

**立法會**  
***Legislative Council***

LC Paper No. CB(1)1546/03-04  
(These minutes have been seen  
by the Administration)

Ref: CB1/PS/2/00/1

**Panel on Transport**

**Subcommittee on matters relating to railways**

**Minutes of special meeting on  
Monday, 16 February 2004, at 10:45 am  
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

**Members present** : Hon Miriam LAU Kin-yee, JP (Chairman)  
Dr Hon David CHU Yu-lin, JP  
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan  
Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP  
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo  
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, JP  
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip

**Non-Subcommittee** : Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP  
**Members attending** Hon James TO Kun-sun  
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, JP

**Members absent** : Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, JP  
Hon CHAN Kwok-keung, JP  
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP  
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP  
Hon LEUNG Fu-wah, MH, JP  
Hon WONG Sing-chi  
Hon LAU Ping-cheung

**Public Officers** : Miss Margaret FONG  
**attending** Acting Permanent Secretary for the Environment,  
Transport and Works

Mr Raymond HO  
Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment,  
Transport and Works

Mr WAN Man-lung  
Principal Government Engineer/Railway Development  
Highways Department

**Attendance by invitation :** **Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation**

Mr Michael TIEN  
Chairman

Mr Samuel LAI  
Acting Chief Executive Officer

Mr K K LEE  
Senior Director, Capital Projects

Mr Kenneth LEUNG  
Director, New Projects

Mr Stephen CHIK  
General Manager, Capital Works Planning

Mrs Grace LAM  
General Manager, Corporate Affairs

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

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

Miss Winnie CHENG  
Legislative Assistant 5

---

Action

**I Report on the scheme design of Shatin to Central Link**

(LC Paper No. CB(1)981/03-04(01) - Information paper provided by the Administration)

Mr Michael TIEN, the Chairman of the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC), briefed members on the latest situation regarding the implementation of the Shatin to Central Link (SCL) project as set out in the detailed report prepared by KCRC on the SCL scheme design (Annex to LC Paper No. CB(1)981/03-04(01)).

Preferred Scheme

2. The Chairman of KCRC advised that in accordance with the SCL Project Brief requirement for a railway link from Tai Wai to Central via East Kowloon, the Corporation had been conducting studies to refine the SCL alignment from the perspective of passenger safety and convenience, and also taking into account the Government's latest planning parameters as well as findings of ground conditions investigation at the proposed locations of SCL stations. According to the proposed Preferred Scheme, the East Rail (ER) across the harbour option would be adopted for SCL. It consisted of a north-south railway from Lo Wu to Central by extending East Rail (ER) across the harbour, and an extension of the Ma On Shan Railway (MOSR) from Tai Wai to Hung Hom Mass Transportation Centre (MTC) via the East Kowloon Line (EKL), and hence to Tuen Mun via West Rail (WR).

3. The Chairman of KCRC stressed that there was no specific requirement in the SCL Project Brief on the linkage between railways and the alignment of the Preferred Scheme was the same as the Original Proposal. The difference was only in the interchanging station for passengers from different lines. Under the Preferred Scheme, MOSR would be extended and EKL constructed to serve the population of Ma On Shan (MOS) and East Kowloon. This railway would be connected to Tuen Mun via the Kowloon Southern Link (KSL) and WR forming a east-west railway corridor. All in all, the Preferred Scheme would attract around 62 000 more passengers per day in 2016 than the Original Proposal. Moreover, around 300 000 passengers per day would benefit from the direct links and require one less interchange at Hung Hom.

4. The Chairman of KCRC also highlighted the following developments in relation to the Preferred Scheme:

- (a) The proposed Hung Hom MTC would be simplified from a 3-way to a 2-way interchange. As the number of interchanging passengers would be reduced, the safe operation of the station in terms of emergency evacuation would be greatly enhanced.
- (b) For ER, the existing 12-car trains would be modified to 9-car trains with an enhanced signalling system to increase the maximum hourly train frequency from 27 trains to an ultimate of 34 trains during peak hours.

