

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)1047/00-01
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by the Administration)

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Legislative Council
Panel on Transport

Minutes of special meeting held on
Thursday, 15 February 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 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 LAU Chin-shek, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
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
- Members absent** : Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon CHAN Kwok-keung
Hon Andrew WONG Wang-fat, JP
Hon LAU Kong-wah
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
- Public officers attending** : Transport Bureau

Ms Shirley LAM
Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport

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Territory Development Department

Mr C K MAK
Project Manager/NTE

Mr John CLIMAS
Deputy Project Manager/NTE

Mr C W KAM
Chief Engineer/Shatin

Mr K L TING
Senior Engineer/SD (Shatin)

Transport Department

Mr K K SIN
Chief Engineer (NTE)

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

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

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I Sha Tin New Town, stage II — Road D15 linking Lok Shun Path and Tai Po Road

(LC Paper No. CB(1)498/00-01(01) - Information paper provided by the Administration)

With the aid of PowerPoint, the Chief Engineer/Shatin of the Territory Development Department (CE/TDD) briefed members on the proposed implementation of the project “554TH — Sha Tin New Town, stage II — Road D15 linking Lok Shun Path and Tai Po Road”. He said that the road which served as a secondary access to Fo Tan and Sui Wo areas would provide relief to the critical junction of Fo Tan Road/Tai Po Road. Under the present proposal, project 554TH would be upgraded to Category A to cover:

- (a) construction of a 0.5 kilometre long 2-land road (Road D15) including three bridges;
- (b) construction of associated footpaths and cycle tracks and re-construction of a roundabout at Lok Shun Path;

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- (c) associated drainage works and slope works;
- (d) provision of noise barriers;
- (e) landscaping works; and
- (f) implementation of related environmental monitoring and audit programme.

(Post-meeting note: A set of presentation materials tabled at the meeting for the project was subsequently circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)613/00-01.)

2. Members noted that the present proposal had been scheduled for consideration by the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC) at its meeting on 21 February 2001.

(Post meeting note : The item was subsequently considered by PWSC at its meeting held on 28 February 2001.)

Noise impact

3. Members noticed that the major concern of the local residents in Royal Ascot and Lok Lo Ha Village was the traffic noise generated by the project. They generally welcomed the Administration's proposal to include the provision of noise barriers in the project to address the concerns of local residents. However, members opined that the Administration should address the noise problem at source. Mr CHENG Kar-foo requested for additional information on the existing and projected noise levels at noise sensitive receivers along the proposed Road D15 alignment. This would enable members to monitor the effectiveness of the noise mitigation measures and whether they could help reduce the noise level from 77dB(A) to within the statutory limit of 70 dB(A) as claimed by the Administration. The Project Manager/NTE of TDD (PM/TDD) agreed to provide the requested information in writing after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The requested information was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)696/00-01.)

4. Noting that the noise barriers to be constructed along Road D15 would be up to 5 metres high, Mrs Selina CHOW commented that when considering the engineering option of erecting barriers to abate traffic noise, it would be important to pay due attention to their design so as to avoid creating visual intrusion and potential sightline obstruction to drivers. As the construction of noise barriers would invariably involve additional costs, she asked whether other direct mitigation measures such as the use of low noise surfacing material had been considered or would be adopted for the proposed project.

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5. In reply, PM/TDD explained that the noise barriers were necessary to mitigate the increased levels of traffic noise at higher floors of Royal Ascot. He assured members that the project would proceed carefully taking into account the need for effective noise mitigation and aesthetic design. In this respect, Mrs Selina CHOW opined that as a general principle, the Administration should realistically assess the need for noise barriers for future road projects taking into account the feasibility of implementing other direct mitigation measures as well as the visual and landscape impacts that might be created.

