

**Extract of Confirmed Minutes of the 50th Meeting of the
Environmental Impact Assessment Subcommittee of
the Advisory Council on the Environment
held on 13 December 1999 at 4:00 p.m.**

Present:

Professor LAM Kin-che (Chairman)
Mr LIN Chaan-ming
Dr NG Cho-nam
Mr Plato YIP
Miss Alex YAU
Professor Peter HILLS
Mr Otto POON
Mr Howard CHAN (Secretary)

Absent with Apologies:

Dr HO Kin-chung
Mr Barrie COOK

In Attendance:

Mr Elvis AU	Assistant Director (Environmental Assessment & Noise), Environmental Protection Department (EPD) (AD(EA)/EPD)
Mr S P LAU	Assistant Director (Conservation), Agriculture and Fisheries Department (AFD) (AD(Conservation)/AFD)
Miss Agnes KWAN	Assistant Secretary (Environment), Planning, Environment and Lands Bureau

In Attendance for Agenda Item 3:

Mr W C CHAN	Chief Engineer/Major Works 1-1, HyD
Dr Sam C K WONG	Senior Engineer 1/Route 10, HyD (SE1(Route 10)/HyD)
Mr Sarath P DIAS	Senior Engineer 2/Route 10, HyD (SE2(Route 10)/HyD)
Mr K S LEE, David	Engineer/Strategy Roads(2), Transport Department (E(SR2)/TD)

Mr C P H HO	Senior Nature Conservation Officer/South, AFD
Mr D K C CHOI	Senior Marine Conservation Officer, AFD (SMCO/AFD)
Mr John D C BURT	Director, Mott Connell Ltd (Mott) (D/Mott)
Dr Anne WATKER-ZERIS	Associate, Mott
Mr Richard KWAN	Technical Director, Environmental Resources Management (ERM)
Mr Josh LAM	Principal Consultant, ERM (PC/ERM)
Mr James WORTHINGTON	Senior Landscape Architect, ACLA Ltd (SLA/ACLA)
Mr Martin G STEPHENSON	Divisional Director, Townland Consultants Ltd
Mr H M WONG	Principal Environmental Protection Officer, EPD (PEPO/EPD)
Mr K H TO	Senior Environmental Protection Officer, EPD

Agenda Item 3: Route 10 - North Lantau to Yuen Long Highway (Southern Section)
(ACE EIA Paper 30/99)

3. The Chairman welcomed the presentation team and invited Members to raise their concerns on the report.

Division of the Project

4. In response to the Chairman, SE1(Route 10)/HyD explained that the project was divided into two EIA studies since it was necessary to go ahead with the study on Southern section first. He stated that the Southern section involved the most complicated and time-consuming task, the construction of Tsing Lung Bridge, of the entire project. While the EIA study of the Northern section could only be completed by mid 2000, the Southern section had to be gazetted in January 2000 so as to start the necessary land acquisition work and to meet the programme schedule which was formulated according to the predicted traffic demand between Lantau and the rest of the territory.

5. AD(EA)/EPD explained that there was internal administrative requirement under which the EIA reports of government projects must be submitted to and endorsed by the ACE before proceeding to gazettal. The consent of the Secretary for Planning, Environment and Lands must be sought if otherwise.

6. To address the concerns of two Members on the separate submission of the two reports and the possible constraints put on the Subcommittee's future discussion on the Northern one, SE1(Route 10)/HyD assured Members that the currently proposed configuration of Route 10 was already the best option as confirmed in its own study as well as the Third Comprehensive Transport Study (CTS-3). Meanwhile, the cumulative impact of both sections would be addressed in the EIA report of the Northern section. He also confirmed that no construction works of the Southern section would take place prior to the submission and endorsement of the Northern section EIA report by the ACE.

7. D/Mott further elaborated that based on the preliminary findings, the potential environmental impact of the Northern section was negligible, except the proposed Lam Tei Tunnel which had no implications on the Southern section. SE2(Route 10)/HyD added that due to the scale of the project, it was impractical to defer the programme schedule of the Southern section until the completion of the Northern section EIA study.

8. A Member alerted the project proponent that whatever the Subcommittee's recommendation on the Southern section EIA report was, the Northern Section EIA report to be submitted would be discussed based on its own merits. The proponent was aware that the Subcommittee's comments on the Southern section EIA report did not imply its similar recommendation on the Northern one. AD(EA)/EPD supplemented that each report submitted under the EIA Ordinance would be scrutinized separately and independently.

