

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)809/02-03
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref: CB1/PS/2/00/1

Panel on Transport

**Subcommittee on matters relating to the
implementation of railway development projects**

**Minutes of meeting on
Friday, 27 September 2002, at 10:45 am
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Hon Miriam LAU Kin-yee, JP (Chairman)
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, JP
Hon LAU Chin-shek, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon LAU Ping-cheung
- Members absent** : Hon CHAN Kwok-keung
Hon LAU Kong-wah
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP
Hon LEUNG Fu-wah, MH, JP
- Non-Subcommittee
Members attending** : Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, JP
Hon Henry WU King-cheong, BBS, JP

**Public officers
attending**

: Agenda items II and III

Environment, Transport and Works Bureau

Mr Paul TANG
Deputy Secretary for the Environment, Transport and
Works (Transport and Works)

Mr WAN Man-lung
Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment,
Transport and Works (Transport and Works)

Highways Department

Mr John CHAI
Principal Government Engineer/Railway Development

**Attendance by
invitation**

: Agenda items II and III

Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation

Mr K Y YEUNG
Chief Executive Officer

Mr James BLAKE
Senior Director, Capital Projects

Mr Samuel LAI
Senior Director, Finance & Management

Mr Kenneth LEUNG
Director, New Railway Projects

Mr Stephen CHIK
General Manager, Capital Works Planning

Mrs Irene YAU
General Manager, Corporate Affairs

Agenda item II

Wong Tai Sin District Council (WTSDC)

Mr LAM Man-fai
Chairman, WTSDC

Mr CHEUNG Yan-hong
Vice-Chairman, Traffic and Transport Committee of
WTSDC

Sha Tin District Council (STDC)

Mr YEUNG Cheung-li
Chairman, Traffic and Transport Committee of STDC

Mr HO Hau-cheung
Chairman, Education and Welfare Committee of STDC

Mr MOK Wai-hung
STDC Member

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

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

Action

I Confirmation of minutes and matters arising

(LC Paper No. CB(1)2436/01-02 - Minutes of meeting on 4 March 2002; and
LC Paper No. CB(1)2555/01-02 - Minutes of meeting on 27 June 2002)

The minutes of meetings held on 4 March 2002 and 27 June 2002 were confirmed.

2. The Chairman advised that on 24 September 2002, the Executive Council had decided to invite the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC) to proceed with the detailed planning and design of the Kowloon Southern Link (KSL). At the request of the Administration, the agenda for the present meeting had been changed to include an item on KSL so that members could be briefed accordingly.

II Shatin to Central Link

Meeting with District Councils/the Administration/KCRC

3. At the invitation of the Chairman, the Deputy Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Transport and Works) (DS for ETW) said that subsequent to the award of the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) to KCRC on 25 June 2002, the Administration had requested the Corporation to examine the technical and financial viability of adding more stations or linkages to SCL to serve more population centres.

Action

In August, KCRC had proposed a revised scheme which was set out in the paper provided by the Administration (LC Paper No. CB(1)2556/01-02(01)). The Administration was now in discussion with KCRC to refine the implementation programme as well as the details for the revised scheme. The intention was to finalize the alignment by the end of this year for the construction work to commence in 2004 and opening of the rail line by end 2008/early 2009.

4. Mr K Y YEUNG, the Chief Executive Officer of KCRC (CEO of KCRC), relayed the apology from the Chairman of KCRC to members as he was unable to attend the meeting due to a prior engagement.

5. With the aid of PowerPoint, Mr Kenneth LEUNG, Director, New Railway Projects of KCRC (D/NRP, KCRC), briefed members on the modified SCL scheme which included a new station at Tsz Wan Shan, an underground automated people-mover (APM) shuttle train system linking the Hung Hom Station to the Whampoa area, as well as the provision for a future station at Hin Keng. He said that with SCL, passengers from Ma On Shan could travel to and from Central without interchange. East Rail (ER) passengers would also be able to interchange with SCL either at Tai Wai or Hung Hom. The future West Rail (WR) passengers would be able to travel from Tuen Mun via the proposed KSL to Hung Hom for interchange with SCL to Central. The Hung Hom Station would be upgraded to a Mass Transportation Centre, which would provide a convenient interchange for SCL, WR and ER and also a direct link to local and cross-boundary train services.

