

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

**Minutes of the 18th meeting
held in the Chamber of Legislative Council Building
on Wednesday, 12 June 2002, at 10:45 am**

Members present :

Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, JP (Chairman)
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, JP
Hon CHAN Kam-lam
Hon WONG Yung-kan
Hon LAU Kong-wah
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-yee, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon LAW Chi-kwong, JP
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP
Hon Henry WU King-cheong, BBS
Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon IP Kwok-him, JP
Hon LAU Ping-cheung
Hon MA Fung-kwok

Members absent:

Hon Kenneth TING Woo-shou, JP
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon Eric LI Ka-cheung, JP

Hon SIN Chung-kai
Hon Andrew WONG Wang-fat, JP
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Dr Hon TANG Siu-tong, JP

Public officers attending:

Miss Elizabeth TSE, JP	Deputy Secretary for the Treasury (3)
Mr K K KWOK	Secretary for Works
Mr Thomas TSO, JP	Deputy Secretary for Planning and Lands (Lands and Planning)
Mr Rob LAW, JP	Director of Environmental Protection
Miss Janice TSE	Principal Assistant Secretary for the Treasury (Works)
Ms Eva TO	Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (Recreation and Sport)
Mr Eddy YAU	Assistant Director of Leisure and Cultural Services Department (Leisure Services) ³
Ms Pamela CHAN	Principal Executive Officer (Planning) Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Mr S H PAU, JP	Director of Architectural Services
Mr Patrick HO	Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport (1)
Mr K K YEUNG	Chief Highway Engineer/Kowloon Highways Department
Mr Y M HO	Principal Transport Officer/Urban Transport Department
Ms Shirley LAM	Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport (5)
Mr Y C LO	Director of Highways
Mr CHAN Wai-cheung	Deputy Project Manager/Major Works (2) Highways Department
Mr LEE Yan-ming	Chief Traffic Engineer/New Territories West Transport Department
Mr Clement LEUNG	Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and Manpower (1)
Mr Jeff LEUNG	Deputy Secretary-General (1) University Grants Committee
Mr CHAN Chiu-ming	Chief Technical Advisor/Subvented Projects Architectural Services Department
Mr Raymond T K CHEUNG	Director of Drainage Services
Mr M T CHOW	Chief Engineer/Drainage Projects Drainage Services Department
Mr H K WONG	Director of Territory Development
Mrs Joanna KWOK	Chief Engineer (Tseung Kwan O and Sai Kung) Territory Development Department

Ms Esther LEUNG	Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (5)
Mr C D B WILLIAMS	Assistant Director of Home Affairs (2)
Mr K L TSANG	Assistant Postmaster General (Corporate Development) Post Office
Mr C C LI	Chief Traffic Engineer/Hong Kong Transport Department

Clerk in attendance:

Ms Anita SIT	Chief Assistant Secretary (1)6
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Staff in attendance:

Ms Pauline NG	Assistant Secretary General 1
Mr Stephen LAU	Senior Assistant Secretary (Temp)

HEAD 703 – BUILDINGS

**PWSC(2002-03)36 371RO Local open space in Area 14 (Mouse Island),
Tuen Mun**

Members noted that this project had been considered by the “Subcommittee to follow up the outstanding capital works projects of the former municipal councils” on 7 March 2002.

2. Mr Henry WU expressed support for the proposal. He noticed that less than 3% (\$0.9 million) of the total project cost would be used for soft landscaping works. He was concerned that there would not be many trees planted at the local open space. His concern was shared by Mr Albert CHAN. Mr CHAN opined that the design of public open space should be in harmony with the natural environment, and pointed out that it was less expensive to provide soft landscaping, i.e. grass, shrubs and trees, than erecting artificial landscaping structures.

3. In response, the Director of Architectural Services (DArchS) advised that careful consideration had already been given to planting more trees and providing other soft landscaping features in this project. He highlighted that the project site was a knoll which was traditionally treated as a landmark by local fisherman. Local residents and the Tuen Mun District Council were keen to preserve the knoll and conserve the natural topographical features and mature trees there. Preservation of the knoll mainly involved slope stabilization works.

