

**Legislative Council Panel on Transport
Subcommittee on matters relating to railways**

**Reorganisation of Light Rail Transit Services
Upon the Commissioning of West Rail**

Purpose

This paper updates Members on the progress of the consultation on reorganization of Light Rail Transit (LRT) services which will tie in with the opening of West Rail in 2003.

Background

2. West Rail is scheduled to open later this year to provide a fast and efficient rail service between the North West New Territories (NWNT) and the urban areas. West Rail will interchange with Light Rail at four stations, namely Tuen Mun, Siu Hong, Tin Shui Wai and Yuen Long.

3. Concurrent with the West Rail project, the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC) is undertaking a \$2.3 billion programme to upgrade and expand the Light Rail system to provide better services to the population in NWNT. The programme includes the construction of two Light Rail extensions in Tin Shui Wai and four West Rail/Light Rail interchanges, grade separation works at several busy junctions in Tuen Mun, and the installation of a new signalling system for Light Rail. The works will enlarge Light Rail's coverage, and enhance the operating efficiency of the system.

4. To tie in with these improvements, the existing Light Rail and KCRC bus routes will be re-structured to provide feeder service to West Rail, and at the same time to maintain its role to provide intra-regional transport service in the NWNT.

5. In January 2003, KCRC presented a service reorganization proposal to the relevant District Councils and local communities with a view to consulting them. During these consultation meetings, KCRC collected a large body of divergent views and opinions. Having taken into account views and concerns expressed, KCRC has revised the proposal for further consultation with the relevant District Councils which is now taking place.

Objectives of the service reorganisation

6. The primary objectives for reorganising LRT services are as follows:

- (a) to maintain Light Rail's role as a local commuter service provider;
- (b) to rationalise the existing routings in the light of the completion of the new Light Rail extensions, grade separation works, and the opening of West Rail;
- (c) to better coordinate public transport services with a view to catering for changing demand and avoiding duplication of resources; and
- (d) to provide feeder service to West Rail with a view to facilitating travel inside and outside the NWNT region.

Features of the future Light Rail network

7. The Light Rail service reorganization aims to provide:

- (a) Direct travel: It is estimated that about 30% of the future West Rail passengers would use Light Rail as a feeder service. The new route structure will enable these passengers to travel quickly to and from the nearest West Rail station.

- (b) Convenience: The four West Rail/Light Rail interchanges are designed to facilitate easy and convenient transfer. The transfer walk time between West Rail and Light Rail will only be about 2 to 3 minutes.
- (c) More frequent service: The new Light Rail route structure seeks to increase the overall frequency of most Light Rail routes, cutting passengers' waiting times.
- (d) Options for inter-zone travel: The journey time of most Light Rail routes to and from West Rail stations will be less than 15 minutes. Passengers will have the options of using either Light Rail or West Rail for inter-zone travel between Tuen Mun and Yuen Long/Tin Shui Wai.
- (e) Redeployment of resources: By redeploying Light Rail resources to areas with bigger demand, it will enhance Light Rail's overall efficiency, resulting in more frequent services. Light Rail's operational efficiency will also be improved upon completion of the grade separation work in Tuen Mun and Tin Shui Wai.
- (f) Fare: An integrated fare structure will be introduced for passengers transferring between West Rail/Light Rail and KCRC buses. This will probably include offering an inter-modal discount.

8. **Annex A** is a map of the existing Light Rail routes, and **Annex B** is routing in the original service reorganisation proposal.

Re-structuring of KCRC Bus routes in NWNT

9. KCRC buses in the NWNT will also be reorganized to enable it to take on the additional role of providing feeder service to West Rail. It is estimated that about 3% of West Rail passengers will use KCRC feeder buses.

Public consultation

10. Since public consultation commenced in January this year, KCRC has consulted many organizations including the following:

- District Councils and the related committees
- Area Committees
- Area Consultative Forums
- Rural Committees
- Residents organizations
- The Corporation's Light Rail Passenger Liaison Groups

11. The key concerns raised in the consultations are summarised as follows:

- Reduction in the number of long distance Light Rail routes
- Reduction in the number of direct Light Rail routes to and from certain key locations such as Tuen Mun Hospital, Tuen Mun Ferry Pier and Tuen Mun Town Centre
- Some passengers will be inconvenienced by more transfers and longer journey time
- The reorganization will "force passengers to use West Rail"
- Chaos resulting from too many route changes upon the opening West Rail
- Changes to LRT services should be implemented some time after West Rail opening
- Possibly higher journey costs after LRT reorganization

12. **Annex C** contains a summary of the key concerns raised by the public about the LRT service reorganisation, and how KCRC plans to address the concerns in the revised proposal.