Toll Plaza

9. Upon the enquiry of a Member, D/Mott clarified that due to space requirement, the toll plaza was proposed to be located in Lantau in the report. However, subject to the on-going discussion with Transport Department and Highways Department on the use of "auto toll" facility, land requirement for toll plaza may be reduced and re-location might be possible in the detailed design stage. In response to that Member's further query, SE2(Route 10)/HyD clarified that the toll plaza was not sited to make connection with the Hong Kong - Lantau Link which might not materialise. He supplemented that the toll plaza was to toll for Route 10, which could end at North Lantau without the additional connection to the Green Island/Hong Kong Island.

Marine Ecological Impact

10. To address a Member's enquiry on the effectiveness of air bubble curtain, SMCO/AFD confirmed that according to previous experience, Chinese White Dolphins would not be adversely affected by the underwater construction noise with the implementation of air bubble curtain as a mitigation measure, though they might move a bit faster so as to stay away from the underwater noise. SE2(Route 10)/HyD also explained that the excavation was not large and relatively small charges would be used for blasting to minimize the impact.

Alignment Options

11. In response to a Member, D/Mott said that the Preferred Alternative Alignment (PAA) was a more favourable alignment option than the Feasibility Study Alignment (FSA) due to technical as well as environmental reasons. Technically, the FSA had to pass over the North Lantau Highway (NLH) and the Airport Railway which would thus place excessive constraints on the construction works. Stringent site safety procedures together with lane closures on NLH would be required for the construction of North Lantau Tunnel. Environmentally, the reclamation area would be reduced and resumption of the villages at Fa Peng and Tso Wan would be avoided in the PAA option.

12. To address a Member's concerns on PAA's potential impact on the embayments at Fa Peng and Tso Wan, D/Mott stated that while the FSA would require a substantial retained fill structure for the toll plaza at Tso Wan, the PAA would maintain the natural embayments and allow the way of life within the villages to be preserved. SE2(Route 10)/HyD explained upon the enquiry of AD(EA)/EPD that it was technically infeasible to grow big trees along the proposed viaducts, but it might be possible to grow small shrubs. However, he had reservation on the effectiveness of such planting. AD(Conservation)/AFD said that with special arrangement, shrubs could be planted as in the case along the fly-over linking Garden Road and Robinson Road.

13. In response to a Member, SE1(Route 10)/HyD explained that if a connection was adopted for linking Route 10 to NLH, huge structures would be needed to cater for the great difference in the gradient between the two roads. It was undesirable in view of the large piece of land to be taken up and reclaimed for that purpose. SE1(Route 10)/HyD also said that the detour via the Cho Ko Wan Link Road and Yam O Interchange to NLH would take less than 5 minutes.

Ecological Impact

14. In response to a Member, PC/ERM confirmed that the estimated working area was already taken into account when calculating the 0.2 ha loss of Fung Shui woodland. SLA/ACLA supplemented that apart from that, the major terrestrial habitat loss arising from the project included 0.8 ha of secondary woodland, 11.6 ha of scrubland and freshwater streams. Among them, only the Fung Shui woodland was considered ecological valuable and hence 10 ha of compensatory re-planting and transplanting would be implemented for the total loss of approximately 1 ha of woodland area on the whole. The project proponent also undertook that the use of native species would be maximized and that the detailed tree survey of the Fung Shui woodland and the finalized plan of compensatory re-planting and transplanting would be provided to the Subcommittee for reference once available.

Highways
Department*Justifications of the Project*

15. In response to a Member, SE1(Route 10)/HyD reiterated that Route 10 was needed as an alternative road link to Lantau and connection with the North West New Territories (NWNT) so as to meet the projected traffic demand generated by cross boundary activities. E(SR2)/TD further explained that the project would cater for the anticipated developments in NWNT and Lantau in addition to the cross boundary activities, and that the project was considered to be urgently in need by various studies such as the Feasibility Study for Additional Cross-border Link, the North shore Lantau Development Feasibility Study, CTS-3 and the Route 10 Study itself.