4. Regarding Mr Albert CHAN's query on the high construction cost of \$6,000 to \$7,000 per square metre (m²) for the project, DArchS explained that this was mainly due to the relatively small site area and the additional provision for the stabilization works for the knoll as well as for the additional works needed to meet the special requirements of the maritime theme garden to be provided at the open space.

5. Noting that the construction unit cost for the open space projects under the items PWSC(2002-03)37, 42, 43 ranged from \$140 to \$250 per m², Mr Albert CHAN considered that the construction cost of over \$6,000 per m² for this project was too high. Besides, the slope stabilization works only account for \$2.5 million out of the total project cost of \$31.8 million. He urged the Administration to further explore ways to reduce the construction cost of the project. In response, the Assistant Director (Leisure Services)³ (AD(LS)³) agreed to liaise with the project architect to suitably modify the design for the open space with a view to cutting down the construction cost.

6. Mr TAM Yiu-chung said that in view of the aging of the Hong Kong populace, more facilities to meet the physical training and recreational needs of the elderly should be provided in local open spaces. He noted that a tai-chi area was provided in this project and suggested that other facilities for the elderly such as foot reflexology walking paths should be provided. AD(LS)³ responded that the Administration was well aware of the need to provide such facilities for the elderly in local open spaces, and in fact, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department had recently identified some safety-proven equipment/facilities for simple physical exercises for the elderly in the market. While it would not be feasible to provide these equipment/facilities under this project due to the lack of space, the Administration would incorporate such facilities in other open space projects whenever space was available.

7. The item was voted on and endorsed.

**PWSC(2002-03)37 374RO Local open space in Areas 18 and 21,
Fanling**

8. Members noted that this project had been considered by the "Subcommittee to follow up the outstanding capital works projects of the former municipal councils" on 7 March 2002.

9. Mr WONG Sing-chi said that the residents of North District supported this proposal and hoped that it would be completed as soon as possible. He noted that the three sites for provision of local open space under this project were very close to residential developments. He was therefore concerned that the nearby residents might be affected by the noise nuisance caused by youngsters gathering at these open spaces during night time. He suggested that measures be taken to address this possible problem.

10. DArchS said that given the nature of public open space, it would not be desirable to include in this project additional structures for noise abatement at the local open space.

AD(LS)3 confirmed that the possible problem of noise nuisance during night time could be tackled by management control in that caretakers would take necessary management measures to prevent users from causing noise nuisance to nearby residents.

11. Mr Henry WU noted that the service block with storeroom and toilet facilities at Site A would be separated from the mini-soccer pitch at Site B by Wo Muk Road. He opined that the entrances of these two sites should be so located that there would be convenient access between the mini-soccer pitch and the service block. As the layout plan in the Enclosure showed only one entrance to Site B at Wo Muk Road, he enquired whether other entrances to Site B had been planned. Mr Albert CHAN shared Mr WU's concern.

12. DArchS confirmed that there were altogether three entrances to Site B: one located at Wo Muk Road for vehicles, one immediately adjacent to the drainage reserve area within Site B, and one opposite to the Union Plaza. He added that the traffic on Wo Muk Road was not heavy and therefore would not cause inconvenience or safety problem for users of the mini-soccer pitch.

13. Mr IP Kwok-him welcomed the provision of two gateball courts under this project, noting that gateball was a popular sport among the elderly. He however considered that some other equipment/facilities suitable for the elderly should be installed/provided in this project. He also suggested that benches should be provided at the periphery of the gateball courts. DArchS and AD(LS)3 agreed to provide exercise equipment/facilities suitable for the elderly in the proposed local open space and benches at the gateball courts, if space allowed. They envisaged that the cost for installing such equipment/facilities could be absorbed by the current project estimate.

14. Mr Albert CHAN suggested that in future designs for local open space, consideration should be given to designating small areas, sufficient to accommodate 20 to 30 persons, with tree shades, for citizens to practice tai-chi and luk-tung-kuen etc. which were popular exercises but were currently constrained by the lack of suitable sites.