13. The revised proposal was presented to the Yuen Long District Council's Traffic and Transport Committee and the Tuen Mun District Council on 18 March and 20 March respectively, and further meetings are being organized.

14. **Annex D** shows the detailed routing of the revised Light Rail service reorganization plan.

15. It is noteworthy that in the revised proposal, most of the Light Rail stops will be served by two or more Light Rail routes, and the overall transfer time will be reduced compared with the original proposal. With regard to journey time, it is estimated that about 40% of the Light Rail passengers will benefit from higher frequency service, cutting their journey time by 1 to 3 minutes. About 45% of the passengers' journey times will remain unchanged. Only about 15%, mostly long distance passengers, will have their journey time lengthened by 1 to 4 minutes.

Implementation

16. KCRC will continue to consult the relevant District Councils, Area Committees, and other local parties in the coming few months on the service reorganization proposal. The Corporation aims to finalize the plans by mid 2003.

17. To reduce the impact of the service reorganization, KCRC intends to introduce the changes in phases. Details of the implementation will be announced after the service reorganization plan is finalized.

18. To assist passengers to familiarize with the changes, extensive education and publicity programmes will be organized. They include:

- School/community talks and briefings
- Media publicity
- Pamphlets and leaflets
- Station open days and public trials of new services

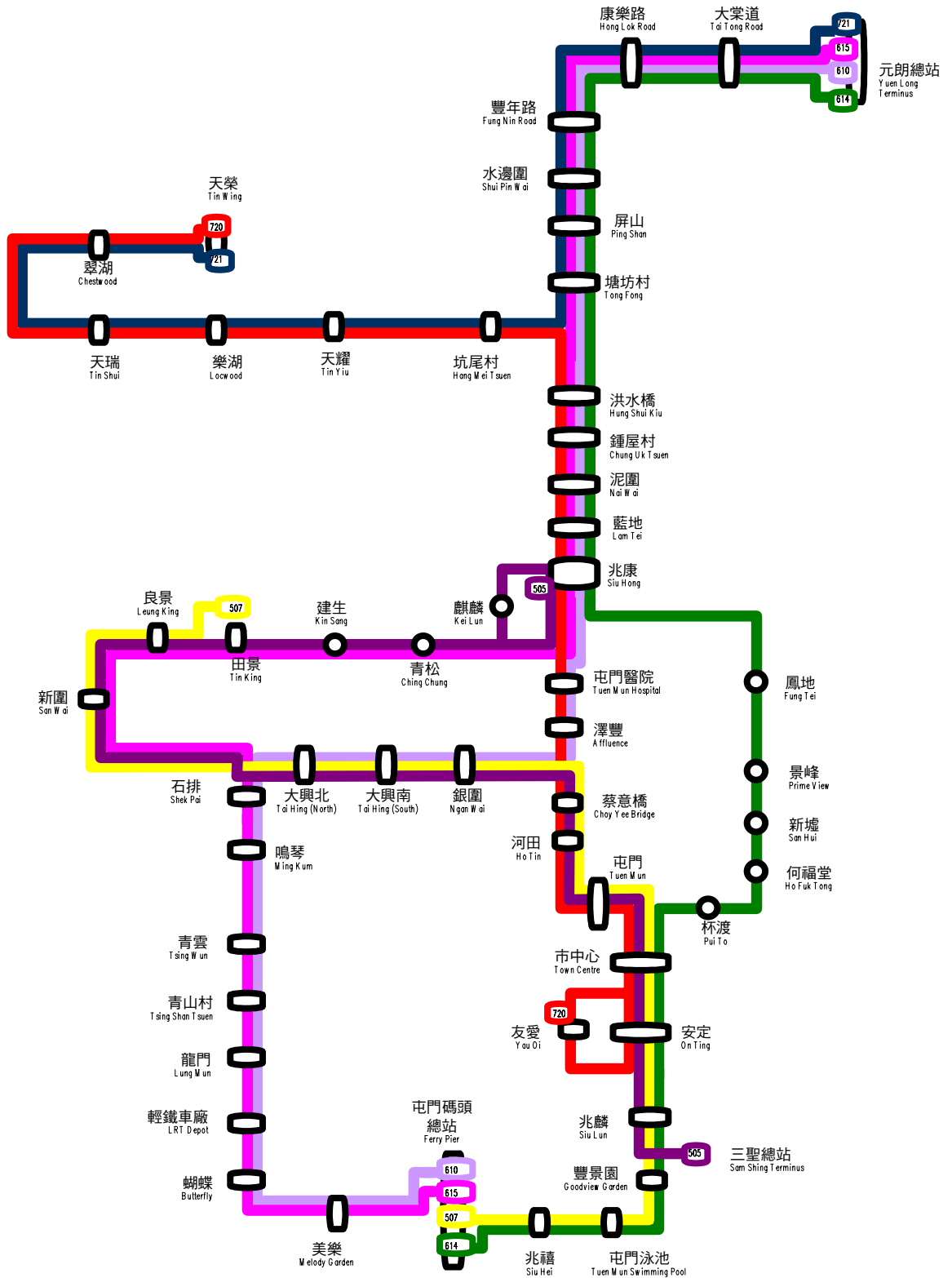
- Passenger information and promotions
- Deployment of service ambassadors to assist the passengers during the initial period of West Rail opening
- Enhanced passenger telephone hotline system
- Drills/exercises on new services and contingency plans