(Post-meeting note: A set of presentation materials on SCL tabled at the meeting was subsequently issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)2614/01-02(01).)

6. On the provision of the future Hin Keng Station, CEO of KCRC stated that Hin Keng was predominantly a residential area and the current rail catchment population was about 30 000. Due to geographical constraints, its population was only expected to reach 35 000 by 2009, which was still below the minimum planning threshold of 50 000. As such, KCRC did not consider it justified at the present time to provide a station there. However, provision had been made in the design for the construction of Hin Keng Station in future when patronage level justified that. In the meantime, consideration would be given to deploying more feeder buses from Hin Keng to the nearby Tai Wai Station to make it easier for local residents to use SCL before Hin Keng Station was built.

Wong Tai Sin District Council (WTSDC)

(LC Paper No. CB(1)2556/01-02(02) - Joint submission from three WTSDC members)

7. Mr LAM Man-fai, Chairman of WTSDC, welcomed KCRC's decision to add a new station at Tsz Wan Shan as part of SCL to meet the transport need of local residents. WTSDC would continue to follow up on the planning and design of the

Action

station to ensure that the most convenient traffic and transport arrangements, say in respect of the location of station exits, the provision of feeder services, etc., could be made to serve various housing developments and tourist attractions in the district.

8. Mr CHEUNG Yan-hong, Vice-Chairman of the Traffic and Transport Committee of WTSDC, also called on KCRC and the Administration to conduct early consultation with WTSDC on the detailed design and construction programme of the Tsz Wan Shan Station.

Sha Tin District Council (STDC)

(LC Paper No. CB(1)2588/01-02(01) - Motion passed by STDC)

9. Mr YEUNG Cheung-li, Chairman of the Traffic and Transport Committee of STDC, pointed out that railways should be developed to serve the overall interest of the community and hence, there was no reason to ignore the transport needs of the local residents in Hin Keng simply because its catchment population did not meet the minimum planning threshold. Expressing concern about the worsening congestion at Tai Wai Station when the Ma On Shan to Tai Wai Rail Link (MOSR) was commissioned, Mr YEUNG considered that the early construction of Hin Keng Station could spread out passenger flow and help alleviate the problem. Under the circumstances, KCRC should seriously re-consider its stance so that Hin Keng Station could be planned and constructed with the rest of SCL all in one go.

10. Mr YEUNG also remarked that if Hin Keng Station was not provided in the first instance, the Administration should ensure that an adequate level of external franchised bus services was allowed to operate in the area. Otherwise, the residents in Hin Keng would have no choice but make use of feeder services to go backwards to Tai Wai Station for onward journeys to Kowloon via SCL.

11. Referring members to the motion passed by STDC urging for the construction of Hin Keng Station together with the rest of SCL, Mr HO Hau-cheung, Chairman of the Education and Welfare Committee of STDC, expressed disappointment with KCRC's decision despite the strong request from local residents. He pointed out that as it was expected that a large percentage of the population in the area would make use of the new rail link, KCRC should make a decision on the basis of projected patronage rather than catchment population. Moreover, he informed members that a new swimming pool would be constructed soon in Hin Keng to serve the whole population in Northeast New Territories. On account of the functional need it would serve, Hin Keng Station should be built in the first instance. Considering the additional patronage to be generated for SCL, Mr HO said that the provision of Hin Keng Station should be financially viable.

12. Citing ER's Kowloon Tong Station and University Station as well as MOSR's Che Kung Temple Station, Mr HO also queried whether the criteria of catchment population had been consistently applied by KCRC for the provision of railway stations. He questioned that if the catchment population of Hin Keng could only

Action

reach 35 000 by 2016 as predicted by the Government, it would be a tremendous waste to set aside precious land resources for a station that would not be built for the next ten years at least. As such, he reiterated that Hin Keng Station should be provided in the first instance on account of its functional need.