16. Upon the enquiry of a Member, SE1(Route 10)/HyD clarified that CTS-3 only provided a framework for the transport infrastructure required to meet the projected population growth and consequential developments. Justifications for individual projects were separately assessed based on their own merits. Such a mechanism applied to Route 10 as well.

17. A Member further queried the need of Route 10 in relation to the development in NWNT as he understood that the Hung Shui Kiu new town to be developed in that area would be largely served by railway instead of road network. Another Member was of the view that the justifications of further expansion of road network should be subject to the findings of the on-going Second Railway Development Study.

18. The Chairman pointed out and Members agreed that while the Subcommittee could comment on the project's environmental impacts according to requirements stipulated in the Technical Memorandum of the EIA Ordinance, the Council should be asked to consider the justifications for the road project in details.

(Post-meeting notes: The project was discussed in the Council's meeting on 20 December 1999.)

Comprehensive Briefing on the Development of Lantau

19. A Member expressed strong concerns on the lack of an overall picture on the potential development of Lantau while various EIA studies related to the Island were yet to be finalized. He suggested that the Council should be asked to organize a comprehensive briefing in that aspect.

ACE
Secretariat

(Post-meeting notes: The Council's Secretariat was informed of Members' request.)

20. The Chairman proposed and Members agreed that subject to further deliberation on the justification of the project at the next ACE meeting, to recommend to the Council to endorse the report with the following conditions:

- construction of the Southern section of Route 10 would not commence until the EIA report of the Northern section was completed and endorsed;
- when the EIA report for the Northern section was submitted under the EIA Ordinance, the cumulative environmental impact of both the Southern and Northern sections of Route 10 and all relevant findings and recommendations in both EIA studies could be subject to review; and
- the findings of the design review study of the toll plaza would be submitted to the Subcommittee once finalized.

**Extract of Confirmed Minutes of the 69th Meeting of
the Advisory Council on the Environment
held on 20 December 1999 at 2:30 p.m.**

Present:

Mr. Peter H. Y. WONG, GBS, JP (Chairman)
Mr. CHAN Kwok-wai, JP
Miss Ann CHIANG
Professor Peter HILLS
Dr. HO Kin-chung
Professor LAM Kin-che
Mr. Edwin LAU
Mr. Joseph LAU Man-wai, JP
The Hon. Dr. LEONG Che-hung
Mr. LIN Chaan-ming
Dr. NG Cho-nam
Mr. Otto L. T. POON
Mr. Michael J. D. RUSHWORTH
Ms Iris TAM
Miss Alex YAU
Mr. Plato YIP
Mrs. Philomena LEUNG (Secretary)

Absent with Apologies:

Mr. Clement CHEN
Mr. Barrie COOK
Mr. Paul C. H. FAN
Professor Anthony HEDLEY, JP
Mr. PAO Ping-wing, JP
Mr. TAN Teng Huat

In Attendance:

Mr. Kim SALKELD	Deputy Secretary (Environment), Planning, Environment & Lands Bureau (PELB)
Mr. Rob LAW	Director of Environmental Protection
Mr. S P LAU	Assistant Director (Conservation), Agriculture and Fisheries Department (AFD)
Mr. Raymond CHIU	Assistant Director (Technical Services), Planning Department (Plan D)
Dr. Constance CHAN	Assistant Director (Health Adm & Planning), Department of Health
Ms. Polly LEUNG	Principal Information Officer, Environmental Protection Department (EPD)
Mr. Maurice LOO	Assistant Secretary (Environment) 4, PELB
Miss Cora SO	Executive Officer (Environment), PELB

Agenda Item 4: Report of the 50th EIA Subcommittee Meeting
(ACE Paper 51/99)

Route 10 - North Lantau to Yuen Long Highways (Southern Section)

24. A Member briefed Members on the Subcommittee's views and recommendations on the EIA report of "Route 10". The Chairman then welcomed DPM(MW)/Hy D, MCE(MW)/Hy D and CE(SI)/TD to the meeting.

25. A Member asked whether there was a master plan for the whole development of Lantau. Another Member recalled that at the last EIA Subcommittee meeting he did request the Administration to provide a comprehensive list of all current studies on Lantau so that the Council could have a full picture. That another Member added that there was a feeling amongst Members that one project on Lantau was at present being justified on the basis of another planned project.

