

## **Legislative Council Panel on Transport**

### **West Rail (Phase I) – Essential Public Infrastructure Works for Kam Tin Section**

#### **Proposed Road to Kam Sheung Road Station**

#### **Introduction**

This note informs Members of the implementation of a proposed road to the West Rail Kam Sheung Road (KSR) Station, which is an essential public infrastructure works (EPIW) for the Kam Tin section of the West Rail (Phase I) project.

#### **EPIW of the West Rail (Phase I) project**

2. On 27 February 1998, the Finance Committee (FC) approved an equity injection of \$29 billion from the Capital Investment Fund to the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC) for the construction of the West Rail (Phase I). We also informed FC that the Government would need to carry out EPIW in the order of \$3,135 million in December 1997 prices to enable West Rail (Phase I) to be open to the public.

3. KCRC commenced construction of West Rail (Phase I) following authorization by the Chief Executive in Council in September 1998. Upon commissioning in 2003, West Rail (Phase I) will provide a domestic passenger railway line serving Tuen Mun, Tin Shui Wai, Yuen Long, Kam Tin, Tsuen Wan West, Mei Foo and Sham Shui Po.

4. We have entrusted to KCRC the construction of other EPIW required under the West Rail (Phase I) for implementation in conjunction with the railway project to enhance the co-ordination between the works of the railway project and the EPIW and to enable simultaneous completion so that the facilities can be available to the public upon the commissioning of the railway line.

5. The Kam Tin Section of the West Rail (Phase I) includes the construction of the West Rail Depot, the KSR Station and a section of railway tracks connecting the Depot and the KSR Station.

6. On 11 June 1999, FC approved the upgrading of part of the EPIW for the Kam Tin Section to Category A as **43TR**, entitled "West Rail (Phase I) - essential public infrastructure works for the Kam Tin section". The approved project estimate was \$546.9 million in MOD prices. The scope of **43TR** comprises mainly the construction of a public transport interchange, access roads, footpaths, and cycle tracks around the KSR Station and an access road between the KSR Station and the West Rail Depot. We retain the remaining part of the EPIW, the proposed road to KSR Station, in Category B pending the finalization of design.

### **The Proposal**

7. To tie in with the commissioning of West Rail (Phase I) in 2003, we need to provide a direct road to connect the public transport interchange around the KSR Station with the eastern roundabout of Kam Tin Bypass<sup>1</sup>, Kam Tin Road and Kam Sheung Road.

8. The scope of the works for the proposed road comprises -

- (a) construction of a 850-metre long two-lane two-way carriageway, including a 30-metre long and a 50-metre long vehicular bridge sections;
- (b) construction of a 40-metre long, 3-metre wide footbridge over the proposed road;
- (c) provision of pedestrian and cycle facilities, including footpaths and cycle tracks, and associated works including drainage, slope and landscaping works and construction of retaining structures and drainage culverts;

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<sup>1</sup> **246TH** – Kam Tin Bypass project was upgraded to Category A of the Public Works Programme at the FC meeting on 9 February 2001. Construction will start in June 2001 for completion in December 2003.

- (d) provision of about 610 metres long noise barriers ranging from 2.5 metres to 5.5 metres high; and
- (e) provision of indirect technical remedies including air-conditioners and window glazing for Kam Kwong Kindergarten, Lutheran Kam Sheung Church and a village house of Ng Ka Tsuen with facades facing the proposed road.

A site plan is at Enclosure 1.

### **The Need for the Proposed Road**

9. At present, the section of Kam Tin Road through the Kam Tin town centre is a single two-lane carriageway. On the completion of the Kam Tin Bypass in 2003, this section of Kam Tin Road will connect to the roundabouts of Kam Tin Bypass serving as a local rural road for the east-west traffic movements through the Kam Tin town centre. The existing Kam Sheung Road, which branches off from Kam Tin Road, is a single two-lane carriageway serving as a rural road for the north-south traffic movements through the southern part of Kam Tin.

10. We anticipate that the commissioning of the public transport interchange facilities around the KSR Station of the West Rail (Phase I) in 2003, coupled with the increase in population<sup>2</sup> in the areas of Kam Tin South, Shek Kong and Pat Heung, will bring in substantial traffic and overload the section of Kam Tin Road through the Kam Tin town centre as well as the section of Kam Sheung Road through the southern part of Kam Tin.