13. Echoing the views of Mr HO and Mr YEUNG, Mr MOK Wai-hung, STDC Member, opined that as a public transport service provider solely owned by the Government, KCRC had a duty to consider the provision of Hin Keng Station from the public interest point of view. He said that taking all existing and planned residential developments into account, the population of Hin Keng area would be well over 35 000. There was indeed an urgent need for the provision of Hin Keng Station to meet the transport needs of these people. He added that if Hin Keng Station could be constructed with the rest of SCL, the project cost might be lower.

Meeting with the Administration/KCRC

(LC Paper No. CB(1)2556/01-02(01) - Information paper provided by the Administration)

Provision of Hin Keng Station

14. Noting the strong request made by STDC Members, Mr CHENG Kar-foo said that as provisions for the construction of Hin Keng Station had already been made, KCRC should seriously consider advancing its delivery to facilitate local residents. Both Ms Cyd HO and Mr Albert CHAN opined that as the alignment of SCL had been re-designed to accommodate Hin Keng Station, there was no reason to defer its construction. Sharing their views, Miss CHAN Yuen-han said that the Administration and KCRC should respect the views expressed by STDC. Mr LAU Chin-shek also pointed out that if Hin Keng Station was constructed together with the rest of SCL, the project cost might be lower while the construction work would be less difficult.

15. Considering that the determining factor should be projected patronage and not catchment population in Hin Keng area, Mr WONG Sing-chi queried whether the Corporation had conducted any studies in this respect before making its decision. He also enquired about the Administration's stance in the provision of Hin Keng Station which clearly had an important functional need.

16. In reply, CEO of KCRC stressed that the Corporation had not shelved the construction of Hin Keng Station. However, as the development of railways required heavy up-front investment, the financial viability of providing a station must be carefully considered. For Hin Keng which was predominantly a residential area, catchment population would be a useful indicator. In considering the matter, the Corporation would also carefully examine all relevant factors and make projections about patronage.

17. D/NRP, KCRC also explained that the minimum planning threshold of 50 000

Action

was not an absolute requirement. If the projected population was below this level, the Corporation would consider whether a given station should be constructed on account of its functional need. For example, ER's University Station was constructed to serve the university, Kowloon Tong station to serve as a major interchange between the Kowloon-Canton Railway (KCR) and Mass Transit Railway (MTR) systems, and MOSR's Che Kung Temple Station to serve the tourists. Addressing members' concern, D/NRP, KCRC said that the Corporation also recognized the need to provide Hin Keng Station at some future date. While much would depend on the future build-up of population and activity in the immediate area, the Corporation had made provision in the design for the station to be built when patronage level justified that.

18. DS for ETW said that the Administration noted the intention of KCRC to provide a station in Hin Keng in future when justified by patronage level. To this end, the Corporation had made provisions accordingly in its modified SCL scheme. He assured members that the Administration would follow up on the timing for the provision of Hin Keng Station from a planning perspective, for example by increasing the catchment population through additional residential developments. In the meantime, the Administration would also ensure the provision of adequate feeder services for the residents to make use of SCL before the Hin Keng Station was built.

19. Mr WONG Sing-chi however remained unconvinced that the construction of Hin Keng Station was not justified at this stage. In this connection, he requested KCRC to provide supplementary information on its study in relation to the provision of the future Hin Keng station on the basis of patronage forecast instead of catchment population.

Fare

20. Members noted that the additional cost for Tsz Wan Shan Station and the APM system would not lead to higher rail fare on SCL itself. The higher project cost would be partly offset by the additional revenue from the increase in ridership, and partly absorbed by the Corporation.

21. Given the heavy burden of transport costs faced by the travelling public as a result of the need to interchange between public transport services provided by different operators, Mr CHENG Kar-foo opined that public transport operators should co-operate and offer inter-modal fare discounts to the passengers. Citing the interchange between Light Rail (LR) and WR, and between the APM system and SCL, he asked whether KCRC had any plans to offer weekly or monthly concessionary fares with the use of Octopus cards so as to relieve the burden of interchanging passengers. As a related issue, Mr CHENG said that KCRC should ensure that the proposed APM system would be adequate to meet the transport needs of the expected 85 000 catchment population in future.