26. A Member said that the proposed scale of Route 10 could only be justified if it was linked to Hong Kong Island because Lantau alone needed not be served by such a big road. In this regard, the transport master plan for the whole territory should also be presented.

27. In response to Members' query, DPM(MW)/Hy D said that the southern section of Route 10 would be connected via Chok Ko Wan Link Road to the Yam O Interchange which was provided to connect Route 10 with the existing North Lantau Highway. Route 10 would therefore provide an alternative access to Lantau and the New Airport. With the investigation and preliminary design assignment still on-going and a full EIA yet to be carried out, he was unable to give Members a full picture of the environmental impacts of the northern section of Route 10. However, given that the southern section would include Tsing Lung Bridge which would take some five years to build, it is necessary to commence the design of the section as early as possible. As such, it was considered appropriate to divide the EIA for the preliminary design of the project into two phases, one for the northern section and the other for the southern section. He assured Members that the EIA report for the northern section would take into account the cumulative environmental impact of the southern section, and construction works would not commence until both EIA reports were endorsed by the Council.

28. The Chairman supported the provision of the bridge because of the necessity of providing an alternative road access from Hong Kong to Lantau. However, Route 10 would appear to terminate at a toll plaza instead of link to the Yam O Interchange under the present plan. DPM(MW)/Hy D clarified that the whole of Route 10, from Yuen Long Highway to North Lantau including its connection to Yam O Interchange, would be completed by 2007.

29. In response to a Member's comments about a direct link between Route 10 and the North Lantau Expressway, DPM(MW)/Hy D explained that there were serious engineering problems in providing a connection for vehicles to travel safely at 100km/hr. The proposed link road would need to have a sufficiently large turning radius and could not avoid having to cross the North Lantau Expressway as well as the Airport Railway, thus disrupting traffic on both the Highway and the Railway.

30. A Member said that she had reservations on the need for a dual 3-lane configuration for Route 10. She noted that all the justifications provided by the proponent to support the project were based on studies currently under review. DPM(MW)/Hy D said that Route 10, apart from providing an alternative access to the Airport, also served the developments in north Lantau in addition to the existing and proposed developments in North West New Territories (NWNT), and traffic generated from the proposed new boundary crossing. A major project like Route 10 took many years from planning, design construction to completion. It would therefore be essential to start the planning and designing work as early as possible.

31. A Member shared that the last spoken Member's concern that Route 10 itself would eventually be used as justifications for other future development projects on Lantau and would preempt the need for developing other modes of transport. He said that the Administration should consider initiating traffic management measures to reduce the need for building more roads.

32. A Member shared Members' concern and urged the project proponent to provide more basic information, such as related development proposals and traffic demand figures, to convince Members about the need of the project.

33. In addition to providing an alternative road link to Lantau, CE(SI)/TD of Transport Department said that Route 10 would also connect with the proposed Deep Bay Link to relieve cross-boundary traffic. She added that Route 10 would also cater for substantial growth in both the NWNT and north Lantau areas, the population of which would increase from 0.8 million in 1996 to 1.4 million by 2011 and 1.6 million by 2016, and from 20,000 in 1999 to 360,000 by 2016 respectively.

34. Two Members pointed out that the population growth of NWNT and north Lantau should be supported by a railway system which was more environmentally-friendly. A third Member commented that a single railway system would not be adequate to serve all the population generated in the region and a highway system would still be necessary. In response to the Chairman's comments, DS(E)/PELB clarified that Route 10 would not link up directly with south Lantau, and a railway system will link up the Yam O Interchange with the Disney Theme Park development.

35. A Member asked whether Route 10 would have surplus capacity or potential to expand if the Government reverted back to its original proposal of building container terminals in the South East of Lantau and having a separate road link to Hong Kong Island. DPM(MW)/Hy D said that having a separate road connection between Lantau and Hong Kong Island may divert traffic to other road links and it would be necessary to conduct further investigations to ascertain the traffic impact. CE(SI)/TD supplemented that sensitivity tests with different planning scenarios have been conducted and all the results indicated that a dual 3-lane configuration was needed for Route 10.

36. A Member said that it would be useful to make reference to the sensitivity tests results and suggested that such information should be presented together with the EIA report in future submissions. The Chairman requested the proponent to provide the tests data to facilitate the Council in arriving at a recommendation.