6. In this connection, Ir Dr Raymond HO asked whether flexible pavement would be used to reduce traffic noise. In response, PM/TDD advised that the noise impact of the proposed project had been considered generally in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) study. With the implementation of various direct noise abatement measures, the traffic noise would be mitigated to within the permissible limit of 70 dB(A). Low noise material would be used where appropriate. He agreed to revert to the Panel after the meeting on the type of road surface materials to be used.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's reply was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)696/00-01.)

7. Referring to the proposal to ban vehicles exceeding 5.5 tonnes from using Road D15, the Chairman considered that it would be unfair to heavy vehicles if they were not allowed to use D15. In response, the Chief Engineer (NTE) of the Transport Department (CE/TD) explained that the decision to ban vehicles exceeding 5.5 tonnes from using Road D15 was made to address the concerns of the affected residents and Shatin District Council (STDC) on the traffic noise impact generated by the project. However, in exceptional cases involving traffic accidents in Fo Tan Road, the police officers-in-charge could exercise their discretion to allow vehicles exceeding 5.5 tonnes to use Road D15.

8. Given the potential impact of such a ban on the operation of the transport trade, the Chairman opined that the Administration should actively consult their views on the present proposal. In reply, PM/TDD advised that similar traffic management measures had been implemented elsewhere on environmental grounds. As far as the present proposal was concerned, as Road D15 was only a secondary access and linked to Tai Po Road, heavy vehicles heading for Tolo Highway would prefer to use Fo Tan Road instead. As such, the impact on the transport trade would be minimal. Mr Albert CHAN stated his support for the Administration's proposal to adopt traffic management measures to ban heavy vehicles from entering certain roads to address the noise impact generated by vehicular traffic, in particular at night time.

Other environmental concerns

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9. Mr CHENG Kar-foo was concerned about the preservation of old trees in the course of works projects undertaken by the Government and urged the Administration to make greater effort in saving such trees. In reply, PM/TDD said that during construction, the felling of trees would be inevitable. As replenishment, new trees or shrubs would be planted. However, in case of valuable trees, they would be transplanted.

10. Responding to Mr WONG Sing-chi's enquiry about whether the appearance of Road D15 would be in harmony with the village landscape of the neighbourhood, PM/TDD assured members that the landscape and visual impacts of the proposed project had been critically examined in the context of the EIA study. To allay members' concern, he agreed to provide members with a photomontage of the completed roadwork after the meeting for information.

(Post-meeting note: Supplementary information provided by the Administration on the above concerns was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)696/00-01.)

Consultation with local residents

11. Citing the case of the Road T7 project in which the residents of Monte Vista had complained about being notified by the Administration of the details of the project only at a very late stage, Mr WONG Sing-chi asked whether the Administration would consult the affected residents on the present proposal so that their views would be taken into account in the detailed design for the project. Sharing Mr WONG's concern, Mr CHENG Kar-foo considered that the Administration should take the initiative to brief the affected residents at the earliest opportunity on all the relevant details of the proposed works including the environmental measures to be adopted. Mrs Selina CHOW also referred to the importance of timely and meaningful consultation in the course of implementing public works projects by the Administration. She opined that such consultation would help to gain the support of the affected residents, in particular for those projects which were more controversial.

12. In reply, PM/TDD reported that the Administration had previously met the Village Representative and villagers of Lok Lo Ha Village as well as the residents of Royal Ascot in the early planning stage of the project to address their concerns. In view of members' suggestions, he said that the Administration could solicit the views of the affected residents through STDC and briefing sessions would be held to present the proposed works to the residents.

13. The Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport (PAS for T) added that the Administration would endeavour to set up consultative meetings with the owners' corporation of Royal Ascot and the Village Representative and villagers of Lok Lo Ha Village on the present proposal before tenders were invited to ensure that their views could be suitably reflected in the tendering document.