22. Mr Albert CHAN expressed grave dissatisfaction that the Administration had all along turned a blind eye on the additional fares being unfairly imposed on

Action

passengers who required interchange services provided by different operators. Worrying about additional fares being charged for passengers who interchanged between SCL and KSL, Mr CHAN opined that as a matter of policy, the Administration should make it clear that railway fares must be calculated according to the distance of journeys travelled and that no hidden fares should be charged for interchange services. He would only support the construction of SCL, in particular the APM system, if this policy matter was resolved. Otherwise, he remarked that the \$2 billion earmarked for the construction of the APM system might be better used to set up a fund to sponsor free shuttle services operated by public light buses for the local residents.

23. In response, Mr Samuel LAI, Senior Director, Finance & Management of KCRC (SD/F&M, KCRC), assured members that KCR fares were calculated according to the distance of the journey and that passengers travelling on different lines within the KCR system would only need to pay a one-off boarding charge. With reference to the existing fare structure, it was expected that the fare of a single journey from Tai Wai to Central would be about \$11.8. However, passengers who made use of LR, feeder buses and the APM system would need to pay a reasonable fare.

24. On fare concessions, SD/F&M, KCRC said that KCRC had been offering various concessionary schemes to both ER and LR passengers. The Corporation would continue to explore ways in which other fare concessions could be offered to passengers. However, he could not make any commitment about the provision of weekly or monthly concessionary fares as suggested by Mr CHENG Kar-foo.

25. While noting KCRC's explanation, Mr Albert CHAN pointed out that railway alignment might sometimes adopt an indirect routing. Hence, railway fares should be determined according to the actual distance between stations and not the distance of railway tracks. Taking note of the member's view, SD/F&M, KCRC said that the Corporation was always mindful of the need to set its fares at a competitive level so as to attract patronage and in turn, maintain fare revenue.

26. Miss CHAN Yuen-han pointed out that the residents in Whampoa had all along requested for a station of SCL be built direct in the area. However, the station could not be constructed due to various constraints and instead, an APM system was proposed. Under the circumstances, the APM system should not be regarded as a separate system from SCL. Moreover, considering the additional revenue to be generated from the increase in ridership, SCL passengers should be allowed to travel free on the APM system. Echoing Miss CHAN's view, Mr LAU Chin-shek said that it was not fair to double-charge those passengers who made use of the APM system for interchanging with SCL.

27. In reply, SD/F&M, KCRC reiterated that KCR fares were calculated according to the distance of journeys travelled. As far as the APM system was concerned, the trains would stop at two new stations, one at Tak Man Street and the other at Man Yue

Action

Street, before terminating at Hung Hom Station. Fare of a single journey was expected to be about \$2. This fare level was considered reasonable and competitive when compared with the fares currently charged by other public transport services plying between Whampoa and Hung Hom. CEO of KCRC also said that if no fares were charged for the service of KCR extensions as a matter of principle, the revenue of the Corporation would be seriously affected.

28. As a related issue, Mr LAU Chin-shek enquired about the progress of discussions between the two railway corporations about the possibility of introducing a single fare structure for both railways. DS for ETW replied that this would be the commercial decision of the two railway corporations to hold discussions of this kind. SD/F&M, KCRC stated that the introduction of a single fare structure was a longer-term objective being pursued by the two railway corporations. In the short-term, discussions had been held about the offer joint fare discounts to interchanging passengers. Progress was being made and some positive results could hopefully be achieved by the end of the year.

29. Referring to the existing franchised bus routes serving Tsz Wan Shan and Ho Man Tin, Ms Cyd HO was concerned that after SCL's opening, the Administration might induce franchised bus companies to increase their fares for these overlapping routes in order to maintain SCL's patronage. If this should happen, the interest of the passengers would be seriously affected.

30. In reply, DS for ETW advised that as in the case of the MTR Tseung Kwan O Line, the Administration would introduce public transport service plans to tie in with the commissioning of a new railway. By making necessary changes to the public transport services provided for the area, it would maintain healthy competition among service providers on one hand and reasonable choice for commuters on the other. The same arrangement would be made for the impending WR as well as the future SCL.