Action

- (c) Instead of providing an underground Tsz Wan Shan (TWS) Station, a dedicated above ground automated people mover (APM) link would be provided between Diamond Hill (DIH) Station and TWS area.
- (d) Due to passenger safety, site and engineering constraints, To Kwa Wan Station would be combined with Mau Tau Wai Station.
- (e) The provision of a people mover system for the Whampoa area would depend on the Government's decision on whether it would accept MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL)'s proposal to extend the Kwun Tong Line to Whampoa.
- (f) Planning would be made for the construction of a new Causeway Bay North Station along Gloucester Road to serve the busy commercial and shopping centre.
- (g) Instead of providing a station at the Tamar site, the Admiralty East Station (ADE) would be constructed to the east of the MTR Admiralty Station.
- (h) Instead of providing a station in Central West, consideration was being given to constructing a Central South Station at the south of Upper Albert Road.
- (i) KCRC was liaising with MTRCL on the details of interchange arrangement at DIH and ADE Stations. Study was also in progress on the interchange arrangement with MTR at Causeway Bay North Station.
- (j) According to current estimate, the total project cost of the Preferred Scheme was \$35.5 billion. The Preferred Scheme would be fully funded by the Corporation with no need for financial support from the Government.
- (k) Subject to the Government's approval, the Corporation's target was to complete the SCL project within the window originally suggested in the Railway Development Strategy 2000 (RDS-2000), i.e. by 2011.

5. With the aid of PowerPoint, Mr K K LEE, Senior Director, Capital Projects of KCRC (SD/CP, KCRC), elaborated on the salient points of the Preferred Scheme.

*(Post-meeting note: A set of presentation materials provided by KCRC was tabled at the meeting and subsequently issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(1)1015/03-04(01).)*

Action

*ER across the harbour option*

6. Notwithstanding the perceived benefits of the Preferred Scheme, Mr LAU Kong-wah maintained his strong view that such changes being contemplated for the SCL project were very unfair to the residents in MOS because they had all along been given to expect through train service from MOS to the Central Business District of the Hong Kong Island by MOSR and SCL via EKL. Moreover, he was gravely concerned that in an attempt to justify the Preferred Scheme, the Corporation might be too optimistic about the demand for east-west transport services while ER would not be adequate to meet the rapidly growing cross boundary traffic demand.

7. Mr CHENG Kar-foo was not entirely convinced by the Corporation's assertion that the Preferred Scheme was a better alternative. As EKL would not be extended across the harbour, many MOSR passengers would interchange with ER at KCR Tai Wai Station causing unacceptable overcrowding there. Coupled with the additional cross harbour passengers on ER and the Corporation's proposal to downsize ER train configuration, he was seriously concerned that KCRC had under-estimated passenger demand resulting in capacity problem on ER.

8. In response, the Chairman of KCRC explained that the greatest strength of the Preferred Scheme was that the connectivity of Hong Kong's railway network, both in terms of north-south and east-west connections, would be improved significantly. The overall efficiency of the whole KCR network was enhanced while the number of passengers required to interchange had been reduced to the minimum. Under the Preferred Scheme, passengers could travel direct from Lo Wu to the financial centre on the island side while daily commuting between various residential and business development areas across the territory would also be more convenient. This would be beneficial to the long-term development of Hong Kong.

9. The Chairman of KCRC further said that the Preferred Scheme was intended to bring about maximum benefits to the community at large. Considering the volume of interchanging passengers required to use Hung Hom MTC under the Original Proposal and the potential risk of such during emergency evacuation, it was necessary for the Corporation to explore whether feasible options were available to simplify the design of the station. He believed that the Preferred Scheme had achieved a win-win situation for the community and the Corporation as the number of passengers requiring interchange would be significantly reduced while the efficiency of the whole KCR network enhanced.

10. Addressing members' concern about ER capacity, the Chairman of KCRC said that as ER was extended to cross the harbour, additional passengers would naturally be attracted by this convenient and direct service. Nonetheless, he stressed that not all ER passengers were bound for the island side. Some of them were expected to terminate their journey at Hung Hom MTC while others would change to other modes of transport. Those passengers who stayed on the KCR network could also interchange conveniently with WR via KSL to various destinations in Tsim Sha Tsui, West Kowloon and Northwest New Territories. Hence, there would be adequate

Action

capacity on ER to cope with cross harbour demand under the Preferred Scheme. Based on such assumptions, most MOSR passengers who were bound for the Hong Kong Island would interchange at Hung Hom MTC for SCL. In this respect, the proposal to combine Ma Tau Wai and To Kwa Wan Stations had an added advantage of shortening the journey time on EKL by one to two minutes. This could attract more MOSR cross harbour passengers to stay on EKL to travel to Hung Hom MTC for interchange with SCL.

