

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)562/01-02
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Legislative Council
Panel on Transport

Minutes of special meeting held on
Thursday, 8 November 2001, at 8:30 am
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building

Members present : Hon Mrs Miriam LAU Kin-yee, JP (Chairman)
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon David CHU Yu-lin, JP
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, JP
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 Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon LEUNG Fu-wah, MH, JP
Hon WONG Sing-chi

Members absent : Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-yee, JP
Hon CHAN Kwok-keung
Hon Andrew WONG Wang-fat, JP
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, JP
Hon LAU Ping-cheung

Public officers : **Agenda item I**
attending

Transport Bureau

Mr Paul TANG
Deputy Secretary for Transport (1)

Ms Shirley LAM
Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport (5)

Transport Department

Mr Tony SO
Chief Engineer

Highways Department

Mr Eddie ROBLIN
Acting Project Manager,
Major Works Project Management Office

Mr Adrian NG
Deputy Project Manager,
Major Works Project Management Office

**Attendance by
invitation**

: Agenda item I

Tuen Mun District Council (TMDC)

Mr SO Shiu-shing
Chairman, TMDC Traffic and Transport Committee

Mr KWU Hon-keung
Convenor, TMDC Route 10 and
Deep Bay Link Project Working Group

Yuen Long District Council (YLDC)

Mr MAN Fu-wan
Chairman, YLDC Traffic and Transport Committee/
Chairman, San Tin Rural Committee

Mr TANG Kwan-shing
Member, YLDC/Vice Chairman, Ha Tsuen Rural Committee

Islands District Council (IsDC)

Miss YUNG Wing-sheung
Member, IsDC

Ha Tsuen Rural Committee

Mr TANG Chik-kit
Vice Chairman

Tuen Mun Rural Committee

Mr CHAN Kwok-wah
屯門掃管笏村村代表

Mr TSING Chin-hung
屯門鄉事委員會總務主任

屯門鄉郊區

Mr TO Shek-yuen
屯門鄉郊區當區議員

屯門掃管笏老青山村居民聯會

Mr LEUNG Kwok-kau
秘書

Mr KWOK Shiu-man
委員

Route 3 (CPS) Company Limited

Mr Winston K S CHU
Vice Chairman

Mr Sam M S CHOW
Managing Director, Wilbur Smith Associates Ltd.

Action Group Against Siu Lam Works (Route 10)

Mr NG Kwai-wah
Member, Route 10 Action Group

Ms Susanna CHAN
Member, Route 10 Action Group

World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong

Ms WOO Lai-yan
Conservation Officer

Save Our Shorelines Society

Ms Lisa HOPKINSON
Advisor

The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society

Mr Michael KILBURN
Vice Chairman

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 To receive public views on Route 10, Shenzhen Western Corridor and Deep Bay Link**
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|------------------------------------|---|
| (LC Paper No. CB(1)647/00-01 - | Information paper provided by the Administration on Route 10; |
| LC Paper No. CB(1)1059/00-01(03) - | Information paper provided by the Administration on Route 10; |
| LC Paper No. CB(1)1946/00-01(01) - | Information paper provided by the Administration on Shenzhen Western Corridor and Deep Bay Link; and |
| LC Paper No. CB(1)235/01-02(04) - | A set of drawings and maps provided by the Administration on Shenzhen Western Corridor and Deep Bay Link) |

The Chairman recapitulated that at the last Panel meeting held on 26 October 2001 when the item on “Shenzhen Western Corridor and Deep Bay Link” was discussed, general concerns had been raised by members, in particular about the supporting infrastructure on the Hong Kong side and their implementation programme. In view of the wide implications involved, members agreed that the Panel should hold a special meeting to receive public views on the two projects as well as Route 10.

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2. The Chairman welcomed the representatives of the Administration and the attending deputations to the meeting. Members noted that written submissions had been received from the Advisory Council on the Environment (LC Paper No. CB(1)212/01-02(06)) and Friends of the Earth (LC Paper No. CB(1)247/01-02(01)) which were unable to attend the meeting.

