

No decision made on any changes to SCL

In response to media enquiries on the Shatin to Central Link (SCL), a spokesman for the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau said:"The SCL is one of the rail projects recommended in the Railway Development Strategy 2000 (RDS-2000).

The project was awarded to KCRC in June 2002 based on its Conforming Proposal submitted to the Government in July 2001.

After the award, KCRC was invited to study the various options on how to improve the transport performance of the SCL including the option of using East Rail across the harbour.

KCRC is now reviewing the SCL proposal with a view to finalising the scheme by the end of 2003 or early 2004.

No decision has been made on any changes to the original proposal. The Legislative Council and the public will be consulted in the normal manner after KCRC has completed its review.

It is necessary for KCRC to revisit and validate the various project assumptions and planning parameters, including population forecasts, originally made in the preliminary design of SCL to ensure the final scheme meets the demand. This is no different from other major projects under planning.

The option for the East Rail crossing the harbour is only one of the alternatives now being investigated by the KCRC in the design of the most desirable configuration of SCL. In this option, it would involve an extension of the existing East Rail from Hung Hom to Central West in Hong Kong Island via the Exhibition and Admiralty. The section of rail from Tai Wai to Hung Hom will still be constructed as planned. We have yet to receive considered views from KCRC on this.

The SCL, despite the additional work to institute further planning and validation, is programmed to be completed within the window of 2008 to 2011 as recommended in the Railway Development Strategy 2000 (RDS 2000). A more definite completion date will emerge after the completion of the scheme review.

In an interview with an electronic media, Secretary for Environment, Transport and Works said that more careful planning should be done by KCRC at the early stage in order to arrive at the most optimal scheme. As a result, there may be a time difference of one to two years."

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