15. Mr TAM Yui-chung observed that sitting-out areas in local open space were often provided with pergolas made of wood with climbing vegetations. These pergolas were good for providing sunshades but could not serve as rain shelters. He suggested that modifications to the design of these pergolas be made so that they could serve as rain shelters as well. DArchS replied that pergolas were for landscaping purposes and providing sunshades only. He would however consider the provision of more pavilions where appropriate.

16. This item was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2002-03)42

375RO

District open space in Areas 3 and 8, Tsing Yi

17. Members noted that this project had been considered by the “Subcommittee to follow up the outstanding capital works projects of the former municipal councils” on 7 March 2002.

18. Mr Henry WU expressed support for the proposal and asked whether a footpath could be provided to connect the landscaped garden with the northern part of the waterfront promenade. DArchS replied that this was not feasible as the two sites were separated by a small hill. DArchS also advised that tiles and other non-skidding materials would be used for paving the multi-purpose paved area at the northern part of the promenade.

19. In reply to Mr IP Kwok-him's enquiry, DArchS advised that taking into account members' comments made during the discussion of the previous item, pavilions, seating facilities and some exercise equipment suitable for the elderly would be provided at the proposed district open space as far as possible.

20. Mr Albert CHAN opined that the design for individual local/district open space should have uniqueness with a special theme or distinct features. He criticized that this aspect had all along been overlooked by the Administration, resulting in a stereotyped design for local/district open space areas. Consideration could be given to planting different species of flowers in different open space areas, while planting of one special species of flowers could be in large quantity so as to produce a special effect. He noted that no details of the design for the district open space under this project had been provided in the discussion paper, and requested the Administration to provide relevant details before the item was considered by the Finance Committee.

21. The Chairman shared Mr Albert CHAN's observation that in general, there was a lack of creativity in the design of public facilities such as footbridges, piers and open space areas.

22. In response, DArchS advised that the waterfront promenade under this project had been carefully designed to blend in with the completed section of the promenade built by a private developer. He agreed to consider instilling distinct features in future open space projects. AD(LS)3 added that special wind-resistant plants with a long flowering period had been carefully chosen for this waterfront promenade. He assured members that the Administration would further discuss with the consultant the detailed design for this project taking into account members' views.

23. Echoing Mr Albert CHAN's point on the importance of incorporating distinct features, Mr IP Kwok-him said that the waterfront promenade in question covered a large area of 3.1 hectares and thus was a very important open space area for the Tsing Yi district. He concurred that the promenade should be carefully designed and should possess distinct features. The Chairman requested the Administration to consider

Admin members' views and provide the design details of this project to members before the proposal was considered by the Finance Committee.

Admin 24. The Secretary for Works said that the Administration would consider ways to enhance the design for public open space areas and where appropriate, to incorporate special themes or special features into the design. He promised that more information on the design aspects would be included in future proposals on public open space.

25. Mr Albert CHAN expressed reservation on the proposal and urged the Administration to provide the design details for members' consideration before the relevant Finance Committee meeting.

26. The item was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2002-03)43 240RS Ma On Shan Sports Ground – phase 2

27. Members noted that this project had been considered by the “Subcommittee to follow up the outstanding capital works projects of the former municipal councils” on 7 March 2002.

28. The item was voted on and endorsed.

HEAD 708 – CAPITAL SUBVENTIONS AND MAJOR SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT

PWSC(2002-03)44 5QJ Renovation of the Wu Kwai Sha Youth Village of YMCA, Ma On Shan

29. Members noted that this project had been considered by the “Subcommittee to follow up the outstanding capital works projects of the former municipal councils” on 7 March 2002.