11. We therefore need to build a two-lane two-way carriageway to connect the public transport interchange around the KSR Station with the eastern roundabout of Kam Tin Bypass, Kam Tin Road and Kam Sheung Road. Upon its completion, the proposed road will provide a direct and convenient access route for the public from the areas of Kam Tin South, Shek Kong and

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<sup>2</sup> The population in Kam Tin South, Shek Kong and Pat Heung is projected to grow from 30 700 in 1996 to 57 070 in 2011.

Pat Heung to the KSR Station. In addition, by year 2003, the proposed road together with Kam Tin Bypass and Stage 1 widening of Kam Tin Road<sup>3</sup> from Au Tau to the west of the Kam Tin town centre will form a district distributor network to cope with the future traffic generated from the areas of Kam Tin South, Shek Kong and Pat Heung.

12. The existing traffic condition and projected flow/capacity ratio (RFC)<sup>4</sup> and volume to capacity (V/C)<sup>5</sup> ratio of Kam Tin Road (section between Kam Sheung Road and western roundabout of Kam Tin Bypass) and Kam Sheung Road through the southern part of Kam Tin, with and without the proposed road, are as follows -

	Year	RFC ratio	
		with proposed road	Without proposed road
<b>Road Junction of Kam Tin Road/Kam Sheung Road</b>	1999	-	0.70
	2003	0.50	1.38
	2011	0.86	1.89

	Year	V/C ratio	
		with proposed road	Without proposed road
<b>Kam Tin Road</b> (section between Kam Sheung Road and western roundabout of Kam Tin Bypass)	1999	-	1.51
	2003	0.74	1.42
	2011	1.08	1.67
<b>Kam Sheung Road</b> (through the southern part of Kam Tin)	1999	-	0.62
	2003	0.78	1.06
	2011	0.99	1.39

<sup>3</sup> **560TH** – Improvement to Kam Tin Road, Stage 1 started construction in May 1999 for completion in late 2001.

<sup>4</sup> A RFC (flow to capacity) ratio not greater than 0.85 means that the road junction has sufficient capacity to cope with the volume of vehicular traffic under consideration. A RFC ratio above 1.0 indicates continual queue length.

<sup>5</sup> A V/C (volume to capacity) ratio not greater than 1.0 means that the road has sufficient capacity to cope with the volume of vehicular traffic under consideration. A V/C ratio above 1.0 indicates the onset of mild congestion and a ratio above 1.2 more serious congestion.

13. To enhance safety of cyclists and pedestrians, we will provide pedestrian and cyclists facilities, including footpaths on both sides and a cycle track on the eastern side of the road. We will also provide signal-controlled pedestrian crossings and build a footbridge over the proposed road to provide a safe and convenient pedestrian access for villagers of Ng Ka Tsuen to Po Tei Road.

14. The predicted traffic flow on the proposed road will generate traffic noise above the levels stipulated in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG) and therefore direct and indirect technical remedies will be required to alleviate the adverse noise impact. We propose to install noise barriers at appropriate locations along the proposed road. Because of space constraints and road safety requirements, erecting noise barriers at certain locations has been found not practicable (details at paragraph 19 below). We therefore propose to provide indirect technical remedies in the form of window glazing with installation of air-conditioners for the affected premises.

### **Financial Implications**

15. The project cost of the proposed road is \$219.1 million in money-of-the-day prices (MOD), made up as follows -

	<b>\$ million</b>
(a) Roadworks	140.5
(b) Footbridge	23.8
(c) Environmental mitigation measures	9.6
(i) Noise barriers	8.7
(ii) Indirect technical remedies	0.9
(d) On-cost <sup>6</sup> payable to KCRC	28.7

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<sup>6</sup> An on-cost at 16.5% of the project base cost (i.e. item (a), (b) and (c) in paragraph 15 will be payable to KCRC for undertaking the technical studies, design and construction supervision of the proposed roadworks.

(e) Contingencies		20.2	
	Sub-total	<u>222.8</u>	(in September 2000 prices)
(f) Provision for price adjustment		- 3.7	
	Total:	<u>219.1</u>	(in MOD prices)

16. We estimate the annual recurrent expenditure to be \$1.2 million.

### **Construction Programme**

17. The construction of the proposed road is planned to commence in January 2002 for completion in mid-2003 to tie in with the commissioning of the KSR Station of the West Rail (Phase I).

### **Environmental Implications**

18. We completed the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the proposed roadworks as required under the EIA Ordinance. The Director of Environmental Protection approved the EIA report on 28 December 1999 and issued the Environmental Permit under the same Ordinance on 9 August 2000. Environmental mitigation measures will be put in place to comply with the recommendations of the EIA and the conditions of the Environmental Permit.