3. At the invitation of the Chairman, the Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport (5) briefly introduced the main points of the Administration's latest proposal for the Route 10 project as follows:

- (a) add road connections between Tsing Lung Bridge and the North Lantau Highway and widen the section of the latter between the existing toll plaza and Yam O Interchange;
- (b) delete the section along the coast of North Lantau;
- (c) add an interchange between Tsing Lung Bridge and Tuen Mun Road at Tsing Lung Tau; and
- (d) delete Siu Lam Link Road and replace it with a tunnel/viaduct scheme between Siu Lam and the approaches to Ting Kau Bridge.

4. The Chairman invited the attending deputations to take note of the above proposed changes to the Route 10 project. She then invited the deputations to give their views on the three projects - Route 10, Shenzhen Western Corridor (SWC) and Deep Bay Link (DBL).

Views of the deputations

*Tuen Mun District Council (TMDC)
(LC Paper No. CB(1)212/01-02(01))*

5. Mr SO Shiu-shing, TMDC Member, stated that the major concern raised by TMDC on DBL was the traffic impact of it on the road network in Tuen Mun. To address the possible traffic disruption, TMDC suggested a more direct road link from DBL to Yuen Long Highway and Route 3 (Country Park Section) (Route 3), instead of the proposed interchange at Lam Tei which would lead traffic directly to Tuen Mun Road. As to Route 10, TMDC was of the view that the project should be implemented in its totality and TMDC would only give its support if both the northern and southern sections were planned and implemented together.

6. Mr KWU Hon-keung, TMDC Member, advised that a working group had been formed under TMDC to follow up on the Route 10 and DBL projects. He also referred to the traffic implications and land resumption and compensation matters arising out of the

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projects and called on the Administration to make greater efforts to address the grave concerns raised by local residents. In particular, he called on the Administration to review the existing policy on land resumption and compensation, as well as rehousing arrangements for squatters to take into account the interests of those villagers who had settled in the area for many years.

Yuen Long District Council (YLDC)
(LC Paper No. CB(1)212/01-02(02))

7. Mr MAN Fu-wan, YLDC Member, stated that YLDC supported the DBL project in principle. However, in view of the existing congestion at Yuen Long Highway and the additional traffic to be generated by DBL, YLDC considered that the proposed widening of Yuen Long Highway would not be adequate to meet the demand. Hence, there should be a direct road link from Ngau Hom Shek to Route 3 via Tin Shui Wai North, Yuen Long Industrial Estate and Kam Tin. This suggestion had already been made to the Administration, but no response was forthcoming. He also shared the views expressed by TMDC that without Route 10 to provide relief, the traffic generated by DBL would have a detrimental impact on Tuen Mun Road.

8. Speaking also on behalf of Ha Tsuen Rural Committee, Mr TANG Kwan-shing, YLDC Member, said that the residents in Ha Tsuen supported the SWC project in principle. But he referred to the proposed tunnel section of DBL in Hung Shui Kiu and pointed out that this tunnel would disturb the ancestral graves and destroy the fung shui of the area. Hence, the local villagers were strongly opposed to the tunnel option. He called on the Administration to adopt an alignment that could avoid the burial ground.

Islands District Council (IsDC)
(LC Paper No. CB(1)225/01-02(01))

9. Miss YUNG Wing-sheung, IsDC Member, expressed her personal views on the three projects. She considered that in addition to Tsing Ma Bridge, there was a strategic need for providing an alternative access to cater for the developments on Lantau. Suitable connections should be made to major population centres to meet traffic demand. In addition, she remarked that when implementing the Route 10 project, the Administration should carefully consider the potential impacts on nearby residents and the environment, and adopt appropriate mitigation measures where necessary, such as the provision of noise barriers.