30. Mr Albert CHAN sought clarification on the subvention arrangements for youth camps. He specifically asked whether the subvented agency in this case had promised to provide youth residential services for a certain period of time after the completion of the proposed works. AD(LS)3 replied that the youth camp site belonged to the Government and was on lease to Chinese YMCA for operation of a youth holiday camp. Before 1981, the Administration had agreed to finance the operating costs, including wages for employees and costs for large-scale improvement and maintenance works, of 25 holiday camps operated by subvented agencies. In 1981, the Government started to operate its own holiday camps, and had since then ceased to finance the operating costs of other non-government holiday camps. AD(LS)3 further advised that the Administration had no plan to change the land use of the Wu Kwai Sha Youth Village as it was very popular and had been well utilized. In 2001-02, some 170 000 people used the residential

facilities, representing a utilization rate of about 90%. The number of non-residential users during the same period was around 156 000, which was close to the full capacity of the camp.

31. Mr LAU Kong-wah said that asbestos particles produced during the proposed asbestos removal works were health hazards. He noted that there were at least two residential developments near the youth camp in question, and asked whether the Administration had consulted the residents on the precautionary measures to be implemented under this project.

32. In reply, AD(LS)3 said that according to the Architectural Services Department, adequate measures would be taken to prevent contamination to the surrounding area during the renovation period. In view of this, the department did not consult the Sha Tin District Council on the proposed renovation programme. He explained that a specialist contractor would be engaged for the demolition and clearance of the asbestos roof sheets of the 42 residential cottages in the youth camp and such works would be carried out in strict accordance with the current legislative requirements as set out in the paper, under close supervision of the Architectural Services Department. The Administration therefore did not envisage that the proposed works would pose any risk to nearby residents nor camp users. DArchS assured members that asbestos removal projects would be undertaken with the greatest care. He said that similar projects had been carried out in schools and hospitals etc. in the past and no problem had occurred. The Administration did not usually conduct public consultation before such works were carried out.

33. Mr LAU Kong-wah stressed that since asbestos could be hazardous to health, and given that the proposed asbestos removal works would span almost three years, the Administration had the obligation to consult local residents on the proposed works. He suggested that the Administration withdraw this item and revert to the Subcommittee after consultation with local residents.

34. Mr IP Kwok-him supported Mr LAU Kong-wah's view that local residents should be consulted on the proposed works. He understood that for asbestos removal projects, the air quality in the vicinity of the works site would be closely monitored by the project delivery department as required by the Environmental Protection Department. He suggested that for this project, the Administration should also release the air quality monitoring records to local residents.

35. The Director of Environmental Protection (DEP) advised that although the asbestos to be removed in the present project was of a low-risk type, serious monitoring of the presence of microscopic asbestos particles in the air would be undertaken. He confirmed that it was possible to monitor the air quality on a daily basis but it took about one week to analyze the air samples collected. It was therefore only possible to release the air quality monitoring records on a retrospective basis.

36. Mr IP Kwok-him then suggested and the Administration agreed to release the air quality monitoring records to local residents on a regular basis throughout the project implementation period.

37. Noting that it would take three years to complete the project under the current phased implementation programme, Mr Albert CHAN queried whether it would be more desirable to implement the project in one go by closing the whole camp for the renovation works. He considered that this approach might be more cost-effective and could reduce the risk of the works to camp users and nearby residents by shortening the works duration.

38. The Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs (Recreation and Sport) explained that the camp was fully booked for the coming two years. By implementing the works in phases, the number of clients affected could be reduced. Should there be any unforeseeable slippage to the completion of each phase of the project, a smaller number of affected clients, say less than a hundred at any one time, could be arranged to take up accommodation in other holiday camps. The Administration had discussed with the camp management and concluded that the arrangements as currently proposed would cause the least disruption to the camp management and camp users as well. As regards the current schedule of asbestos removal works, DArchS advised that the removal works would last for about two months and would be carried out in three phases. He also advised that phased implementation of asbestos removal works had been adopted in many previous projects and no problem had arisen due to the adoption of this approach.

39. Mr LAU Kong-wah asked whether it was possible to remove all the asbestos roof sheets in the camp in two months. DArchS replied that while it was technically feasible to do so, he was not optimistic that the specialist contractor had sufficient resources to undertake the works in such a scale. He undertook to check with the contractor on this aspect. Mr LAU remarked that the contractor might prefer to do the job in one go as it would be more cost-effective.