11. While noting KCRC's explanation, Mr CHENG Kar-foo saw the need for the Corporation to provide a detailed breakdown and explanation on the projected changes in SCL patronage under the Preferred Scheme vis-à-vis Original Proposal, in particular the Corporation's estimates that the Preferred Scheme would attract 62 000 more passengers while the number of interchanging passengers at Hung Hom MTC would be significantly reduced by 46% from 640 000 to 340 000 passengers on a daily basis.

KCRC 12. While agreeing to provide supplementary information to members for consideration after the meeting, the Chairman of KCRC briefly stated that as far as patronage was concerned, the number of cross harbour passengers on MOSR and EKL under the Preferred Scheme would be reduced by 15 000 and 60 000 respectively as such passengers were expected to switch to ER or other modes of transport. But on ER, the number of cross harbour passengers would increase by 103 000. Taking into account the reduction on MOSR and EKL and the increase on ER, it would mean that there would be a net increase of 28 000 passengers making use of SCL (ER cross harbour section) to cross the harbour.

*Train capacity*

13. Mr CHENG Kar-foo opined that the Corporation's proposal to modify ER train configuration could fail to provide adequate capacity to cope with the increasing demand expected to be generated on ER with its direct service to the Hong Kong Island, as well as the impending commissioning of MOSR. Notwithstanding the increased train frequency, the total number of train cars deployed to run on ER during peak hours would be reduced from 324 to 306. If the overcrowding situation at KCR Tai Wai Station was further aggravated by the resulting capacity problem, this could induce the passengers to switch to other modes of public transport.

14. Mr LAU Kong-wah said that as SCL would be extended to the busy shopping and commercial centre of Causeway Bay under the Preferred Scheme, he had serious doubts as to whether the 9-car train option could cope with the additional demand. Furthermore, he considered that the proposal would lead to serious waste of resources as the existing ER station facilities were built to accommodate 12-car trains.

15. In response, the Chairman of KCRC said that the proposal to run shorter trains with more frequent headway on ER was made after careful consideration of various factors including the need to enhance operational efficiency of and passenger convenience on ER. He explained that the perceived problem of existing ER trains being overcrowded was largely a result of passengers' preference to board the train in

## Action

the middle section for more convenient egress. At present, the 12-car ER train at the front and in the rear was not fully utilized with a passenger load factor of less than 70%. If 9-car trains were used instead, the load factor was expected to be increased to more than 80%. Passengers could also enjoy greater convenience as the headway of 9-car trains would be reduced to less than two minutes. This was in line with current worldwide trend of railway systems, and MTR also only operated 8-car trains.

16. The Chairman of KCRC further said that another important consideration was that there was serious space constraint at the four proposed SCL stations on the Hong Kong Island. Nonetheless, he assured members that the Preferred Scheme was designed to handle up to 100 000 passengers per hour. It was more than adequate to meet the Government's design capacity requirement of 85 000 passengers per hour for SCL.

17. Responding to members' enquiry about the possibility of further increasing the hourly frequency of 12-car ER trains, SD/CP, KCRC said that when ER was designed in the early days, it was intended to serve as a suburban line catering for a lower passenger capacity. Given the length of 12-car trains, it would not be possible to further increase the frequency of ER up to 34 trains per hour as the proposed 9-car train option.

### *Interchange with MTR*

18. Acknowledging the overall transport benefits to be achieved by the Preferred Scheme, Mr Albert CHAN asked whether arrangements would be made for SCL passengers to interchange with MTR at the new Causeway Bay North Station.

19. The Chairman of KCRC said that the Corporation was still studying the interchange arrangement with MTR at Causeway Bay North Station so as to further facilitate interchange of passengers from Kowloon East and Northern New Territories to Hong Kong Island East.

20. Mr CHENG Kar-foo stated that in view of a possible merger between the two railway corporations, the interchange arrangements between SCL and MTR at DIH and ADE Stations should be carefully planned to avoid duplication of resources in case any station facilities would have to be re-designed at a later stage.

21. The Chairman of KCRC responded that notwithstanding the outcome of any merger talks, it was still necessary to construct the DIH and ADM Stations. The Corporation would ensure that the most convenient interchange arrangements were made for the passengers. To date, good progress had been made with MTRCL on interchange arrangement at DIH Station while further issues would have to be resolved for ADM Station.