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14. In addition, PM/TDD stated that taking into account the experience of the Road T7 case, a liaison committee comprising the contractor, the resident engineer, the representatives of the affected residents and members of the STDC would be set up for the proposed project so that all interested parties would be briefed periodically about the progress of the project as well as the work for the next stage. It would ensure that views from the affected residents would be properly taken into account during the construction of the project. In that case, both the Chairman and Mrs Selina CHOW requested that such an initiative be implemented for all projects involving new roads built in close proximity of residential buildings. PM/TDD advised that the relevant requirement would be included into the relevant contracts for such projects.

15. Referring to the Legislative Council case conferences held in 1999 on the Road D15 project, Mr CHENG Kar-foo suggested that the residents of Lok Lo Ha Village and Royal Ascot who had attended the case conferences should also be informed of the latest progress of the project as well as the future courses of action to be taken by the Administration in relation to the proposed project.

(Post-meeting note: The deputations concerned were informed accordingly by the Complaints Division of the Secretariat.)

II Sha Tin New Town, stage II — detailed design and site investigation for Road T3 — proposed increase in approved project estimate

(LC Paper No. CB(1)498/00-01(02) - Information paper provided by the Administration)

16. With the aid of PowerPoint, the Senior Engineer/SD (Shatin) of the Territory Development Department (SE(SD)/TDD) briefed members on the proposed increase in the Approved Project Estimate (APE) of the project “475CL — Sha Tin New Town, stage II — detailed design and site investigation for Road T3” by \$29.5 million from \$51 million to \$80.5 million. The proposed increase in APE was needed as a result of additional works items recommended in the Sha Tin and Ma On Shan District Traffic Study (STMOSDTS) as well as those identified in the course of the detailed design for Road T3. He further explained that the proposed Road T3 was a strategic road linking Route 9 Sha Tin section with Ma On Shan, Tai Po and North District. Without Road T3, traffic using Route 9 would have to use the local road network in Sha Tin and would lead to traffic congestion. This would substantially undermine the function of Route 9.

(Post-meeting note: A set of presentation materials incorporating the detailed site plans of the project was circulated to members via LC Paper No. CB(1)613/00-01.)

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17. Members noted that the present proposal had been scheduled for consideration by PWSC at its meeting on 21 February 2001.

18. Responding to members' enquiries, SE(SD)/TDD confirmed that the consultants' fees of \$27.6 million out of the proposed increase in APE would cover additional consultancy services corresponding to the new works items and the increased fees was not calculated in proportion to the increase in the project's overall cost.

(Post-meeting note: Supplementary information provided by the Administration on the estimated cost for Road T3 after the increase in project scope was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)632/00-01.)

Increase in project scope of Road T3

19. Mr CHENG Kar-foo was concerned that more works items might have to be included in the project scope with the completion of other related studies in future. In this respect, he enquired about the reasons why the additional works items presently proposed, especially those recommended in STMOSDTS, were not identified at an earlier stage so that adequate funding could be requested accordingly. He was worried that if additional funding was required as the project proceeded, its completion would be delayed.

20. Taking note of the member's concern, PAS for T stressed that when new road projects were proposed, the responsible departments would work to ensure that all the required works items were identified in the project scope and sought funding approval accordingly. However, Road T3 was an isolated case as there were new developments during the consultancy for detailed design and site investigation which had to be taken into account, including the completion of STMOSDTS and the adoption of the Route 9 alignment. Additional works were thus necessary to avoid interface problems and abortive works. For future projects, the Transport Bureau (TB) would monitor the situation in close connection with all the departments concerned to avoid a recurrence of similar incidents. However, she said that if additional works were necessitated by exceptional circumstances as in the present case, the Panel would be briefed accordingly.

21. To supplement, PM/TDD explained that as STMOSDTS was completed in 1996 around the time when funding for 475CL was sought, it would not be possible to anticipate the amount of additional works arising therefrom without a detailed study of the relevant findings. Likewise, the detailed design of Route 9 was undertaken during 1997 and 1998 which coincided with the consultancy for Road T3. The new policy initiative on the requirement for stabilization of natural slopes was implemented after the original APE was approved. Highlighting the importance of implementing road projects to meet the needs of local residents, he

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said that the Territory Development Department (TDD) would maintain close liaison with local District Councils on the development of major works projects.