19. The approved EIA report concluded that operational road traffic noise is the key environmental concern for the proposed roadworks. The findings indicate that by 2018, some noise sensitive receivers along the proposed road will be exposed to traffic noise exceeding the standards laid down in the HKPSG. The EIA recommended nine sections of noise barriers, ranging from 2.5 metres to 5.5 metres high, along the proposed road to alleviate the noise impact. In addition, indirect technical remedies in the form of air-conditioners and window glazing would be provided to three noise sensitive receivers as recommended in the EIA Report, namely Kam Kwong Kindergarten, Lutheran Kam Sheung Church and a village house of Ng Ka Tsuen.

20. We will control the short-term construction impact of the proposed roadworks through implementation of environmental impact mitigation measures. We have included in the project estimate the cost to implement suitable mitigation measures during construction. To ensure timely and effective implementation of the environmental impact mitigation measures, we will formulate and implement an Environmental Monitoring and Audit programme.

21. During the planning and design stages, we have considered ways of reducing the generation of construction and demolition materials as much as possible. We shall require the contractors to submit Waste Management Plans for approval. These will set out appropriate mitigation measures including the allocation of an area for waste segregation.

### **Public Consultation**

22. We consulted the West Rail Monitoring Group of the Yuen Long District Council on 26 May 2000 and 6 April 2001. Members of the District Council expressed no adverse comment on the proposed roadworks. We also consulted the Pat Heung Rural Committee on 27 April 2000 and the Kam Tin Rural Committee on 29 February 2000 on the proposed roadworks prior to gazetting it under the Roads (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance (the Ordinance). Members of the Rural Committees supported the project in principle.

23. We gazetted the proposed roadworks under the Ordinance on 9 June 2000 and received nine objections. One objector withdrew his objection with conditions, and the other eight objectors maintained their objections. Details of the objections are as follows -

- (a) One objector withdrew his objection on the conditions that Government would relocate the affected boundary fence and water pipe before the commencement of the proposed roadworks.
- (b) Five objectors objected to the resumption of their land for the proposed roadworks. Four objectors demanded higher land

compensation rate. We explained to them that the quantum of compensation was determined in accordance with the prevailing land compensation policy. Of these four objectors, two requested to shift the proposed road alignment to avoid their lands and one requested to resume the remaining portion of his land not affected by the roadworks. We explained that the proposed road alignment was the most desirable alignment taking into account various factors including road safety and site constraints. We also explained that Government could only resume the land required for the purposes of or incidental to the proposed roadworks.

- (c) Three objectors from Ng Ka Tsuen, a non-indigenous village, were concerned that the proposed roadworks would cause environmental nuisances to the village and involve the resumption of land currently used by villagers for recreational and Lunar New Year festivities purposes. There would also be Fung Shui impact on the village. We explained that the approved EIA report concluded that the traffic noise impact arising from the proposed roadworks could be reduced with the implementation of direct and indirect technical measures. Soft landscaping would be provided along the proposed road to mitigate the visual impact. We also assisted the objectors in identifying a replacement site for recreational and Lunar New Year festivities purposes. On Fung Shui impact, Ng Ka Tsuen was not eligible for ex-gratia payment for Tun Fu ceremony under the prevailing land policy as it is not an indigenous village.

24. Having considered the objections to the road scheme, the Chief Executive in Council authorized the proposed roadworks and also endorsed the proposed indirect technical remedies for the affected premises. The notice of authorization will be gazetted on 27 April 2001.

### **Land Acquisition**

25. We require resumption of about 29 452 square metres of private land. The land acquisition and clearance will affect 18 families involving 72 persons. The Director of Housing will arrange re-housing for the eligible families in accordance with the prevailing re-housing policy.

26. The estimated cost of acquisition and clearance of the land occupied by the proposed roadworks is about \$130 million in September 2000 prices. KCRC will bear this cost according to the West Rail Project Agreement entered into between Government and KCRC.

### **The Way Forward**

27. We will seek the approval of the Public Works Sub-Committee of the FC on 6 June 2001 to upgrade the project to Category A under **40TR** entitled “West Rail (Phase I) – essential public infrastructure works for the Kam Tin section – remaining works”.

### **Advice Sought**

28. Members are invited to provide comments on the project before we submit the funding proposal to the Public Works Sub-Committee of the FC.

Transport Bureau  
April 2001