40. Mr Albert CHAN considered that honouring the bookings of clients should not be of paramount importance since the youth camp services were recreational in nature. Instead, the safety of camp users should be the most important consideration. The Chairman concurred that from the safety angle, it would be more desirable to carry out the asbestos removal works with the whole camp closed.

41. Deputy Secretary for the Treasury (3) (DS(Tsy)3) said that having regard to members' concerns, the Administration would withdraw this item for re-assessment of the desirability of implementing the works in phases. If it was decided that the phased implementation approach was more desirable, the Administration would re-submit the paper, with additional information, to the Subcommittee for consideration at the next meeting. She emphasized that for safety reasons, the asbestos roof sheets should be demolished as soon as possible.

42. Ms Miriam LAU suggested that the Administration should also assess the option of complete closure of the camp during the asbestos removal works and re-opening it in phases during the construction of new roof sheets. DArchS said that this option was technically feasible but the Administration needed to examine this option with the camp management.

43. Mr LAW Chi-kwong was concerned about the impact of partial closure or entire closure of the youth camp on staff. He requested the Administration to look into this matter and provide information on the arrangements for staff in its future re-submission.

44. The Chairman requested the Administration to include relevant information to address all the concerns/queries raised by members during the discussion of this item in its future re-submission.

45. The item was withdrawn by the Administration.

HEAD 706 - HIGHWAYS

PWSC(2002-03)45 67T1 Public transport interchange at Hung Hom Bay Reclamation

46. Mr CHAN Kam-lam asked whether the design of the proposed public transport interchange (PTI) had given special consideration to the air quality aspects. The Director of Highway (D of Hy) replied that the design of the PTI had included special features to ensure good ventilation within the PTI. For example, the ceiling height of the interchange had been increased from the normal standard of 5.1 metres to 6 metres to enable better air circulation. The power of the ventilation facilities had been increased so that vehicle emissions could be dispersed faster. Bus bays would be arranged in a saw-tooth shape to reduce the chance of passengers being exposed to vehicle emissions. He believed that the air quality within the proposed PTI would be much better than that of existing ones.

47. In reply to Mr Henry WU, the Principal Transport Officer/Urban, Transport Department confirmed that the taxi bay consisted of two driving lanes so that a taxi stopping at the bay would not obstruct other taxis passing the bay.

48. The item was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2002-03)53 718TH Improvement to Tung Chung Road between Lung Tseng Tau and Cheung Sha

49. Members noted that this project had been discussed at the meetings of the Transport Panel on 19 January 2001 and 25 January 2002.

50. Ms Miriam LAU highlighted that there was an urgent need to construct the upgraded Tung Chung Road (TCR) to improve road safety and meet traffic demand, and that local residents had expressed their strong wish that the project could be completed as soon as possible. She noted that investigation and preliminary design (I&PD) for this project had already been completed and queried the need for one full year to complete the detailed design. She also noted that the consultant to be engaged for the detailed design would review the I&PD and thus queried the cost-effectiveness of this arrangement.

51. D of Hy explained that this project involved complicated engineering works. Apart from the widening and realignment of TCR between Lung Tseng Tau and Cheung Sha, 16 bridges and 63 retaining walls would need to be constructed together with other associated works. The hilly terrain of the road section would also increase the complexity of the proposed works. Taking all these into account, the one-year period for the detailed design, associated site investigations and preparation of tender documents was indeed a very tight schedule. He further explained that the I & PD completed by the first consultant only established the technical viability of the preferred alignment of the upgraded TCR. Detailed site investigations had to be carried out at the detailed design stage.

52. Ms Miriam LAU further enquired whether there were ways to speed up the construction works. D of Hy replied that the Administration was already proceeding with the project under a fast track programme. The current schedule was to complete the project by phases from September 2005 to September 2006, which was already one to two years ahead of the normal schedule for a medium scale engineering project. He explained that there were constraints for speeding up the construction schedule further. For example, it was necessary to maintain normal traffic flow during peak hours and public holidays and therefore construction traffic would be suspended during the peak periods from 7 am to 9 am and from 5 pm to 7 pm during weekdays and from 9 am to 6 pm during weekends and public holidays. To avoid causing undue disruption to traffic, contractors could at maximum close partially 100 metres of the road section for works at 500-metre intervals. For ecological reasons, no works could be carried out after 11 pm during night time.