19. Prior to the changes, there will be extensive trials to ensure that the implementation will be seamless.

20. Members are invited to comment on the proposed reorganization plan.

Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation
April 2003

Existing Light Rail Routes 現時輕鐵路綫

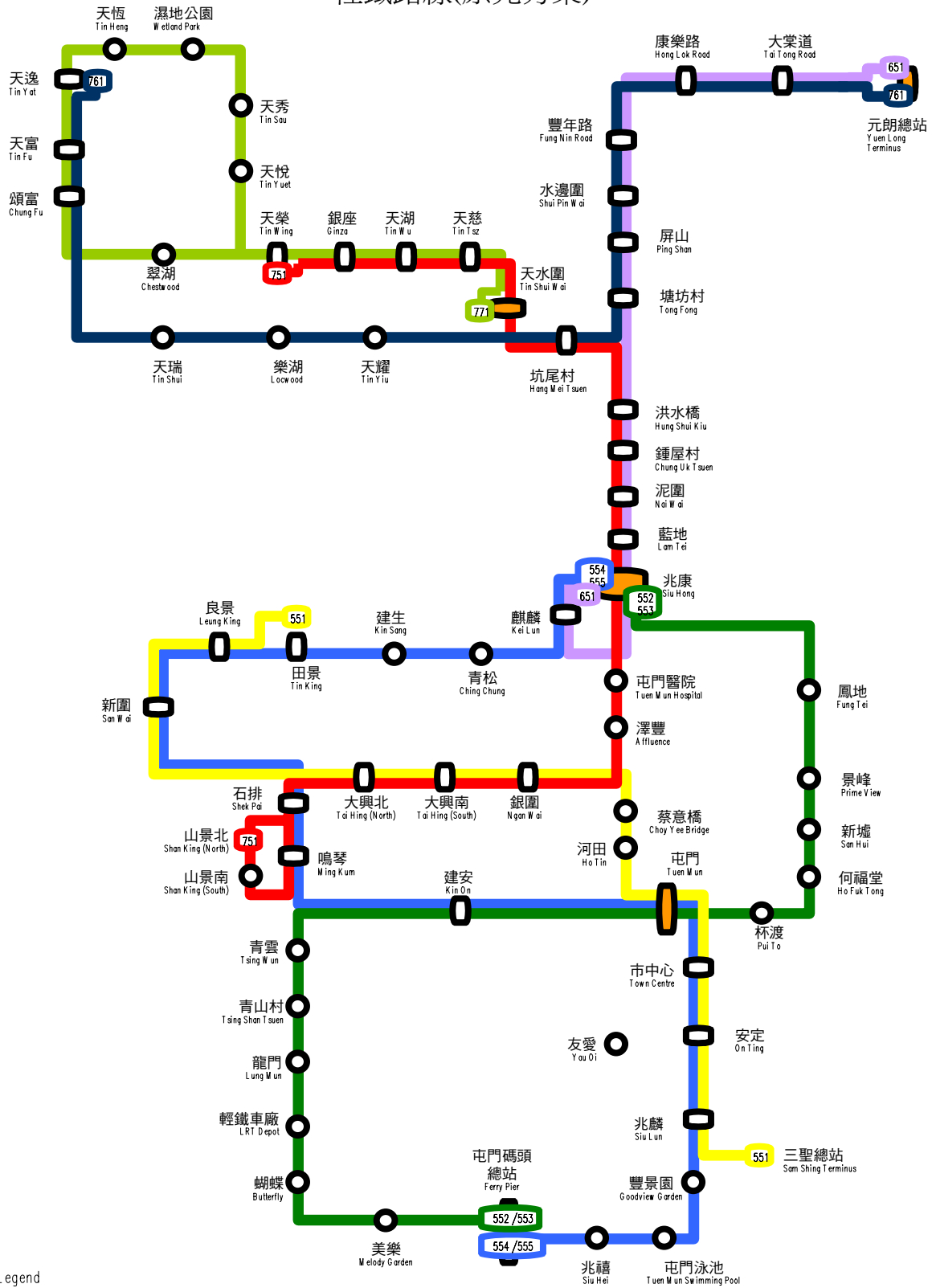


Legend

Route 路線	Terminus	Route 路線	Terminus
	505 (Sam Shing - Siu Hong) 三聖總站 - 兆康		615 (Yuen Long - Ferry Pier) 元朗總站 - 屯門碼頭
	507 (Ferry Pier - Tin King) 屯門碼頭 - 田景		720 (Tin Wing - You Oi) 天榮 - 友愛
	610 (Yuen Long - Ferry Pier) 元朗總站 - 屯門碼頭		721 (Tin Wing - Yuen Long) 天榮 - 元朗總站
	614 (Yuen Long - Ferry Pier) 元朗總站 - 屯門碼頭		

Light Rail Routes (original proposal)

輕鐵路綫(原先方案)



Legend

Route 路線	Terminus	Route 路線	Terminus
	551 (Sam Shing - Tin King) 三聖總站 - 田景		761 (Tin Yat - Yuen Long) 天逸 - 元朗總站
	552 / 553 (Siu Hong - Ferry Pier) 兆康 - 屯門碼頭		771 (Tin Shui Wai Circular) 天水圍循環綫
	554 / 555 (Siu Hong - Ferry Pier) 兆康 - 屯門碼頭		
	651 (Yuen Long - Siu Hong) 元朗總站 - 兆康		
	751 (Tin Wai - Shan King) 天榮 - 山景		West Rail Interchange Stop 輕鐵西鐵接駁站

**Summary of key concerns
on the original Light Rail reorganisation proposal**

Concerns

KCRC's plan to address these concerns

Light Rail service:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduction of long distance inter-town Light Rail routes
• No direct Light Rail routes to and from certain key locations such as Tuen Mun Hospital, Tuen Mun Ferry Pier and Tuen Mun Town Centre
• More transfers for some passengers on long distance journeys will be needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two inter-town long distance routes have been extended to increase coverage including Tuen Mun Hospital and Tuen Mun town centre.• In addition, West Rail will have ample capacity for carrying inter-town passengers.