22. The Acting Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Acting PSET) said that the need for SCL would not be affected by any consideration of a possible merger between the two railway corporations. As reported by the

Action

Chairman of KCRC, useful progress had already been made by the two railway corporations in respect of interchange arrangements between SCL and MTR. While it would be presumptuous to make any speculations on the merger, she said that one of the key benefits to be achieved through an integration of the two corporations' railway networks was that seamless interchange arrangements would be provided to the passengers in the long run. While the merger issue was still being considered by the Administration, the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works had already stated that an announcement would hopefully be made soon. Subject to any further developments, the Corporation could consider incorporating any necessary refinements in the Final Proposal it planned to submit to the Government in mid-2004.

*SCL fare*

23. Mr CHENG Kar-foo reiterated his concern that with the ER across the harbour option, the financial viability of MOSR would be seriously undermined. Moreover, the construction of the Preferred Scheme would cost an additional \$5 billion. All these would create tremendous pressure on the Corporation's fare levels.

24. The Chairman of KCRC responded that while the construction cost of the Preferred Scheme was higher than the Original Proposal by \$5 billion, the Preferred Scheme would bring in 62 000 more passengers each day and hence increase the fare revenue. Based on the rate of return for 50 years, the increase in cost would be offset by the increase in revenue. Hence, there would be no material change in the rate of return and the fare level would not be affected. He further said that the Corporation was mindful of the need to keep its fares at a competitive level, particularly under the prevailing economic conditions.

*TWS APM System and Whampoa People Mover System*

25. Considering the potential safety risks involved, Mr James TO concurred with the Corporation's assessment that it might not be appropriate to provide the TWS Station. In respect of the proposed TWS APM System, Mr Fred LI sought assurance from KCRC that it would have adequate capacity to meet the transport demand of local areas. He also stressed that the Corporation must make every effort to minimize the noise and visual impacts of the APM system which was to be built on viaduct.

26. Ms CHAN Yuen-han considered that the proposed APM System should be developed to serve the transport needs of local residents in TWS area as it would have a significant impact on their livelihood. As it was KCRC's original commitment to provide a station in TWS under SCL, the proposed APM System should not be regarded as a separate system from SCL and the passengers should not be required to pay extra fare for the leg of journey on the TWS APM System. Furthermore, Ms CHAN expressed concern about the need to minimize the noise and visual disturbance created in the neighbourhood which included residential and educational premises as well as recreational space. KCRC should also ensure that the design of the station could enhance the tourists attractions nearby such as the Chi Lin Nunnery.



Action

27. SD/CP, KCRC said that the capacity of the APM system, which was similar to that of the originally planned station, would be able to cope with passenger demand. As envisaged, the Corporation would make reference to similar systems in overseas countries such as Japan and adopt the latest technology to minimize the possible noise generated from the APM System. For example, low speed magnetic levitation system or the rubber wheel design would be considered. For locations close to residents, consideration would be given to providing suitable mitigation measures if needed to reduce noise. The Corporation would also ensure that the station was designed in harmony with the surrounding environment.

28. As far as fare on the TWS APM System was concerned, the Chairman of KCRC confirmed that the system would be treated as one of the station of SCL and the passengers would not be required to pay any extra fare for travelling on the APM System if they were using the APM in conjunction with the KCRC system. However, depending on the boundary of fare zones to be applied for SCL, different fares might be charged for those passengers terminating at the TWS APM System and DIH Station.

29. Mr Albert CHAN reiterated his long-standing dissatisfaction about the services of Light Rail, and cautioned KCRC not to contemplate the use of a similar system for either the TWS APM System or the Whampoa People Mover System. Stressing that transport services must be provided for the convenience of the travelling public, he considered that the Corporation should actively explore the feasibility of using shuttle bus or trolley-bus service to replace the APM System if the interest of passengers could be better served.

30. The Chairman of KCRC explained that the proposed TWS APM System would be built on viaduct. Its design and operation were different from the at-grade Light Rail system. Noting Mr Albert CHAN's suggestion about the use of shuttle bus service, he said that the Corporation was open on this matter. Further consultation would be conducted with local residents on how best their transport needs could be met. Regarding the provision of rail service in Whampoa, the Chairman of KCRC said that if a decision was made to extend the MTR system to Whampoa area, the Corporation would not provide the People Mover System to avoid duplication of resources.