Design of SCL

Interchange stations

31. Ir Dr Raymond HO referred to the inconvenient interchange arrangements at Kowloon Tong and Mong Kok Stations and called on the Administration to ensure better cooperation between the two railway corporations in the planning of KCR-MTR interchange stations of SCL, viz. Diamond Hill, Exhibition and Admiralty, so that a seamless railway network could be established to serve the passengers. As a matter of principle, he said that interchange passengers should not be required to walk a long distance. Otherwise, travellers should be provided. Ticketing arrangements should also be simplified as far as practicable. In this connection, Ir Dr HO sought information about the progress of discussion between the two railway corporations in this matter.

Action

32. In reply, D/NRP, KCRC assured members that KCRC would ensure that the most convenient interchange arrangements were provided to the passengers. While it was not envisaged that much difficulty would be encountered for Diamond Hill and Exhibition Stations, the situation at Admiralty Station was more complex due to the presence of major electrical installations underground on the east side of the existing MTR station. In order to work out an early solution, KCRC had already initiated discussions with MTR Corporation Limited.

33. While noting KCRC's reply, Ir Dr HO highlighted the importance for the Administration to assume a coordinating role in this matter so that public interest would be safeguarded. In response, the Principal Government Engineer/Railway Development assured members that the Administration would monitor the cooperation between the two railway corporations.

34. For the purpose of KCR-MTR interchange, Ms Cyd HO opined that there was no need to build new SCL stations if the two railway corporations could well and truly cooperate. The expansion of existing MTR stations might prove to be more cost-effective. It would also bring convenience to passengers. In this respect, she questioned why no provision had been made for SCL to interchange with MTR at the existing Central Station.

35. In response, DS for ETW explained that SCL's Central West Station would be located near Ice House Street and it was designed to serve the Lan Kwai Fong area in Central.

36. In this respect, the Chairman said that the Administration would have a coordinating role to play through the granting of land to railway corporations for the construction of new stations.

Tsz Wan Shan Station

37. Noting that the proposed Tsz Wan Shan Station would be about 100 metres below ground, Ir Dr Raymond HO cautioned that extra attention should be paid to the fire safety requirements in the design of the station. In this connection, he also called on the Administration to closely monitor KCRC's compliance with relevant statutory requirements.

38. Miss CHAN Yuen-han suggested that KCRC could consider developing the station into an underground shopping centre. In order to promote tourism development, she suggested that KCRC could incorporate the famous scenery of Lion Rock in the design of the station.

Kai Tak Station

39. Referring to the concentration of a large number of small shops and businesses in Kowloon City, Mr Tommy CHEUNG stressed that there was a need to provide

Action

better connection between this area and the proposed Kai Tak Station. In reply, D/NRP, KCRC said that the provision of a connection from Kai Tak Station across Prince Edward Road to the Kowloon City area involved planning issues which would have to be dealt with by the Administration. Noting the member's view, DS for ETW agreed to liaise with KCRC on this matter.

40. In response to Mr LAU Ping-cheung's enquiry about the connectivity between SCL and the South East Kowloon Development (SEKD), D/NRP, KCRC advised that SEKD would be served by an environmentally-friendly transport system. Planning had already been made for connecting this transport system with SCL's Kai Tak Station.

III Kowloon Southern Link

(File ref: ETWB(T)CR 12/1016/99 - Legislative Council Brief)

41. At the invitation of the Chairman, CEO of KCRC briefly introduced the Kowloon Southern Link (KSL) project which was an extension of WR from Nam Cheong Station to connect with the KCR Extension to Tsim Sha Tsui (TST Extension). Highlighting the need to extend WR from Nam Cheong to Tsim Sha Tsui East to complete the connection between ER and WR, he stressed that KSL would improve the accessibility of WR passengers to the business centre in South Kowloon and hence, enhance the competitiveness and business case of WR. The travelling public would also benefit from KSL by way of shorter journey times and cheaper fares. Upon its completion in 2008, commuters would be able to stay within one system in travelling in the New Territories, and between the New Territories, Kowloon, and Hong Kong Island.