Hy D

37. DPM(MW)/Hy D said that the full justifications of the project had been presented to and endorsed by the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC) of LegCo in November and he would give Members a copy of the PWSC paper for reference. He noted that LegCo Members had pressed the Administration to implement the Route 10 project as soon as possible in the course of the discussion at the PWSC meeting. The Chairman suggested that the proponent should present to Members the full justifications of the project as presented to LegCo Members. [Copies of the PWSC paper were circulated for Members' reference.]

38. The Chairman said that the Council would need time to digest the data requested and it would be desirable to have another meeting to discuss the project and to come up with a recommendation. DEP pointed out that the delay might exceed the 60-day statutory period for providing comments on EIA reports. The Chairman said that the proponent could attend the next EIA Subcommittee meeting and if Subcommittee Members were satisfied, other Members could endorse the EIA report by circulation.

39. DEP reminded Members that under the EIA Ordinance, the Council's role was to consider the technical aspects of an EIA report and that the Council could not reject the report because it was not satisfied with the need for the project. The Chairman said that he understood the point but Members would feel uncomfortable in endorsing an EIA report before they were convinced about the need for the project.

40. A Member said that EPD could extend the 60-day period if they required additional information from the project proponent. DEP replied that he would need to have a valid reason for asking for additional information under the EIA Ordinance. As such, he would need to seek legal advice on whether he was empowered to extend the statutory period given the present circumstances.

41. Given that the proponent had already secured funding endorsement from LegCo, a Member questioned the urgency for seeking the Council's endorsement of the EIA report. DPM(MW)/Hy D said that they were working under a tight schedule and they intended to gazette the southern section of Route 10 under the Roads (Works, Use and Compensation) Ordinance by next month. He would like to seek the endorsement of the Council before initiating the gazettal procedures when members of the public would be allowed to comment on the project.

42. Upon clarification, DEP confirmed that the statutory period for considering the EIA report would end on 29 January 2000. The Chairman suggested that the proponent provide Members with additional information and address Members' concern at the next EIA Subcommittee meeting scheduled for 3 January 2000. If Subcommittee Members were satisfied, other Members could endorse the EIA report by circulation. Otherwise, the next Council meeting could be advanced to say 24 January 2000 to further discuss the report.

Hy D

43. A Member suggested that the proponent should postpone the gazettal procedures of the project until the Council had a definitive decision on the EIA report. Another Member said that it was appropriate to adhere to the practice of only initiating gazettal procedures after the endorsement of the Council.

44. In response to a Member's query, DPM(MW)/Hy D confirmed that the Finance Committee of LegCo had already given funding approval for the detailed design of the project. Since the funding application was only related to the design of the project, the environmental implications of just doing the designs were considered to be insignificant. DEP clarified that the proponent would still be required to seek funding approval from the Finance Committee for the construction works.

45. A Member was concerned that public money would be wasted on the detailed design of the project if the Council did not endorse the EIA report and the project was shelved. As such, it would be prudent to have the EIA report endorsed before seeking LegCo's funding approval for the detailed design of the project. Another Member shared that Member's concern that the environmental implication paragraphs of the PWSC submissions were misleading. A third Member said that he would bring this issue to the attention of LegCo members.

46. DEP said that there were administrative guidelines which stipulated the need for Government departments to consult the Council on projects before submitting the proposal to LegCo and undergoing the relevant gazettal procedures unless there were strong reasons for not doing so.

47. A Member suggested that the proponent provide Members with a copy of the minutes of the concerned PWSC meeting before the next EIA Subcommittee meeting since some of Members' questions were already raised at that meeting.

Environment and Food Bureau
January 2000

**Extract of Confirmed Minutes of the 51st Meeting of the
Environmental Impact Assessment Subcommittee of
the Advisory Council on the Environment
held on 3 January 2000 at 4:00 p.m.**

Present:

Professor LAM Kin-che (Chairman)
Mr LIN Chaan-ming
Dr NG Cho-nam
Mr Plato YIP
Miss Alex YAU
Mr Otto POON
DR HO Kin-chung
Mr Howard CHAN (Secretary)

Absent with Apologies:

Mr Barrie COOK
Professor Peter HILLS

In Attendance:

Mr Elvis AU	Assistant Director (Environmental Assessment & Noise), Environmental Protection Department (EPD) (AD(EA)/EPD)
Mr S P LAU	Assistant Director (Conservation), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)
Miss Agnes KWAN	Assistant Secretary, Environment and Food Bureau

In Attendance for Agenda Item 4:

Ms Shirley Lam	Principal Assistant Secretary, Transport Bureau (PAS/TB)
Mr John Chai	Deputy Project Manager/Major Works (1), Highways Department (HyD) (DPM(MW)/HyD)
Mr W C Chan	Chief Engineer/Major Works 1-1, HyD
Mrs Joanna Kwok	Chief Engineer/Strategic Roads, Transport Department (CE(SR)/TD)
Mr H M Wong	Principal Environmental Protection Officer, EPD

Agenda Item 4: Route 10 - North Lantau to Yuen Long Highways (Southern Section)

(ACE EIA Paper 30/99)

11. The Chairman welcomed the presentation team and explained that the Subcommittee was directed by ACE to have further deliberation on the justifications of the project before making final recommendation to the Council.

Justifications of the Project

12. DPM(MW)/HyD stated that there was a robust need for a dual 3 lane design for the proposed Route 10 which had been confirmed by various related studies, even without taking into account the yet to be decided Hong Kong Lantau Link (HKLL).

13. Upon the enquiry of a Member, DPM(MW)/HyD undertook that appropriate mitigation measures would be implemented if HKLL materialised and resulted in congestion to Route 10 due to the increased traffic flow between Hong Kong Island and Lantau. PAS/TB supplemented that the Administration had yet to have a firm programme for HKLL since the project was not considered to be needed at this stage. She undertook that the Administration would closely monitor and review the situation and, if and when HKLL was considered for implementation, the project would need to be justified based on its merits and the EIA concerned would fully assess and address the cumulative impact of all related projects before it could proceed.

Alignment Option and the Toll Plaza

14. In response to a Member, DPM(MW)/HyD confirmed that subject to detail design, the proposed alignment together with the toll plaza was already the best practical option with due considerations to engineering and technical constraints. He further explained that due to aviation and marine restrictions, the proposed Tsing Lung Bridge was already designed to have a maximum span. Reclamation would be needed if otherwise. AD(EA)/EPD further pointed out that reclamation was not a practical alternative since the waters concerned was essential in maintaining the tidal flow of the harbour. DPM(MW)/HyD however undertook to continue exploring the possibility of reducing the size of the toll plaza and relocating the toll plaza by adopting more auto-toll facilities through further discussion with relevant departments.

Traffic Impact Assessment

15. To address a Member's concerns on the traffic impact assessment in relation to the project, DPM(MW)/HyD stated that the impact to be caused by this project on the existing transport network had already been taken into account in the EIA report. The worst case scenario, i.e. high traffic flow prediction, was adopted in the assessment irrespective of the presence of HKLL. CE(SR)/TD also stated that the traffic impact assessment had already taken into account the recommendations of other relevant traffic analysis including the Second Railway Development Study and the Third Comprehensive Transport Study.

16. Upon the query of a Member, DPM(MW)/HyD confirmed that alternative traffic arrangement would be considered in case the traffic capacity of Route 10 was exceeded in future as a result of further development subsequent to the implementation of the project and this would be subject to separate environment impact assessment.

17. A Member enquired whether the Cho Ko Wan Link Road (CKWLR) would be implemented. AD(EA)/EPD stated that the CKWLR would be discussed in detail in the EIA report on "Northshore Lantau Development Feasibility Study", which would be submitted together with another EIA report on "Construction of an International Theme Park in Penny's Bay of North Lantau and Its Essential Associated Infrastructures" to be submitted to the Subcommittee in due course.

18. The Chairman proposed and Members agreed to recommend to the Council to endorse the report with the following conditions:

- construction of the Southern section of Route 10 would not commence until the EIA report of the Northern section was completed and endorsed;
- when the EIA report for the Northern section was submitted under the EIA Ordinance, the cumulative environmental impact of both the Southern and Northern sections of Route 10 and all relevant findings and recommendations in both EIA studies could be subject to review; and
- the findings of the design review study of the toll plaza would be submitted to the Subcommittee once finalized.

