

**Extract from the minutes of the meeting of the
Public Works Subcommittee held on 7 May 2003**

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PWSC(2003-04)16	63KA	Central Government Complex, Legislative Council Complex, exhibition gallery and civic place at Tamar, Central
	50RE	Planning and Infrastructure Exhibition Gallery at Tamar – exhibits design and fabrication

24. The following members declared interest since they had been involved in planning the new Legislative Council Complex (the LegCo Complex) at Tamar as members of the Legislative Council Commission (the LegCo Commission) -

Ms Emily LAU
Mr Henry WU
Dr LAW Chi-kwong
Mr LI Wah-ming
Mr IP Kwok-him

25. The Chairman informed members that Mr LAU Ping-cheung, who was not able to attend the meeting, had written to declare interest that he was an employee of W T Partnership (Hong Kong) Limited, which provided quantity surveying service for one of the prequalified tenders for the design-and-build contract for the Tamar development project (i.e. project 63KA). He however was not personally involved in the project.

26. Members noted that the two proposed projects had been discussed at a meeting of the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works on 4 April 2003. Dr TANG Siu-tong, Chairman of the Panel, reported that members of the Panel were generally supportive of the projects. However, some members did not consider that there was a need to construct the exhibition gallery, and expressed concern that locating the exhibition gallery at the Tamar site would make the whole development overcrowded. Members had also made the following comments -

- (a) procuring the Tamar development project by a design-and-build contract might result in compromising the design due to cost consideration;

- (b) energy-saving designs/facilities should be adopted for the two projects and the designs should enable savings in maintenance cost in future;
- (c) where possible, the Administration should ensure that the local workforce could benefit from the job opportunities created by the projects;
- (d) adequate transport facilities should be provided to cater for the future pedestrian and vehicular traffic destined for the Tamar development and the waterfront promenade.

Access to the Tamar site

27. Pointing out that the plan to construct the North Hong Kong Island Line (the NHKIL) had been withheld and hence the Tamar station of NHKIL would not be available in the foreseeable future, Mr LAU Kong-wah enquired about the public transport arrangements to ensure easy access to the Tamar development. Mr Andrew CHENG, Ms Emily LAU and Mr IP Kwok-him also considered it necessary to ensure that the Tamar development would be easily and conveniently accessible to the public by means of public transport. They sought details on the public transport arrangements.

28. In reply, the Director of Administration (D of Admin) advised that pending the construction of NHKIL, footbridges and covered walkways would be provided as essential means for pedestrian access from Admiralty to the Tamar development. As regards bus routes that would be serving the development, the detailed arrangements would be worked out at a later stage.

Access to the Tamar development by the Shatin to Central Link

29. Members in general considered that as there would be prominent public facilities including the civic place and the exhibition gallery to be constructed at Tamar, it would be highly undesirable if there was no railway station at or in close proximity to Tamar to enable easy and convenient access for the public. Messrs LAU Kong-wah, Andrew CHENG and IP Kwok-him suggested that the feasibility of extending the Shatin to Central Link (the SCL) to the Tamar site should be actively considered.

30. In response, D of Admin said that one of the Government's design requirements for the SCL in its Project Brief was that the Link must interchange with the Island Line and Tsuen Wan Line of the Mass Transit Railway. Hence the indication in the brief of providing the interchange station next to the existing Admiralty Station of the Island/Tsuen Wan Line. With the construction of a footbridge to connect the Tamar development with Admiralty, the public would be able to reach the Tamar development from the future Admiralty station of SCL by 5-10 minutes' walk.

31. The members considered the above arrangement not satisfactory. They requested that if it was not feasible to provide a SCL station at Tamar, then the Admiralty station of SCL should have an exit very close to the Tamar development. In response, Acting Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works) (Ag PSW) said that the design of SCL had yet to be finalized. He undertook to relay members' views to the parties concerned for consideration.

32. Mr Abraham SHEK, however, considered that there were technical difficulties and important security concerns needed to be resolved or addressed if a SCL station were to be provided at the Tamar site. He also highlighted that apart from the Central Government Complex (CGC) and the LegCo Complex to be constructed at Tamar, the presence of the Chinese People's Liberation Army Forces Hong Kong Building in the site's vicinity was also an important security consideration. He therefore found the current proposed arrangement to build the SCL interchange station next to the existing Admiralty Station of Island Line acceptable.

Restrictions on the provision of underground public facilities at the Tamar site

33. Mr Albert CHAN said that he understood that the Administration had instructed the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC) not to construct an underground station of SCL at Tamar for security reasons. He expressed dissatisfaction that the Administration had not consulted the LegCo Panel on Transport on such an important decision affecting the planning and development of SCL and other new railway systems. Nor had the LegCo Panel on Security been consulted on the security policies and/or considerations. He opined that the above issues should be discussed at the relevant Panels before the present proposal was voted on by the Subcommittee.