42. With the aid of PowerPoint, D/NRP, KCRC introduced the two stations proposed for KSL, one at West Kowloon and the other at Canton Road under the Canton Road alignment. He said that notwithstanding the need to close off one traffic lane at Canton Road for about one year during the construction stage, the Corporation's initial view was that the cut & cover option was preferable as it would provide an acceptable alignment for rail operation, better serve the main business area, minimize land resumption and disruption to existing major development/facilities, and avoid works in the harbour. As for the bored tunnel option, although lesser disruption would be caused at the ground level and to the traffic during the construction stage, it could only provide an inconvenient station layout where the concourse was off-line from the platforms. It also required the resumption of two multi-storey buildings along Canton Road and affected the FMPHQ heritage site which was being planned as a tourist attraction. The Corporation would further examine the pros and cons of the two options before a final decision was made.

(Post-meeting note: A set of presentation materials on KSL tabled at the meeting was subsequently issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)2614/01-02(02).)

Action

Choice of alignments

43. For the purpose of minimizing the disruption during the construction stage, Ir Dr Raymond HO enquired about the Corporation's consideration on the Kowloon Park Drive alignment option. In response, D/NRP, KCRC explained that the Canton Road alignment was preferred as the station would be located in the busiest area to serve most passengers. To supplement, Mr James BLAKE, Senior Director, Capital Projects of KCRC (SD/CP, KCRC) said that the Kowloon Park Drive alignment would run along the Kowloon Park Drive before turning eastwards with a very sharp curve beneath the YMCA Building into Salisbury Road. This alignment would almost inevitably require the resumption and demolition of the YMCA site. He assured members that out of the four possible alignments, the Canton Road cut & cover option represented the best alternative in terms of disruption, passenger convenience and avoiding resumption of existing buildings.

Compensation for affected parties

44. Noting the complexities of tunnelling works to be carried out along Canton Road for KSL, members in general expressed grave concern about the prolonged disruption that would be caused to the local community and nearby shops, many of whom were already adversely impacted by the on-going construction of TST Extension.

45. In response, CEO of KCRC expressed the deepest regret to all the affected parties for the disruption caused by the construction of TST Extension. As Tsim Sha Tsui was a prime commercial and tourism area, he assured members that the Corporation would make every effort to minimize the disruption that might be caused during the construction stage. For this purpose, he pledged that KSL's construction works along Canton Road would only commence in mid-2004, i.e. six months after the scheduled completion of TST Extension civil works.

46. While commending the Administration's decision to expedite the planning and implementation of KSL in order to enhance WR's financial viability, Mr Albert CHAN was worried that no matter which option was adopted, the construction of KSL would invariably affect a significant number of shop owners and business operators, particularly along Canton Road. Citing the unsatisfactory way in which the resumption of Wah Kei Industrial Building for the construction of WR was dealt with by the Government, he expressed grave dissatisfaction about the absence of an equitable statutory mechanism to deal with legitimate compensation claims from parties whose interests were adversely affected by the implementation of railway projects. He opined that as the law stood currently, the Government was vested with sweeping powers to dismiss the objections and compensation claims from the affected parties.

47. In addition, Mr CHAN expressed concern about the difficulty to hold KCRC

Action

responsible for structural damages caused by its tunnelling works to the buildings nearby. The affected parties often had great difficulty in proving their cases. As such, he put forth the strong view that unless and until a more equitable mechanism was in place to deal with such compensation claims, he would not give his support for the construction works to take place in such a busy area.

48. In reply, D/NRP, KCRC said that a statutory mechanism was already in place to deal with such claims. Under the Railways Ordinance (Cap. 519), a person whose access to his land was adversely affected by road closure might claim compensation for the expenditure and loss of money actually and incurred and arising from that road closure. The claim would then be considered by the Lands Department.

49. While stating that the Administration had no plans to introduce any change to the existing mechanism, DS for ETW stressed that all compensation claims from the affected parties would be dealt with by the Administration in accordance with law. If there was dispute on the decision made by the Lands Department, either the claimant or the Administration might refer the claim to the Lands Tribunal for determination.

50. Given the complexity of the construction works, Mr CHENG Kar-foo opined that many businesses would be affected. Instead of going to courts for each and every compensation claim, the Government should adopt a more proactive approach and work out a mechanism through which disputes could be resolved by adjudication.