31. Considering that the provision of rail service in Whampoa area was long overdue, Mr James TO sought assurance from the Administration that rail service would indeed be provided to local residents either by KCRC or MTRCL. In reply, Acting PSET confirmed that aside from KCRC's proposal, the Government had also invited MTRCL to undertake further planning in extending the Kwun Tong Line to Whampoa via Homantin. A decision on this rail link would be made in conjunction with the SCL scheme design.

32. Mr James TO also asked whether the same fare arrangement would be adopted for the Whampoa People Mover System if built. Mr Samuel LAI, the Acting Chief Executive Officer of KCRC, responded that as originally envisaged, the Whampoa

Action

People Mover System would be an extension of the KCR system with three stations serving the Whampoa area. Discounts would be provided for passengers who interchanged with SCL.

*Kai Tak Station*

33. Mr Albert CHAN noted that the Public Works Subcommittee would shortly consider a funding proposal from the Administration for the demolition of the passenger terminal building and associated structures remaining in the north apron area of the former Kai Tak Airport so as to prepare the site for KCRC to construct the SCL depot. In this connection, he asked whether the Administration would consider entrusting the project to KCRC so that related works could be undertaken concurrently to achieve cost savings.

34. SD/CP, KCRC replied that the Corporation had been consulted on the matter. In view of the lack of cost-effectiveness and the fact that the SCL project had yet to be gazetted, the Corporation had decided not to take up the said government works. Moreover, there was a need for the Government to ensure the timely completion of such advance works so that the site could be handed over to the Corporation for other ensuing construction works of the SCL project.

*Homantin Station*

35. Mr James TO said that suitable arrangements such as the provision of lifts or travellers should be made to ensure the connectivity of Homantin Station with Homantin Estate and other uphill areas. Taking note of the member's concern, Mr Kenneth LEUNG, Director/New Projects of KCRC, said that further discussions would be held with the Administration on the necessary arrangements in due course.

*Causeway Bay North Station*

36. Ms CHAN Yuen-han expressed concern about the serious disruption caused by the construction of a station in the busy Causeway Bay North area, particularly to various recreational and tourist attractions in the vicinity including the Victoria Park, the Noon Day Gun, the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club and the Police Officers' Club. She further asked whether any reclamation would be required to construct the Causeway Bay North Station.

37. Mr LAU Kong-wah was gravely concerned about the traffic impact as a result of the temporary closure of Gloucester Road for five years during the construction of the Causeway Bay North Station. In this respect, he enquired about the temporary traffic arrangements to be made to maintain traffic flow.

38. In reply, SD/CP, KCRC said that the Corporation was now reviewing the details of building the Causeway Bay North Station with the Transport Department and other relevant government departments. As currently planned, temporary bridge structures would be constructed in the Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter to provide nine traffic

## Action

lanes for the diverted traffic during the temporary closure of Gloucester Road. As far as the Police Officers' Club was concerned, it would be temporarily relocated and reprovisioned in a slightly different configuration at a later stage to provide land for the tunnel ventilation system.

39. Regarding the reprovisioning of various waterfront facilities in the Causeway Bay Waterfront, Acting PSET said that it would be dealt with in the context of the Wan Chai Development Phase II project. In this connection, the Chairman cautioned that the Administration should ensure the co-ordination of various construction works to be undertaken in the area. Ms CHAN Yuen-han also requested that the Administration should brief members on the details of the said station before a final decision was made.

## Way forward

40. Responding to members' enquiry about the Administration's consideration on the Preferred Scheme, Acting PSET said that based on preliminary assessment, the Administration considered that the Preferred Scheme could attract additional patronage for SCL. The proposed 9-car train option would also be adequate to cope with the projected demand.

41. Acting PSET further said that the Corporation had indicated that its final proposal would be ready in the next few months for submission to the Government. As SCL was a major investment to cater for the long-term transport needs of Hong Kong, the Government would need time to carefully review KCRC's proposal before a Final Scheme could be concluded. The current programme was to gazette the Final Scheme under the Railways Ordinance (Cap. 519) by end-2004 so that works for the project would commence in late 2005 for completion in stages within the window of 2008-2011 as originally envisaged in RDS-2000.

42. Notwithstanding the Administration's explanation, members generally considered that the Administration should make every effort to expedite the decision process as well as the overall programme of the SCL project. They agreed that the Subcommittee would convene a special meeting in June 2004 to follow up on the latest development of the project.

*(Post-meeting note: An item on update of the SCL project was subsequently scheduled for discussion at the meeting on 7 May 2004.)*

## **II Any other business**

43. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:45 pm.