Ha Tsuen Rural Committee (HTRC)
(LC Paper No. CB(1)235/01-02(01))

10. Mr TANG Chik-kit of HTRC said that HTRC and local villagers were generally in support of SWC and DBL subject to the following conditions:

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- (a) no tunnel should be built so as to avoid any adverse fung shui implications;
- (b) a suitable landing point should be identified for DBL with slip roads connecting to Ha Tsuen;
- (c) the Administration should stand by its previous undertaking to assist the villagers in relocating their ancestral graves; and
- (d) funding should be allocated to improve the existing roads in Ha Tsuen area to meet the increasing traffic demand.

Mr TANG also expressed support for YLDC's suggestion for a direct road link from Ngau Hom Shek to Tin Shui Wai North, but considered that the said road should not pass through the central areas of Ha Tsuen.

*Tuen Mun Rural Committee (TMRC)
(LC Paper No. CB(1)235/01-02(02))*

11. Speaking also on behalf of the villagers of So Kwun Wat Tsuen, Mr CHAN Kwok-wah of TMRC expressed serious concern about the adverse impact caused by the passing of Route 10 through So Kwun Wat Tsuen. To supplement, Mr TSING Chin-hung of TMRC said that while TMRC supported the Administration's initiatives in the provision of transport infrastructures, the Administration should also respect the views put forward by the affected villagers. During the past two years, the villagers had met with relevant government officials many times to express their concerns but to no avail. He thus called on the Administration to properly address the concerns of the villagers, in particular, the 100 or so households affected by the northern section of Route 10, who were not eligible for rehousing or compensation under the existing policy.

屯門鄉郊區

12. Sharing the views raised by the representatives of TMRC, Mr TO Sheck-yuen of 屯門鄉郊區 called on the Administration to consider the following in the implementation of DBL:

- (a) suitable rehousing and compensation arrangements should be made for those villagers who were forced to leave their homes;
- (b) noise and visual impacts of the project should be properly addressed;
- (c) the alignment should be kept away from other developments, and adequate land should be resumed for the purpose of providing green areas, etc.;

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- (d) the Administration should review its land resumption policy to ensure that fair compensation was paid to the affected land owners; and
- (e) the concerns raised by the affected villagers should be brought to the attention of relevant policy bureaux for early resolution.

屯門掃管笏老青山村居民聯會

(LC Paper No. CB(1)212/01-02(03))

13. Citing the serious livelihood problems, fung shui implications and environmental impact arising out of the project, Mr LEUNG Kwok-kau of 屯門掃管笏老青山村居民聯會 stated the strong opposition of the villagers of Lo Tsing Shan Tsuen in So Kwun Wat on Route 10. Expressing doubts about the need and cost-effectiveness of the project, he considered that instead of wasting precious resources on the incomplete Route 10, the Administration should consider other alternatives to meet the traffic needs, such as Route 3 and the Lingdingyang Bridge. However, should the Administration insist on going ahead with its proposal, the section along So Kwun Wat should be in tunnel form and the alignment should shift to the northern valley so as to minimize disturbance on the local population concentrated in the southern valley.

Route 3 (CPS) Company Limited

(LC Paper Nos. CB(1)144/01-02(01) and CB(1)235/01-02(03))

14. Highlighting the uneven distribution of traffic at Tuen Mun Road and Route 3, Mr Winston CHU of Route 3 (CPS) Company Limited (Route 3 Company) said that there was clearly a case for utilizing Route 3 to provide relief to the anticipated increased congestion at Tuen Mun Road caused by the opening of SWC and DBL. This would not only help improve the financial situation of the Company, but also benefit the society as a whole in terms of the greater time and distance savings achieved. Under this consideration, the Company had developed an alternative proposal - the Western Highway which would provide a direct high-quality route from the new boundary crossing to Ting Kau. This would involve adding a new road from DBL through Hung Shui Kiu to Yuen Long Highway, widening Yuen Long Highway and constructing the western section of the proposed New Territories (NT) East-West Link.