22. Notwithstanding the Administration's explanation, Mr CHENG urged TB to play a more active monitoring role to ensure that planning for new highways projects undertaken by TDD and the Highways Department in new development areas were properly co-ordinated and due consideration would be given to related traffic studies conducted by the Transport Department.

Implementation of Road T3 project

23. Ir Dr Raymond HO expressed support for the proposal and urged the Administration to put in place suitable arrangements to ensure road safety in the weaving of traffic when viaducts from Tai Po Road and Route 9 merged. SE(SD)/TDD took note of the member's concerns and advised that adequate weaving length would be provided and suitable signs would also be placed along the approach road to guide the motorists.

(Post-meeting note: Supplementary information provided by the Administration on the traffic weaving arrangement was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)632/00-01.)

24. Worrying about the possibility of future residential developments being constructed within a close distance of the road as in the case of Monte Vista and Road T7, Mr WONG Sing-chi opined that when the alignment of Road T3 was finalized, the Administration should inform the concerned developers and land owners of the various plots of vacant open land along the proposed road. He also said that local residents directly affected by the project should be properly consulted. Concurring with Mr WONG's view, the Chairman considered that better planning and co-ordination by the Administration was required to avoid possible disputes arising out of the adverse noise and visual impacts unduly created in the neighbourhood.

25. In response, PM/TDD advised that as in the case of other major transport infrastructure projects, the Administration would consult the local community on the proposed Road T3 project after funding was approved by the Finance Committee (FC). He also assured members that the Administration would learn from the experiences of the Road T7 project to ensure that similar cases would not happen again. For Road T3, the proposed alignment would roughly follow Tai Po Road and it would mostly affect the industrial buildings in Tai Wai area. At the request of Mr WONG Sing-chi, PM/TDD agreed to provide additional information on the impact of the proposed Road T3 on the schools and community facilities in the neighbourhood.

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26. In reply to Mr CHENG Kar-foo, SE(SD)/TDD explained that as traffic would increase tremendously with the proposed slip road extension to Chik Wan

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Street, the footbridge extension over Chik Wan Street near Tai Wai Station would provide a grade-separated pedestrian walkway to minimise conflict between pedestrians and vehicles. In this connection, Mr WONG Sing-chi raised concern about the potential safety risks created by the increased traffic at Chik Wan Street on the pedestrians, especially school children. The Chairman added that the Administration should find ways to ensure that no pedestrians could cross the busy road at-grade. To allay members' concerns, PAS for T said that consideration would be given to installing railings along Chik Wan Street for the purpose nearer the time.

III Footbridge system and road improvement works at the junction of Che Kung Miu Road and Hung Mui Kuk Road, Sha Tin — proposed increase in approved project estimate

(LC Paper No. CB(1)498/00-01(03) - Information paper provided by the Administration)

27. Members noted that the present proposal had been scheduled for consideration by PWSC at its meeting on 21 February 2001. However, members decided that as the proposal did not involve any transport policy issues, the Panel would not discuss the item at the meeting. They took the view that the Administration should properly account for the proposed increase in APE to Members when the item was discussed by PWSC.

IV Any other business

28. The Chairman drew members' attention that at the request of the Administration, an information paper on "Route 5 - Section between Shek Wai Kok and Chai Wan Kok" had been circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)595/00-01 the day before this Panel meeting. Members considered it necessary to discuss the item before it was put to the PWSC for consideration. As an exceptional arrangement, they agreed to include the item in the agenda for the regular Panel meeting scheduled for 23 February 2001. To allow sufficient time for members' deliberation, the meeting would run from 10:30 am to 1:00 pm instead.

29. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:25 pm.

Legislative Council Secretariat

20 April 2001