53. The Chairman recalled that the reason given by the Administration for not continuing construction works overnight was that such works would disturb the rest of butterflies and other insects inhabited in the area. In reply to Ms Miriam LAU's enquiry on whether the Environmental Protection Department could take a more flexible view on this matter in view of the urgency of the project, DEP clarified that it was within the purview of the Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation to comment on issues relating to ecological and conservation matters. The Chairman and Mr Albert CHAN opined that it was justified to allow construction works to be carried out during night time in this case as early completion of the project was important to ensure safety of road users.

54. D of Hy assured members that the Administration would try its best to further speed up the project. He would consider using pre-cast units for the construction of

bridges and retaining walls. He would also liaise with the appropriate authority to see if the working hours of the construction works could be further extended at night time.

55. In reply to Mr Albert CHAN's enquiry, D of Hy advised that switching to the "design-and-build" approach would not help speed up the project at this late stage. Under the current programme, construction works could start fairly soon in December 2003. Another consideration was that the "design-and-build" approach was more suitable for projects with few uncertainties, but the present project involved a lot of uncertainties associated with the site conditions.

56. Mr Albert CHAN sought explanation for the high estimated cost for the project at \$931 million. D of Hy advised that the relatively high project cost was mainly attributed to the peculiar topography of the road section in question. Because of the hilly terrain, it was necessary to construct 16 bridges and 63 retaining walls and carry out stabilization works at 40 slopes. In addition, the upgraded TCR would still be fairly steep and thus a lot of traffic safety enhancement measures such as paving the road with anti-skidding surface materials, providing arrester beds and installing heavy duty crash barriers, etc. had to be implemented. He added that the total estimated project cost would be reviewed upon completion of the detailed design for the project.

57. In reply to the Chairman's query, D of Hy advised that the use of pre-cast units might involve higher cost than in-situ construction. In the current project estimate, the possibility of using pre-cast units for certain structural works had been taken into account.

58. In reply to Mr Albert CHAN's enquiry about the basis of the projected traffic flow on TCR of 1 000 vehicles per hour in 2016, the Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport (5) explained that owners of private vehicles had to obtain two permits, namely, the Lantau Closed Road Permit and Tung Chung Road Prohibited Zone Permit, for travelling on TCR from 8 am to 6 pm everyday. With the commissioning of the upgraded TCR, the Lantau Closed Road Permit System would remain in operation whereas the Tung Chung Road Prohibited Zone Permit System would be relaxed. As such, all residents of South Lantau owning private vehicles would be allowed to use the upgraded TCR. The traffic projections for the upgraded TCR were worked out on this basis.

59. Mr TAM Yiu-ching expressed concern that the traffic of large construction vehicles on TCR during the construction period would pose safety problems and serious traffic impact, given the narrowness of the existing TCR. In response, D of Hy said that construction traffic would be suspended during peak hours but with the partial closure of the road at some sections, the road traffic would be affected to some extent inevitably. He assured members that the Administration would try its best to minimize the adverse traffic impact, and give special attention to the traffic safety aspect during the construction period.

60. At Mr Albert CHAN's request, D of Hy agreed to consider the provision of parking bays at look-out points along the upgraded TCR.

61. This item was voted on and endorsed.

HEAD 708 – CAPITAL SUBVENTIONS AND MAJOR SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT

PWSC(2002-03)49 25EK Phase 7 development, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

62. Members noted that this item had been discussed at the Education Panel on 13 May 2002.

63. Mr Henry WU declared interest as a Board Director of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

64. The item was voted on and endorsed.

HEAD 704 - DRAINAGE

PWSC(2002-03)46 118CD Drainage improvement in Northern New Territories – package B
119CD Drainage improvement in Northern New Territories – package C

65. Mr Albert CHAN observed that concrete blocks bound by wire were used as the lining materials for some river training projects. He considered that the concrete blocks were visually not in harmony with the environment and asked whether other methods/materials could be employed to produce a better visual effect. The Director of Drainage Services replied that the Administration accorded high importance to the visual effect of the lining materials for river training projects. Where feasible, grasscreted or other lining materials with perennial vegetation would be employed for river training projects.