• The revised routing provides direct access to Tuen Mun Hospital is similar to what is currently.• The routing from Tin Shui Wai has been extended to terminate at Tuen Mun town centre.• The routing from Yuen Long has been extended to Tuen Mun Ferry Pier.
• The revised proposal will reduce the overall transfer rate of passengers to 15%, three percentage points better than the original proposal. |
|---|---|

- Longer journey times for some passengers on long distance journeys
- The revised proposal confers benefits to a greater proportion of passengers.
- For those long distance passengers who may need to transfer and hence may incur a longer journey time, KCRC is considering a lower Light Rail fare.

Fares:

- Early release of West Rail fares
- KCRC has noted the public's concern, and would consult the public as soon as the Corporation's Managing Board has formed a preliminary view on fares.
- West Rail fares within the NWNT should be as low as the current Light Rail fares in order to provide a real alternative for passengers
- KCRC will positively consider this request in the overall context of acceptability of Light Rail reorganization proposal.
- Transfer charges from Light Rail/Bus to West Rail should be as low as possible, or free
- KCRC will positively consider making very reasonable transfer charges to and from West Rail.
- Request to retain free transfer between Light Rail and some feeder bus routes
- KCRC will consider this in the overall context of acceptability of Light Rail feeder bus reorganization proposals.