51. In reply, DS for ETW clarified that the affected parties' right to compensation was clearly set out in law. The Lands Department would consider the claim for compensation based on the supporting documents provided by the claimant. He stressed that it was only when both sides could not reach an agreement on the amount of compensation would the claim be referred to the Lands Tribunal for determination. In this connection, the Chairman called on both KCRC and the Administration to take heed of the concerns raised by members so that the interests of the affected parties could be adequately safeguarded and compensated.

52. Addressing Mr Albert CHAN's concern about possible structural damages caused to the buildings nearby, D/NRP, KCRC said that unlike the village houses in the New Territories, the buildings along Canton Road were sturdy structures built with piles. Hence, it was unlikely that the construction works would cause structural damages to these buildings.

53. Citing the numerous complaints he received from shop owners and business operators who suffered from great business loss as a result of the construction of TST Extension, Mr Tommy CHEUNG opined that when Hong Kong was building for its future, it would be as important to ensure that the investment made by small businessmen was adequately protected. While stressing that a fair sum must be paid to the affected parties as compensation, he said that the compensation due to the small businesses should be paid out as early as possible. To minimize disturbance on the local community, Mr CHEUNG also called on KCRC to expedite the progress of

Action

construction works.

54. The Chairman highlighted the need for KCRC to conduct early consultation with the local communities and other affected parties as the project was taken forward. Citing the experience with the MOSR and TST Extension projects, she asked whether the Corporation would consider setting up a community liaison office for the KSL project. In reply, SD/CP, KCRC said that the Corporation would establish communication with all businesses in the area likely to be impacted. In fact, preliminary discussions had already been held. With the offer of invitation from the Government, such discussions could now be formalized.

55. As far as when the compensation was to be paid, SD/CP, KCRC said that the Corporation would have to be bound by government procedures and precedents. In this respect, KCRC would work closely with the Lands Department. Nevertheless, he assured members that in case of any compensation issues, the Corporation would work together with the Administration in the first instance so that means to alleviate the problem could be identified as early as possible.

Cooperation and coordination between railway corporations

56. Referring to the overlapping services run by KSL and the Airport Express Line (AEL) along west Kowloon as shown in Annex A to the Administration's paper, Ms Cyd HO reiterated her view that there was indeed no need for KCRC to spend extra money for the construction of station facilities if the two railway corporations could well and truly cooperate. She opined that the inefficient use of resources bred by such wasteful competition would lead to higher railway fares and in turn, increase the burden of transport cost on the public.

57. In response, DS for ETW pointed out that different functions were served by KSL and AEL. The purpose of building KSL was to enable WR passengers to have more direct access to the main employment/business areas in urban Kowloon. As a result, there would be an overall increase in the patronage of the whole railway network. Hence, the Administration did not agree that wasteful competition would occur with the construction of KSL.

58. Given the close proximity of KSL's Canton Road Station and MTR's Tsim Sha Tsui Station in Nathan Road, Ms Cyd HO remained unconvinced that the provision of overlapping services and duplicating station facilities was justified. In this connection, she requested for additional information on the coordination between overlapping services provided by KSL and AEL/Tung Chung Line along the Nathan Road/Canton Road corridor.

Admin/
KCRC

59. The Chairman said that it would be most important for KCRC to ensure that the most convenient KCR-MTR interchange arrangements were provided to passengers. Noting that passengers interchanging between KSL's West Kowloon Station and AEL's Kowloon Station would have to walk quite a long distance, she asked whether

Action

the situation could be improved, such as by revising the alignment.

60. While noting the Chairman's view, SD/CP, KCRC explained that AEL's Kowloon Station was surrounded by a very large residential development. The current planning had already placed the West Kowloon Station as close as possible to the podium structure of the residential development.

Admin/
KCRC

61. In response to the Chairman, DS for ETW advised that as the next step, the Corporation would proceed with detailed planning and kick off consultations with local communities. He agreed to revert to the Subcommittee in six to eight months' time about the implementation programme and progress of the KSL project.

IV Any other business

62. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 1:00 pm.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
27 January 2003