15. Mr CHU pointed out that as the proposed Western Highway did not involve any tunnelling works and hence, would not be as technically difficult as Route 10, the project could be completed within a shorter timeframe and at lower cost. In addition, instead of relying on expertise from overseas countries, more local workers could be employed for the project. According to the Company's calculation, this highway could be completed in 2005 to tie in with the opening of SWC and DBL, but would only cost about \$3 billion which was merely one-tenth of the project cost of Route 10.

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16. Mr CHU added that with this proposal, the Administration could have more time on hand to resolve outstanding planning issues affecting the alignment and detailed design of Route 10 such as the location of new container terminals, crossings to Lantau Island and the future of Tuen Mun Road. The Administration should also conduct a comprehensive review on the road network and connections in Northwest NT with a view to achieving a more even distribution of traffic flow. Mr CHU advised that if the proposed highway was built, further discussions could be held between the Company and the Administration on measures to alleviate the toll burden of motorists such as by subsidies.

(Post-meeting note: A further submission provided by the Company was tabled at the meeting and subsequently issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)271/01-02(01).)

*Action Group Against Siu Lam Works (Route 10)
(LC Paper Nos. CB(1)139/01-02(01) and CB(1)225/01-02(02))*

17. Mr NG Kwai-wah of Action Group Against Siu Lam Works (Route 10) (the Action Group) highlighted the following problems with the Administration's planning for the SWC, DBL and Route 10 projects for members' consideration:

- (a) As many as seven highway projects had been planned in Tuen Mun and Yuen Long between 2002 and 2006. The increased use of construction trucks would inevitably create an unbearable burden on Tuen Mun Road which was already very congested;
- (b) With the completion of SWC and DBL in 2005, the situation would be further aggravated by the additional traffic generated by DBL. Notwithstanding the Administration's assessment that Yuen Long Highway and Route 3 could cope with the traffic demand during the initial operation of DBL, many members and the public were very concerned that much of the cross-boundary traffic coming from DBL would still use Tuen Mun Road, an untolled road. The Administration had so far failed to put forward any concrete measures to convince members and the public that such traffic would take to Yuen Long Highway and Route 3 at the Lam Tei Interchange; and
- (c) Regarding the planning to connect DBL with Route 10, it would be important to bear in mind that this strategic route was originally intended to serve the new container terminal facilities in Hong Kong. Given the uncertainties about the future location of such facilities, the Administration's decision to commit huge sums of moneys on the badly-planned Route 10 was premature and tantamount to a waste of public funds. Moreover, even if Route 10 was built, it would still depend on the

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toll strategy to ensure that traffic would be diverted off Tuen Mun Road. However, no information was given by the Administration on this crucial point.

18. In view of these problems and the plight faced by the residents in Tuen Mun, Mr NG said that the Action Group had the following suggestions to make:

- (a) To better serve SWC and DBL, the Administration should consider improving the connection between DBL and Yuen Long Highway and Route 3, such as by building a direct road link to Route 3 through Tin Shui Wai;
- (b) As a matter of priority, Tuen Mun Road should be widened and improved to meet the transport needs of Northwest NT;
- (c) The overall planning for Route 10 should be reviewed to take into account its strategic function of serving new container terminal facilities in Hong Kong; and
- (d) Instead of using Route 10 to provide an alternative access to the Hong Kong International Airport, the Administration should consider building a direct road link from Tuen Mun to the Airport in tunnel form.