19. As a separate issue, the Chairman proposed and Members agreed to recommend to the Council to:

- (a) set up a mechanism to monitor the progress and development of the findings of the Third Comprehensive Transport Study regularly so that Members could be briefed on the overall development of transport planning of the territory; and
- (b) suggest to the Sustainable Development Council, when established, to discuss the issue of a sustainable transport strategy for Hong Kong.

**EIA Subcommittee Secretariat
March 2000**

**Extract of Confirmed Minutes of the 88th Meeting of
the Advisory Council on the Environment
held on 17 September 2001 at 2:30 p.m.**

Present:

Mr. Peter H. Y. WONG, GBS, JP (Chairman)
Prof. Anthony HEDLEY, BBS, JP
Mr. Edward S. T. HO, SBS, JP
Mr. KWOK Kwok-chuen, BBS
Prof. LAM Kin-che
Mr. Edwin C. K. LAU
Mr. Peter Y. C. LEE, SBSt.J
Mr. LIN Chaan-ming
Dr. NG Cho-nam
Mrs. Mei NG
Mr. PAO Ping-wing, JP
Mr. Michael J. D. RUSHWORTH
Ms Iris TAM
Prof. WONG Yuk-shan, JP
Miss Alex YAU
Ms. Jessie WONG (Secretary)

Absent with Apologies:

Mr. Daniel M. C. CHENG
Mr. Barrie COOK
Prof. Peter HILLS
Dr. HO Kin-chung
Prof. Dennis S. C. LAM
Dr. LEONG Che-hung, GBS, JP
Mr. Otto L. T. POON
Mr. LOH Ah Tuan

In Attendance:

Mrs. Stella HUNG	Acting Secretary for the Environment and Food
Mr. Thomas CHOW	Deputy Secretary (C), Environment and Food Bureau (EFB)(DS(C)/EFB)
Mr. Donald TONG	Deputy Secretary (B), EFB
Mr. Rob LAW, JP	Director of Environmental Protection
Mr. Raymond CHIU	Assistant Director (Technical Services), Planning Department
Mr. C C LAY	Assistant Director (Conservation), Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD)

Miss Petula POON Chief Executive Officer (C), EFB
Ms. Cora SO Executive Officer (C), EFB

In Attendance for Agenda Item 6:

Ms. Shirley LAM Principal Assistant Secretary, Transport Bureau (PAS/TB)
Mr. T K LEE Chief Engineer, Highways Department (HyD) (CE/HyD)
Mr. C K LIN Senior Engineer, HyD (SE/HyD)
Mr. Tony SO Chief Engineer, Planning Br. Transport Department (CE/TD)
Mr. Patrick LAI Senior Nature Conservation Officer, AFCD (SNCO/AFCD)
Mr. Eric CHAN Associate Director, Over Arup & Partners (AD/OAP)
Mr. Alan KWOK Managing Director, Environmental Management Ltd
(MD/EML)

Action

Agenda Item 6: Shenzhen Western Corridor and Deep Bay Link
(ACE Paper 37/2001)

56. The Chairman welcomed PAS/TB and her team to the meeting. PAS/TB introduced the background of the proposed new boundary crossing followed by a detailed presentation of the proposed alignment of the crossing and link roads by AD/OAP.

57. The Chairman suggested that TB should arrange a visit for Members to study the sites involved in the project so that Members could gain a better understanding about the project and the environmental issues concerned. PAS/TB agreed.

[The Chairman handed over the chair to a Member (the Acting Chairman) and left the meeting at this juncture due to other commitments.]

58. The Acting Chairman recalled that when the paper on cross border link was submitted to the EIA Subcommittee a few years ago, the project proponent said that the EIA of the project would be conducted in two phases, the first being the study on alignments and options. He noted that the findings of that study were not included in the paper and asked if TB could provide such details to Members.

59. PAS/TB agreed. She said that the preliminary design for Deep Bay Link (DBL) had already started whereas consultants had just been commissioned for the preliminary design of the Shenzhen Western Corridor (SWC). TB

60. A Member considered the timetable for the project too optimistic. For instance, the gazettal of the project was planned for 2002 while the EIA study had not yet been completed. He agreed with the Acting Chairman that more information on alternative alignment/options and their pros and cons would be required to convince Members that the proposed alignment/option was the best choice. He was particularly concerned as to why the tunnel option was abandoned because the proposed option would have adverse impact on mangroves and mudflats.