34. In response, D of Admin said that when the LegCo Panel on Transport was briefed on the SCL project after its award to KCRC, the proposal was to provide the interchange station next to the existing Admiralty Station outside Tamar. On the need for the restrictions on the provision of underground facilities at the Tamar site, D of Admin explained that the restrictions mainly stemmed from the need to provide substantial carparking and other underground facilities to service the new buildings and future users under the Tamar development project. At the same time, for security considerations, the Administration also considered it inappropriate to locate underground public facilities under such important buildings as the new CGC and the LegCo Complex. Ag PSW said that KCRC would give due regard to the necessary restrictions on the provision of underground public facilities at Tamar in designing SCL's alignment. They said that the Administration was prepared to explain the considerations underlying the restrictions to Members at an appropriate forum.

35. Ms Emily LAU and Mr IP Kwok-him agreed that to guard against bomb attacks and other terrorist activities, there should not be a railway station located directly underneath the CGC and the LegCo Complex. They however maintained that the Administration should ensure convenient connection from the future

Admiralty station of SCL to the Tamar development.

36. In response, D of Admin assured members that the requirement for the SCL to have an interchange station with the existing Admiralty Station could be met notwithstanding the restrictions on the provision of underground public facilities at Tamar. In view of members' concerns, he agreed to actively pursue the arrangement of locating an exit of SCL's Admiralty station in close proximity to the Tamar site.

Admin

37. Members agreed that the above issues, namely the public transport arrangements to ensure convenient access to the Tamar site, the implications of the Tamar development on the design of SCL and other new railway systems, and the security considerations for determining the restrictions on the provision of underground public facilities at the Tamar site, should be discussed at a joint meeting of the Panel on Transport and the Panel on Security before consideration of the present proposal by FC on 30 May 2003 as currently scheduled. Mr LAU Kong-wah, in particular, requested that the Administration should draw up a transport plan to ensure convenient access to the Tamar development by the public, and that representatives of KCRC be invited to attend the Joint Panel meeting to answer questions relating to the design of SCL. In response, D of Admin undertook to liaise with the Panel Chairmen or Panel Clerks to arrange the meeting.

Design and image of the Tamar development

38. Highlighting that the Tamar development would be the prime civic core of Hong Kong and a prominent landmark at the Harbour waterfront, Ms Emily LAU said that although the Tamar development had already proceeded as a design-and-build project, she maintained her view stated on previous occasions that an open competition should be held with a view to achieving the best design for the development. Ms Cyd HO shared her view and opined that the design should embody the spirit of open and transparent government. She urged the Administration to refrain from fencing off the future LegCo Complex as what had been done at the present Central Government Offices.

39. In response, D of Admin said that it would be up to the LegCo Commission to decide on the need or otherwise to fence off the new LegCo Complex at Tamar. In reply to Ms LAU on whether the new CGC would be fenced off, D of Admin said that the detailed security arrangements had yet to be finalized.

The proposed exhibition gallery at Tamar

Need for the Exhibition Gallery

40. Ms Emily LAU opined that the proposed exhibition gallery was not justified in view of Hong Kong's limited achievements in infrastructural projects and plans. She was also concerned that given the space constraints at Tamar, the provision of the exhibition gallery would make the Tamar development overcrowded, leaving little open space for the enjoyment of the public. She therefore stated her

opposition to the construction of the exhibition gallery on the Tamar site.

41. Mr IP Kwok-him said that while he basically supported the need for the proposed exhibition gallery, he shared the concern that locating the gallery at the Tamar site could affect the provision of open space at the site.

42. In response, D of Admin stressed the need to construct a special facility in Hong Kong to provide the public and overseas visitors with an overview of Hong Kong's major infrastructural and development achievements and the plans for future development. It was envisaged that the exhibition gallery would be well received by the community and overseas visitors. He also assured members that the exhibition gallery would not compromise the town planning requirement for a two-hectare open space or civic place at Tamar. Mr Abraham SHEK concurred and pointed out that many major cities in the Asia Pacific region such as Shanghai, Singapore and Sydney also had similar exhibition facilities.

Proposed major facilities of the Exhibition Gallery

43. In reply to Mr WONG Sing-chi on the major facilities of the exhibition gallery, the Assistant Director of Planning (Technical Services) advised that apart from an atrium, there would be four major thematic exhibition areas focusing on four themes, namely, urban development, transport/logistics/information technology, tourism, and sustainable development. There would also be an early learning centre/children's gallery to cater for young visitors, a public forum, a conference hall, briefing rooms and a resource centre to facilitate community education and exchange of views.

Justification and cost-effectiveness of the exhibition gallery

44. Mr WONG Sing-chi referred to Enclosure 5 to the paper which set out the proposed size and projected visitation of the exhibition gallery vis-à-vis the major museums managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD). Highlighting the low visitation level of the temporary Planning and Infrastructure Exhibition Gallery at Edinburgh Place, which was more conveniently located and did not charge entrance fees, Mr WONG questioned the high projected visitation of the exhibition gallery, and hence the reliability of the estimates on the operating cost per visitor and the annual recurrent cost of the exhibition gallery. At Mr WONG's request, D of Admin agreed to consider providing more details on the forecast of annual visitation level.