World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong (WWF)
(LC Paper No. CB(1)212/01-02(04))

19. Ms WOO Lai-yan of WWF presented WWF's views on the SWC and Route 10 projects, as set out in its submission (LC Paper No. CB(1)212/01-02(04)). The major concerns of WWF were as follows:

- (a) Notwithstanding the Administration's commitment on SWC, the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) study for SWC should fully evaluate the environmental performance of different alternatives, including possible variations in terms of transport form and management measures, alignment and construction form;
- (b) Given that only the section of SWC in Hong Kong was subject to EIA study, it was unclear how the total impacts arising from the whole construction and operation of SWC and the cumulative impacts from the whole SWC project on the Deep Bay ecology would be properly assessed;
- (c) Construction works could cause changes in sedimentation and hydrological patterns in Deep Bay, in addition to direct reduction in mudflat area. Many bird and marine species would be adversely affected;

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- (d) It was likely that the operation of SWC would have significant and adverse impacts on the ecology of the migratory birds of the internationally important Mai Po and Inner Deep Bay Ramsar Sites; and
- (e) The cumulative impacts from both the northern and southern sections of Route 10 should be properly assessed even if the detailed planning for the northern section had yet to be finalized. Partial endorsement of the EIA of the southern section should not be used to justify the construction of the northern section and other connecting links in the future.

Save Our Shorelines Society (SOSS)
(LC Paper No. CB(1)212/01-02(05))

20. Reiterating the Society's position on Route 10 as previously presented to the Panel on 27 April 2001, Ms Lisa HOPKINSON of SOSS called on the Administration to review the whole concept of Route 10 due to major changes in planning.

21. As to SWC and DBL, Ms HOPKINSON highlighted the following concerns of the Society from the planning, process and policy perspectives:

- (a) SWC and DBL were assumed to be going ahead, even before an EIA study was conducted. The Administration should clarify whether any commitment had been made to the Shenzhen authorities in terms of implementing these projects;
- (b) As Route 10 and other major highway infrastructural projects were being dealt with in isolation, it was very difficult to assess the cumulative environmental and traffic impacts. According to the Third Comprehensive Transport Study, there would be significant and unacceptable increases in air and noise pollution, particularly in Northwest NT, simply due to the increased growth in road freight traffic;
- (c) The cumulative environmental impacts of SWC and DBL could not be viewed in isolation from Route 10. These projects should be reviewed as an infrastructural package rather than as individual projects, and environment and traffic studies and funding assessed on that basis; and
- (d) The Administration should also consider other alternatives to a fourth highway cross-boundary link. Efforts should be made to reduce the growth in cross-boundary road freight traffic and optimize its efficiency. Rather than simply building more roads to meet projected demand, the Government should be looking for ways to implement more sustainable

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solutions including a freight rail line to Kwai Chung, river trade, and reducing the number of empty vehicles moving across the boundary.

The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society (HKBWS)

22. Mr Michael KILBURN of HKBWS invited members to note the submission from the Society which was tabled at the meeting. He stated that the Society had lodged an objection against the gazettal of the southern section of Route 10. Subsequently, a meeting was held with representatives of the Administration to discuss the objection. However, HKBWS was under the impression that due to poor funding and execution of EIA work, insufficient survey work had been conducted to establish the types of birds which were using the site, as well as the potential impact of both the construction and operational phases of the project on these birds. As such, the Society declined to withdraw its objection. While HKBWS understood that this might extend the public consultation period required for the project and thus delay its completion, such delays could actually be avoided with improved performance from the project engineers and ecological consultants in respect of EIA work.

(Post-meeting note: The submission provided by the Society was subsequently issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)271/01-02(02).)

Discussion with the deputations

Congestion at Tuen Mun Road

23. Notwithstanding the call from Route 3 Company and other deputations for providing a better connection between DBL and Route 3, Mr Albert HO was worried that without an appropriate toll strategy from the Company, the traffic coming from DBL would still prefer to use Tuen Mun Road. Hence, he sought the Company's position in effecting toll reduction to attract more cross-boundary vehicles to use Route 3 under its proposal.

24. Mr Albert CHAN referred to the gap between the completion of SWC/DBL and Route 10 and considered that it would be most important to ensure that no additional congestion was brought by the operation of SWC/DBL on Tuen Mun Road. Hence, the Company's position on attracting increased usage of Route 3 was pivotal to his support for the Administration's proposal on SWC and DBL. In this connection, he asked whether concrete measures would be taken by the Company to attract more container trucks to use Route 3, such as by reducing tunnel toll during the morning peak.