61. A Member appreciated the Government's objective to relieve traffic congestion at the borders and at the same time assist the economic development of the two sides. However, he queried why the proposed link was connected to Shekou via ecologically sensitive areas instead of to Shenzhen.

62. PAS/TB explained that the link was connected to Shekou at the request of Shenzhen for mainly two reasons. The first was that the three existing cross border links were all connected to the heart of the Shenzhen city where there was no capacity to cope with further increase in traffic volume. Secondly, because of economic development within the Pearl River Delta Region, more and more traffic was estimated to head towards the direction of Shekou.

63. A Member asked whether there were agreed standards for EIA studies of joint Mainland and Hong Kong projects. On road links, she also asked how the Administration would encourage drivers to use Route 3 instead of Tuen Mun Highway which was toll-free. Thirdly, she asked whether there would be any measures to step up enforcement of preventing vehicles using illegal diesel from entering Hong Kong.

64. PAS/TB said that Hong Kong and Shenzhen had their own environmental legislation and neither party had jurisdiction over the other. However, a joint working group had been set up to oversee the SWC project from planning to implementation and the cumulative impacts on the whole Deep Bay area would be examined in the EIA study. In response to that Member's question on road usage, PAS/TB said that the Administration would review the management of strategic roads on a regular basis taking into account updated planning parameters. On EIA standards, MD/EML clarified that the EIA study would adopt the appropriate Hong Kong standards for Hong Kong's sensitive receivers and Mainland standards for Mainland's sensitive receivers within the assessment area.

65. In response to that Member's question on the illegal use of Mainland diesel in local vehicles, DS(C)/EFB said that at present there were limits on the amount of diesel carried by vehicles crossing the border into Hong Kong. The Customs & Excise Department had set up checkpoints to inspect vehicles before they crossed the border. Such measure should continue to be applied to the proposed new border link.

66. Noting that an area near Shekou would be reclaimed, a Member expressed concern that it might trigger further reclamation along the coastline. The Acting Chairman asked whether the proponent would assess the cumulative impact arising from the reclamation and its impact on water quality. PAS/TB responded that the impact of reclamation would be included in the assessment conducted by the Shenzhen side. MD/EML supplemented that the consultants would use "Del-3" model which had been adopted in the study for the Deep Bay area in assessing water quality. He also confirmed that the cumulative impact of reclamation would be assessed in the EIA Study.

67. A Member queried why it was necessary to reclaim such a big area in Shekou to build just the immigration/custom checkpoints. He also suggested implementing measures to enhance the visual impact alongside the bridge. The proponent could plant mangroves on both sides of the bridge to make it a landmark for attracting tourists.

68. PAS/TB said that the reclamation area shown in Annex B of the paper was for illustration purpose only. The exact size and location had yet to be determined. She thanked that Member for his suggestion and would take that into account during the design stage.

69. A Member expressed grave concern about the impact of the projects on the ecology of Mai Po and Deep Bay. She said that the channelization of the Shenzhen River had already altered the hydrology of mudflats in those areas and she demanded full justifications for adopting a road-based link.

70. PAS/TB responded that a road-based link was more appropriate because the target users of the link would be container vehicles and lorries. A railway link would increase the transportation costs in loading and unloading goods between vehicles and the train. MD/EML supplemented that as far as the ecology of Deep Bay was concerned, the consultants would pay particular attention to the impacts on intertidal mudflats which were feeding grounds for birds. Two main impacts were anticipated, namely the removal of mudflats to make room for pile structure of the bridge and changes in water movement due to the pile structure.

71. In response to a Member's follow-up question on the rate of the sedimentation due to the construction of bridge foundation, MD/EML said that sediment movements would also be included in the study model.

72. In reply to a Member's question on road usage, PAS/TB said that the users of the link would go via SWC and DBL to Yuen Long Highway where they could proceed to the container terminals either through Route 3 or Route 9.

73. The Acting Chairman thanked TB for consulting the Council in an early stage and hoped that they would take into account Members' concerns regarding the joint environmental monitoring programme between Mainland and Hong Kong, the scale of reclamation in Shekou, the visual design of the bridge, and the overall ecological well-being of Deep Bay. He was pleased that a site visit would be arranged for their better understanding of the project and requested TB to provide information about the preliminary assessment of the alternative alignments/options of the project as early as possible.