Admin

45. In reply to Mr WONG's enquiry about the entrance fees of the proposed exhibition gallery, D of Admin advised that the preliminary thinking was for the exhibition gallery to collect entrance fees to generate some operating revenue, but the details were yet to be worked out. The Administration would make reference to the entrance fee levels and visitation patterns of other museums managed by LCSD in deciding the entrance fee level of the exhibition gallery.

46. Mr WONG Sing-chi pointed out that apart from the entrance fee level, the visitation level of the exhibition gallery would hinge on its accessibility. He was therefore keen to ensure easy access to it. In response, D of Admin said that sufficient parking spaces for coaches would be available and it would be convenient for tourists to go to the gallery. As for the general public, the walk from Admiralty to the gallery would take only five to 10 minutes.

Management of the proposed Exhibition Gallery

47. In reply to Mr LI Wah-ming on whether the exhibition gallery would be managed by LCSD, D of Admin said that the Planning Department was responsible for the planning of the exhibition gallery because the exhibits therein would be related to the work of the Department. As regards the management of the gallery, the Administration would actively consider the contracting-out option.

Schedule of accommodation

48. Mr LI Wah-ming and Ms Emily LAU sought explanation for the significant increase in the area (7 892m²) required for common and ancillary facilities in the new CGC over the existing provision (2 993m²). D of Admin explained that the reasons were two-fold. Firstly, these facilities would be shared by more bureau offices as the ones which were currently out-stationed in scattered government buildings or leased premises would also be housed in the new CGC. Secondly, to improve the operational efficiency of the Government, there was a need to provide sufficient functional facilities in the new CGC. Such facilities, including conference rooms, press room, dining hall, multi-purpose hall and other ancillary facilities, were at present either absent or under-provided in existing premises. D of Admin also advised that the size of the dining room would be less than 500m² and the multi-purpose hall would be for holding seminars and conferences.

Admin

49. Ms Emily LAU questioned the significant increase in the space provision for the Chief Executive's Office, the Executive Council and its Secretariat in the new CGC in comparison with the respective existing facilities. At her request, D of Admin agreed to further elaborate on the schedules of accommodation of the CGC and the LegCo Complex, focusing on those facilities with significant increase in space provision. He assured members that the space requirements for staff's offices at the new CGC were planned in accordance with Government's accommodation standards.

Selection of tenderers

50. Noting that there was no adopted design for the proposed facilities, Mr Abraham SHEK considered that the detailed cost breakdown as set out in the paper might not be necessary and might result in higher tender prices for the design-and-build contract. In reply, D Arch S said that for budgeting purposes and for seeking funding approval, a project estimate with cost breakdown was required for the purpose of submissions to the Public Works Subcommittee and Finance Committee. In deriving the estimated costs for 63KA, reference had been made to the

design standards of Grade A office buildings such as the Cheung Kong Centre and the International Finance Centre. Hence, the cost estimates set out in the PWSC paper reflected the trend market prices. The Project Director 1, Architectural Services Department, supplemented that as the project would be put to tender, the outturn contract price would be a result of competitive bidding.

Admin

51. Noting that there was only one building professional, i.e. a former professor in architecture, sitting on the Special Selection Board (SSB), Mr Abraham SHEK suggested that the SSB should solicit opinions from more experts and professionals in assessing the design proposals from tenderers. This could be achieved by establishing a panel of advisors to assist the SSB. In response, D of Admin stressed the need to contain the size of the SSB to ensure that it could operate efficiently and that no persons connected with the tenderers were involved. Since the Stage 1 prequalification exercise had already completed, there was difficulty in changing the membership of the SSB midway. He however agreed to consider Mr SHEK's suggestion.

52. Ms Emily LAU referred to a recent rumour that a very senior Government official had been lobbying support for awarding the contract to one of the prequalified tenderers. She considered that a recent response made by the Chief Secretary for Administration to a LegCo question that contacts with prequalified applicants was unavoidable and therefore permissible might give rise to concern over the fairness and integrity of the project procurement exercise. D of Admin clarified that although it would not be practical to stop individual SSB members from meeting with prequalified applicants, they were not allowed to discuss or exchange information on the Tamar project. To avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interests, SSB members were required to disclose to the SSB any discussion or exchange of information with the prequalified tenderers. He further confirmed that so far he had received no details to substantiate the above rumour for follow-up.

Voting

53. Pointing out that many details about the exhibition gallery had yet to be provided, Mr WONG Sing-chi enquired if the funding for the design and construction of the gallery could be taken out from this item and voted on separately. His request was echoed by Ms Emily LAU.

54. In reply, Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury)³ confirmed that as the design and construction of the exhibition gallery was an integral part of the Tamar development project (63KA), it was necessary for the Administration to obtain funding approval for the entire project. Moreover, project 50RE on the exhibits design and fabrication of the exhibition gallery was incidental to the Tamar development project and thus the two projects should be considered as a single proposal for funding approval.

Clerk

Admin

55. Before voting, the Chairman informed members that Mr Albert CHAN had left a message stating that he would abstain from voting because of the problems related to the SCL, and would request that the proposal be voted on separately at the

relevant Finance Committee meeting.

56. The item was voted on and endorsed. Ms Emily LAU requested that Ms Cyd HO and her abstention from voting be recorded.

57. The meeting ended at 1:00 pm.

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