

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)2490/02-03

Ref: CB1/PS/02/00

Panel on Transport

Subcommittee on matters relating to railways

Background brief on Shatin to Central Link

Purpose

This paper provides some background information on the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) and the latest development of the project.

Shatin to Central Link

2. On 16 May 2000, the Government announced the Railway Development Strategy 2000 (RDS-2000). The Strategy is based on the findings of the Second Railway Development Study (RDS-2) and maps out the preferred railway network expansion plan for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region up to the year 2016. The SCL is one of the six new railway projects recommended for implementation.

Conforming Scheme

3. According to the Project Brief for the SCL, the SCL will be a through running line between Tai Wai and the Central Business District of Hong Kong Island. It effectively comprises three elements: (a) Tai Wai to Diamond Hill Link which comprises a new station at Tai Wai or an integrated station with the existing KCR Tai Wai Station, together with a running line through to the proposed Diamond Hill SCL Station; (b) East Kowloon Line which comprises a running line, with stations at Diamond Hill, Kai Tak on the South East Kowloon Development site, To Kwa Wan, Ma Tau Wai, either Ho Man Tin or Gillies Avenue, and Hung Hom; and (c) the Fourth Rail Harbour Crossing which comprises a running line crossing Victoria Harbour with new stations at Exhibition, Admiralty and Central West. The alignment and station locations are at **Annex A**.

4. In January 2001, the Government invited the two railway corporations to submit proposals for the SCL based upon a design, construct, operate and finance arrangement for the Conforming Scheme. The corporations might

submit Non Conforming Proposals but only those Non Conforming Proposals from the Corporation whose Conforming Proposal had been assessed to be the best would be considered further.

5. By the close of the tender on 20 July 2001, Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC) submitted two and MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) nine proposals. No proposal was received from any other party. Out of the total 11 proposals submitted by the two corporations, only one from each corporation conformed fully with the requirements in the Project Brief and were thus considered Conforming Proposals.

6. Having regard to the technical and financial merits of the two Conforming Proposals, the Government announced the award of the SCL to KCRC on 25 June 2002. Details of the technical and financial assessments of the Conforming Proposals are set out in the Legislative Council Brief issued by the Administration under File Ref. TBCR 10/1016/99.

Modified scheme submitted by KCRC in August 2002

7. Upon the announcement of the award of the SCL to KCRC, the Government invited KCRC to examine the technical and financial viability of adding more stations or linkages to SCL to serve more population centres.

8. In August 2002, KCRC proposed a revised scheme. The modified SCL scheme follows essentially that outlined in the SCL Project Brief comprising ten stations, namely Tai Wai, Diamond Hill, Kai Tak, To Kwa Wan, Ma Tau Wai, Ho Man Tin or Gilles Avenue, Hung Hom, Exhibition, Admiralty and Central West. A new station will be added at Tsz Wan Shan. An underground people mover system will be provided to link the Hung Hom Station to the Whampoa area. Adequate protective work would be undertaken to make provision for a future station at Hin Keng.

9. KCRC estimates that the Tsz Wan Shan Station and the automated people mover system would require an additional cost of about \$4 billion (MOD). The total project costs of SCL will be increased from \$31 billion (MOD) to \$35 billion (MOD). KCRC has agreed to absorb these additional costs in full by way of internal resources and borrowing. Government's financial support is not required.

10. KCRC estimates that with the introduction of Tsz Wan Shan Station, early opening of the section from Tai Wai to Diamond Hill Stations will not be possible. The whole project is estimated to be completed by end 2008/early 2009.

Implications of the Tamar development on SCL

11. In April 2002, the Government proposed to develop the site at Tamar for the Central Government Complex (CGC) and Legislative Council Complex (LCC) with the associated works scheduled for completion in 2007.

12. According to the Government's Project Brief on the SCL, one of the stations of the SCL will be located at Admiralty, which will serve as an interchange station with the existing MTR Island Line and Tsuen Wan Line. KCRC proposed in its SCL submission to locate this interchange station at the southern or "Government, Institution or Community" portion of the Tamar site.

13. Whilst acknowledging the potential merits for providing a railway station at the Tamar site on transport grounds, the Administration considers it not desirable to allow for any railway station or tunnel, or other public transport facilities directly underneath the CGC and LCC on security grounds. The SCL interchange station should remain at the location to the east of the existing Admiralty Station of the Island Line and Tsuen Wan Line. The KCRC was advised of the Government's decision formally in October 2002. The Corporation has since been planning for the SCL on this basis.

14. KCRC estimates that the relocation of the SCL Admiralty Station from Tamar to Admiralty East will incur an additional cost of about \$1 billion to the project.

15. On 26 May 2003, the Government announced its decision to temporarily put the Tamar development project on hold in order to review its spending priorities.

East Rail as the Fourth Harbour Crossing

16. In July 2003, it was widely reported in the media that the Administration and KCRC were considering the option for ER crossing the harbour. As a result, the SCL project would be delayed for one to two years.

17. The Panel held a meeting on 1 August 2003 to receive a briefing by the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works on the matter. Members note that KCRC is studying various options on how to improve the transport performance of the SCL including the option of using ER across the harbour. In order to ensure that the most optimal scheme is adopted to meet the demand, it is necessary for KCRC to revisit and validate the various project assumptions and planning parameters originally made in the preliminary design of the SCL, including the latest population forecasts and the timing of the Wanchai reclamation.

18. As regards the timing for completion of the SCL, the Administration confirms that despite the additional work to institute further planning and validation, SCL is programmed to be completed within the window of 2008 to 2011 as recommended in RDS-2000. A more definite completion date would emerge after the completion of the scheme review.

Concerns expressed by members at previous meetings

19. At previous meetings of the Panel on Transport and its subcommittee, members expressed concern over a wide range of issues relating to the planning and implementation of the SCL. The major ones include the following:

- (a) Whether the Tamar development, the Central and Wanchai Reclamation, and the proposed extension of East Rail as the Fourth Harbour Crossing would have any impact on the planning and implementation of the SCL, and whether the SCL could be completed by 2008 as originally scheduled;
- (b) Whether the proposed extension of East Rail as the Fourth Harbour Crossing would give rise to possible claim for compensation from MTRCL;
- (c) Whether the review of the planning for the SCL reflects a fundamental change to the railway development strategy as set out in RDS-2000;
- (d) Whether the overcrowding situation at KCR Tai Wai Station would be aggravated beyond an acceptable level as a result of the possible slippage in the delivery of the SCL;
- (e) Whether the extension to Whampoa and Tsz Wan Shan would be unduly affected as a result of the review of the design of the SCL; and
- (f) Whether an additional station could be provided at Hin Keng at the earliest opportunity.

