope of the mitigation measures to be put in place would be dependent upon the number of objections received from local residents.

29. In response, DPM/MW 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. 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. The Administration had explained to the SSPDB that the proposed noise mitigation measures would be adequate to bring the noise level to 70 dB(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 SSPPDB had taken note of the explanation but they 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. PAS for T(5) 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 which might not all be accepted by residents.

30. Mr CHENG Kar-foo enquired the details of the 68 objections as quoted in paragraph 35 of the paper and the proposed actions to be taken by Government to address their concerns.

31. PAS for T(5) responded that of the 68 objections, 62 were concerned about the clearance of Wai Man Tsuen. The clearance of Wai Man Tsuen did not arise from the Route 9 project, rather from the policy to clear all cottage areas by 2001. The Government only made use of the cleared area for the construction of Route 9. She would provide further information in this regard after the meeting. Mrs Selina CHOW urged the Administration to take positive steps to address the concerns raised by the objectors.

Project cost

32. In response to Ir Dr Raymond HO, Mr H C WONG, Chief Engineer of the Highways Department confirmed that the estimated project cost had been worked out based on recent tender prices. DPM/MW added that the project estimates as contained in the paper would also be updated based on the new inflation figures adopted by the Government with effect from 1 May 2001 when the funding proposal was put to the Public Works Subcommittee for consideration. At the request of members, PAS for T(5) undertook to provide the updated cost breakdown of the projects after the meeting.

33. Mrs Selina CHOW was concerned whether traffic to and from Cheung Sha Wan Market would be affected during the construction stage of the project. DPM/MW advised that the contractor would be required to implement temporary traffic arrangements to maintain through traffic to Cheung Sha Wan Market at all times. An inter-departmental working group would also be set up to monitor the traffic during construction stage.

34. Mr LAU Ping-cheung enquired whether provision was made for tree planting on both sides of Route 9 including elevated roads. DPM/MW replied that provision for landscaping works along Route 9 including tree planting had already been provided for in the project estimates, and the landscaping works would be mainly underneath the elevated roads.

35. Mr LAU Ping-cheung opined that in order to avoid future disruption to traffic, the Administration should take the opportunity to provide utility reserve along the alignment. DPM/MW replied that subject to site availability, the Administration would consider the member's suggestion.

36. The Chairman requested the Administration to provide further information on issues raised by members before the item was put to the Public Works Subcommittee for consideration.

(Post-meeting note : The requested information was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1) 1408/00-01.)

III West Rail (Phase I) - Essential Public Infrastructure Works for Kam Tin Section - Proposed Road to Kam Sheung Road Station
(LC Paper No. CB(1)1078/00-01 - Information paper provided by the Administration)

37. At the invitation of the Chairman, the Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport (4) (PAS for T(4)) and the Government Engineer/Railway Development (GE/RD) briefed members on the salient points of the project as set out in LC Paper No. CB(1) 1078/00-01.

38. Mr Albert CHAN was concerned about the resumption of private land for public projects or railways and the proposed re-housing arrangements for the affected parties. He pointed out that there might be situations where, after a portion of a private lot had been resumed by Government for the purpose of public works projects, the remaining portion of that lot was not resumed by Government, rendering the site incapable of reasonable beneficial use by reason of its small size and odd shape. In his opinion, this was unfair to private land owners. He therefore urged the Administration to review the policy and to re-consider the objector's claim as set out in paragraph 23(b) of the paper.

39. PAS for T (4) replied that land should only be resumed for public purpose and the extent of resumption depended on the engineering and related requirements of the project. He would relay the concern of Mr CHAN to Lands Department for further examination and provide further information.

40. The Chairman also remarked that after a certain portion of a private lot had been resumed by the Government, say 80%, for public purpose, the Administration should consult the affected lot owner as to whether the remaining portion of the land should be resumed by the Government as well.

(Post-meeting note : The requested information was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1) 1410/00-01.)

41. Mr Abraham SHEK opined that in order to facilitate land resumption, a joint-venture approach could be adopted whereby private lot owners could be invited to surrender their land for railway implementation purposes in return for the granting of property rights on top of future railway stations. The Chairman remarked that land resumption for the West Rail project was carried out by Lands Department and the sites would then be handed over to KCRC for further works. She invited the Administration to note Mr SHEK's view.

42. The Chairman remarked that species such as vine should not be used for tree planting purpose as it might encroach onto road surface.

43. Mr LAU Ping-cheung opined that consideration be given to providing utility reserve along the proposed road. GE/RD advised that the pedestrian pavement would be wide enough to house the utilities in such a rural setting. Moreover, the pedestrian pavement would be constructed in precast paving blocks to facilitate utilities laying and maintenance, and adequate traffic bearing capacity should be readily maintained along the proposed road, with a forecast v/c ratio of about 0.3, during such works.

IV Any other business

44. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:50 pm.

Legislative Council Secretariat

10 October 2001