66. The item was voted on and endorsed.

HEAD 707 – NEW TOWNS AND URBAN AREA DEVELOPMENT

PWSC(2002-03)47 277CL Tseung Kwan O development, phase II, remaining engineering works

67. Members noted that this item had been discussed at the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works on 31 May 2002.

68. This item was voted on and endorsed.

HEAD 703 – BUILDINGS

**PWSC(2002-03)50 186SC Joint-user building at Rock Hill Street,
Kennedy Town**

69. Mr Albert CHAN enquired about the opening hours of the conference room and multi-purpose function rooms in the proposed joint-user building. He remarked that there was a strong demand for these types of venues in local communities and the opening hours should tie in with the local demand. The Assistant Director of Home Affairs(2) (AD(HA)2) replied that the Administration would carefully consider the opening hours of the aforesaid venues having regard to the pattern of local demand. Generally speaking, community halls opened at 9 am until 10 pm, with slight variations depending on the utilization situation of individual venues. He undertook to consult the local community on this aspect when the proposed building was near completion.

70. Noting that the multi-purpose function rooms would also serve as reading rooms for residents in the district, Mr Fred LI asked if the Administration had assessed whether there was a greater demand for library facilities in the district. He also queried whether the location of the proposed building was suitable for housing an integrated centre for new arrivals.

71. AD(HA)2 replied that the multi-purpose rooms which might also be used as reading rooms were planned having regard to the views of the Central and Western District Council (C&WDC) and some local groups. As regards the integrated centre for new arrivals, he advised that relevant statistics revealed that about 16% of the new arrivals in the territory resided on the Hong Kong Island. As the only integrated centre on the Island side was located in the Eastern District, it was considered appropriate to provide another one in Western District.

72. Mr IP Kwok-him said that while C&WDC called for early completion of the project, it had reservation on the allocation of eight storeys out of the total 16 storeys of the building for a carpark. The Administration had maintained that the allocation of eight storeys was necessary to provide a total of 200 parking spaces, which was the minimum number of parking spaces for viable operation of the carpark. He requested the Administration to further elaborate its position on this issue.

73. The Chief Traffic Engineer/Hong Kong advised that apart from the consideration of viable operation, the 200-space carpark was necessary to meeting the shortfall of 300 parking spaces in Kennedy Town. At present, three open space sites had been temporarily used as public carparks. These sites would eventually be resumed for development. The proposed 200 parking spaces would alleviate the shortfall situation.

74. Mr Fred LI considered that allocating eight out of 16 storeys of the government joint-user building for provision of a carpark might be a waste of precious resources. He also queried that having only some 20 parking spaces on each storey might result in low efficiency in the use of floor space. He asked whether other alternatives such as building an underground carpark at the project site had been considered. In response, DArchS advised that it would be very expensive to construct an underground carpark as the site was small and the underground soil was composed of granite, which posed further difficulties for construction.

75. Mr Fred LI observed that there was an urban service complex adjacent to the project site and the complex had a much larger footprint. In reply to his enquiry, DArchS confirmed that it was not possible to construct a carpark in the lower part of the complex as it had already been built. Mr IP Kwok-him said that according to his understanding, the original idea was to develop the urban service complex and the government joint-user building as one single project. The development of the government building was however held up due to the lack of a consensus on the facilities to be housed in the building and thus the construction of the urban service complex went ahead.

76. In reply to the Chairman's enquiry, DArchS advised that special arrangements would be made to maximize the space of the carpark for ease of circulation and to provide the maximum number of parking spaces. For example, the "Vehicular in & out" point at the building would be used exclusively by the users of the building, while other vehicles would use the entrance located in the adjacent urban service complex. The use of a half-ramp design would also maximize space usage.

77. The item was voted on and endorsed.

78. The meeting ended at 12:50.