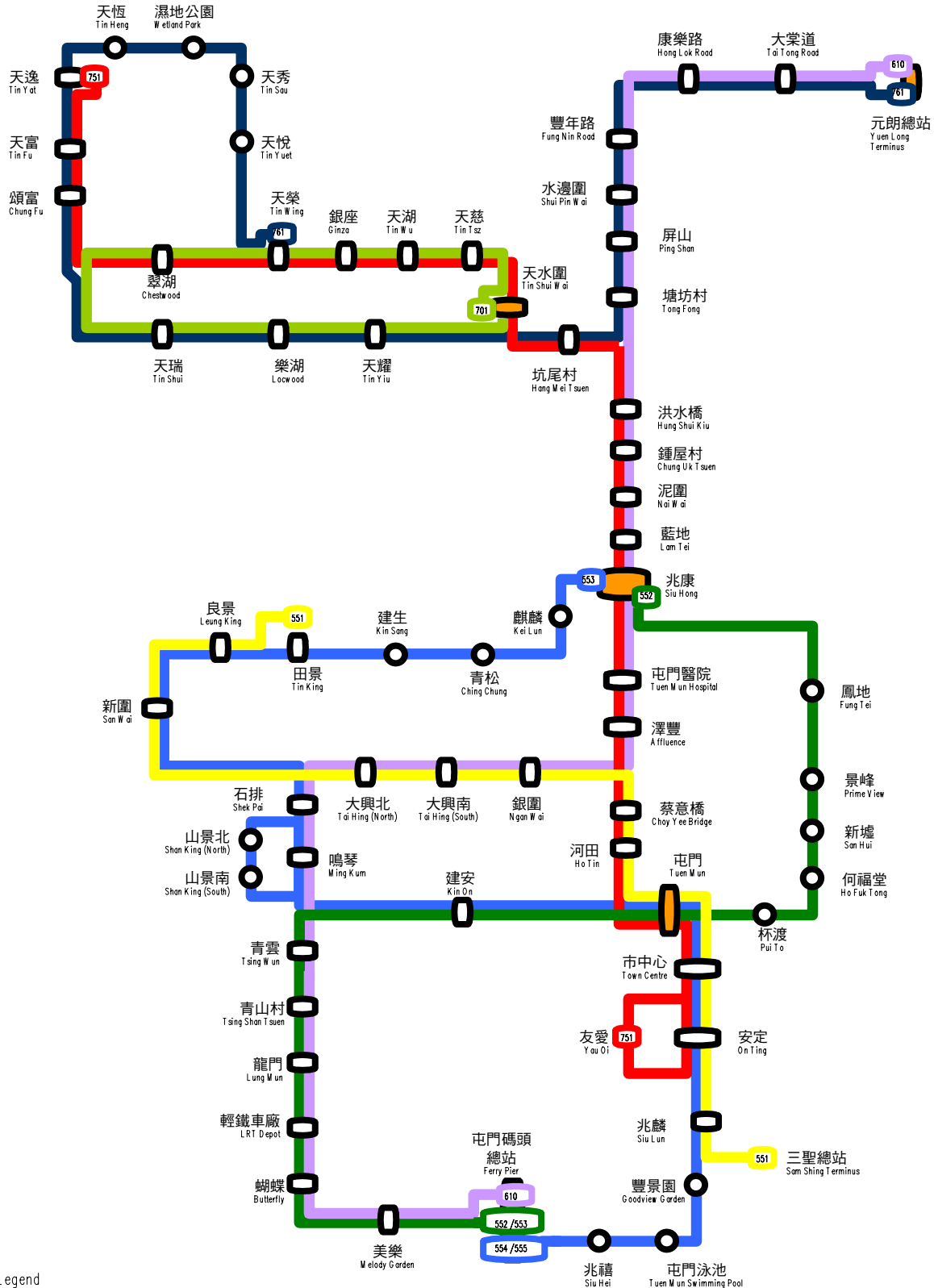
Implementation:

- The proposed plan involves too big changes for passengers
- Four of the seven routes in the revised plan are the same or similar to the existing routes.
- Extensive publicity and passenger education programmes will be organised to get the passengers familiarised with the new routings
- KCRC plans to implement the changes in phases.
- Some suggested that the numbering of the routes should remain unchanged as far as possible
- As far as practicable, KCRC would try to retain the existing numbering system.
- Some suggested that the reorganisation plan should be implemented after West Rail opens
- With the imminent opening of the new extensions in Tin Shui Wai and the completion of the grade separation works in Tuen Mun, reconfiguration for some routes is inevitable.
- However, KCRC would consider implementing the changes in phases.

Light Rail Routes (revised proposal)

輕鐵路線(修訂方案)

Annex D 附件D



Legend

Route 路線	terminus	Route 路線	terminus
	551 (Sam Shing - Tin King) 三聖總站 - 田景		751 (Tin Yat - Yau Oi) 天逸 - 友愛
	552/553 (Siu Hong - Ferry Pier) 兆康 - 屯門碼頭		761 (Tin Wing - Yuen Long) 天榮 - 元朗總站
	554/555 (Siu Hong - Ferry Pier) 兆康 - 屯門碼頭		
	610 (Yuen Long - Ferry Pier) 元朗總站 - 屯門碼頭		
	701 (Tin Shui Wai Circular) 天水圍循環線		West Rail Interchange Stop 輕鐵西鐵接駁站