25. Acknowledging the views and suggestions from members, Mr Winston CHU replied that without any discussion of the Board, he was not in a position to respond to members' questions on behalf of the Company. However, he stressed that the existing toll of Route 3 was well below the level permitted under the law. But, given the toll-free

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Tuen Mun Road and prevailing economic condition, the number of lorries/container trucks using Route 3 was still very low. Various measures had already been taken to stimulate usage, but no significant effect was seen. He stated that the Government should have the responsibility to discuss with the Company on how the existing tunnel resources of Route 3 could be better utilized to help revive Hong Kong's economy.

26. Mr CHU further said that as the Administration's present proposal on DBL would clearly fail to lead traffic to Route 3, the Company had put forward its alternative proposal with a view to providing some help in the short term. However, it would require further discussions with the Government in order to resolve the financial difficulties faced by the Company. The Company would welcome any opportunities to discuss the matter with the Administration. Mr CHU added that the toll strategy of Route 10 would also affect the usage of Tuen Mun Road and Route 3, and might create even more congestion on Tuen Mun Road.

27. Mr Albert CHAN considered that the Company should have its own position in the matter, instead of asking the Government to take all the responsibilities. He said that if members were not assured that proper connection was made for SWC and DBL, they might consider deferring the two projects to tie in with the completion of Route 10. In this respect, the Chairman requested the Company to consider the views expressed by Mr CHAN.

28. Mr Abraham SHEK however opined that it would not be appropriate to ask a private company to come up with measures to address the problem of traffic congestion. In order to make use of existing tunnel resources to alleviate congestion, there might be a case for the Government to consider buying back the ownership of Route 3 and turn it into a toll-free route. In response to Mr SHEK's enquiry, Mr Winston CHU advised that other arrangements might be made for the Government to pay tunnel toll directly to the Company or to provide subsidies to motorists.

29. Considering that the implementation of any highway projects in Tuen Mun would inevitably affect Tuen Mun Road, Mr David CHU asked whether other measures, such as allowing the trucks to transport the construction materials at night, could be put in place to alleviate the problem. In reply, Mr NG Kwai-wah said that due to the high costs involved, it would not be feasible from the Administration's point of view to carry out construction work at night. Although the Action Group was not against the implementation of transport infrastructures, the programme of such projects should be phased out. In order to cope with the increased demand, Tuen Mun Road should be widened first as a matter of priority.

30. Mr Albert CHAN referred to the functions to be served by Route 10 in alleviating the traffic demand on the road network in Tuen Mun and considered that its construction would be beneficial to the residents of Tuen Mun. He also welcomed the

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Administration's latest revisions to the design of Route 10 with no additional costs required.

DBL

31. Mr CHENG Kar-foo considered that while the sentiments of the local villagers should be respected, it was also important to strike a balance between fung shui implications and development of transport infrastructures. In addition, many tunnels had already been built in NT for various highway projects. In this connection, he sought elaboration from HTRC on the extent and degree of fung shui impact of the proposed tunnel section of DBL.

32. In reply, Mr TANG Chik-kit advised that more than 1 000 graves from Ha Tsuen and other villages at the Burial Ground/YL No. 55 would be affected. Considering that irreparable damage would be done to the "dragon vein" and other less expensive options were available, the villagers were strongly opposed to any tunnelling works. Instead of risking the strong resistance from the villagers, the Administration should address the concern of the affected villagers and discuss with them suitable compensation arrangements. To supplement, Mr TANG Kwan-shing said that when Ha Tsuen was first consulted on the DBL project, no tunnel was proposed and its support was only given on that basis.

33. The Chairman thanked the deputations for their views on SWC, DBL and Route 10. She advised that the Panel would discuss the three projects again with the Administration at its meeting on 23 November 2001 and she welcomed further submissions from the deputations.

II Any other business

34. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 10:30 am.

Legislative Council Secretariat

11 December 2001