

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

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seen by the Administration)

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**Public Works Subcommittee of the Finance Committee  
of the Legislative Council**

**Minutes of the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting  
held in the Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building  
on Wednesday, 11 May 2005, at 8:30 am**

**Members present:**

Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, S.B.St.J., JP (Chairman)  
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP  
Hon Margaret NG  
Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-yee, GBS, JP  
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong  
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, JP  
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, JP  
Hon Jasper TSANG Yok-sing, GBS, JP  
Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP  
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-yee, JP  
Hon CHOY So-yuk  
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo  
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP  
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP  
Hon LEE Wing-tat  
Hon LI Kwok-ying, MH  
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung  
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, SBS, JP  
Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP  
Hon TAM Heung-man

**Members absent:**

Hon James TO Kun-sun  
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip

**Public officers attending:**

Miss Amy TSE, JP	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) <sup>3</sup>
Mr Y C LO, JP	Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works)
Mrs Rita LAU, JP	Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (Planning and Lands)
Mr K K KWOK, JP	Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Environment)
Mr Davey CHUNG	Principal Assistant Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) (Works)
Mr F K LAI	Director of Drainage Services
Dr M J BROOM	Assistant Director of Environmental Protection (Water Policy)
Mr W W CHUI	Chief Engineer/Harbour Area Treatment Scheme Drainage Services Department
Mr K W MAK	Chief Engineer/Consultants Management Drainage Services Department
Miss Christine CHOW	Principal Assistant Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (Planning and Lands) <sup>2</sup>
Mr TSAO Tak-kiang, JP	Director of Civil Engineering and Development
Mr YEUNG Wing-tsan	Chief Engineer/Tseung Kwan O and Sai Kung Civil Engineering and Development Department
Ms Ernestina WONG	Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environmental, Transport and Works (Transport) <sup>5</sup>
Mr H L CHENG	Chief Engineer (Traffic Engineering)(NTE) Transport Department
Ms Elizabeth TAI	Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Transport) <sup>2</sup>
Mr K K SIN	Chief Engineer/Traffic Control (Acting) Transport Department
Ms Eva CHENG	Commissioner for Tourism
Mrs Winifred CHUNG	Assistant Commissioner for Tourism <sup>(4)</sup>
Mr C H YUE, JP	Director of Architectural Services
Mr KWAN Chi-wai	Chief Engineer(Traffic Engineering)(HK), Transport Department
Mr Gary YEUNG, JP	Deputy Director of Home Affairs (1)

Mr Patrick LI, JP  
Mr KO Chi-wo

Assistant Director of Home Affairs (2)  
Chief Architect/1, Housing Department

**Clerk in attendance:**

Ms Alice AU

Senior Council Secretary (1)5

**Staff in attendance:**

Ms Pauline NG

Assistant Secretary General 1

Mr Anthony CHU

Council Secretary (1)2

Ms Caris CHAN

Senior Legislative Assistant (1)1

Mr Frankie WOO

Legislative Assistant (1)2

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Action

**HEAD 704 – DRAINAGE**

**PWSC(2005-06)2    171DS    North and South Kowloon sewerage, stage 2**

The Chairman advised that the item together with the following item “208DS Outlying Islands sewerage, stage 1 phase 1 part 1 – Ngong Ping village sewerage works” were discussed by the Panel on Environmental Affairs (EA Panel) on 24 March 2005. While Panel members supported the projects in principle, they expressed concern about the disruptions arising from road opening works which were an inevitable part of sewerage projects. To address the problem, the Administration should make efforts to reduce the duration of works as far as possible or consider undertaking such works at night. Some members also suggested that the Administration should make use of the opportunity to include smaller utility pipelines above or alongside sewers in sewerage projects, thereby providing a common utility duct system to facilitate future repair works.

2.        The item was voted on and endorsed.

**PWSC(2005-06)3    208DS    Outlying Islands sewerage, stage 1 phase 1  
part 1 – Ngong Ping village sewerage works**

3.        Members noted the discussion held by the EA Panel on the item at its meeting on 24 March 2005 as set out in the opening paragraph above.

4.        The item was voted on and endorsed.

## **HEAD 707 – NEW TOWNS AND URBAN AREA DEVELOPMENT**

### **PWSC(2005-06)4 177CL Sha Tin New Town, remaining engineering works**

5. Members noted that an information paper on the project was circulated to the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works in April 2005.

6. Mr Patrick LAU questioned the design of the noise barriers. He queried the need to provide 5.5 metre (m) high noise barriers along To Shek Street which might be excessive for protecting the village houses nearby. On the other hand, he noticed that no barriers would be provided to protect the Ronald MacDonald House on the same street, which was used as temporary housing for children in distress. He urged the Administration to consider the provision of noise barriers based on the special needs of those affected even though the expected noise level might be within statutory limit.

7. In response, the Director of Civil Engineering and Development (DCED) said that according to the environmental study conducted in February 2003, the proposed road works under the project would adversely impact the noise levels at To Shek Street. Hence, about 320 m of noise barriers would be constructed to help contain the noise levels of 65 existing dwellings and about 77 planned dwellings along To Shek Street to an acceptable standard.

8. The Chairman remarked that he had always called for a critical examination of the current standards in assessing the need for noise barriers. Mr CHENG Kar-foo was also concerned about the justifications for the proposed provision of noise barriers, and expressed dissatisfaction that the Administration's paper did not provide any information about the noise levels of the relevant noise sensitive receivers (NSRs) along To Shek Street. He sought information on the expected level of noise mitigation for the 65 existing dwellings and about 77 planned dwellings along To Shek Street as a result of the proposed provision of noise barriers. Concerned about the situation of the Ronald MacDonald House, Mr LAU Kong-wah also sought information about the existing and future noise levels at the said location.

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9. In response, DCED assured members that all relevant considerations had already been taken into account in the design of noise barriers. The Principal Assistant Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (Planning and Lands)2 (PAS(PL)2) also assured members that site visits had been conducted and views of the local residents had also been taken into consideration. DCED said that while he did not have the information requested by members at hand, he would provide the said information together with findings of noise impact assessments of the relevant NSRs along To Shek Street as well as the justifications for the proposed provision of noise barriers under the project after the meeting.

10. Mr LAU Kong-wah expressed grave dissatisfaction over the public officers' failure to make such critical information available to members while

seeking members' endorsement of the proposal. In this connection, Mr CHENG Kar-foo echoed that relevant information on the noise levels experienced at NSRs should be essential information to be included in future submissions for capital works projects involving the provision of noise barriers.

11. Mr CHENG Kar-foo pointed out that if, after review, noise barriers were to be provided for the Ronald MacDonald House, the total project costs would increase. He suggested that the Administration should withdraw the present proposal, and re-submit the item after working out the relevant costs.

12. In reply, PAS(PL)2 sought members' support for the proposal at the present meeting. The Administration would take into account members' views in its review and submit its proposal for changes, if feasible, to the proposal before the relevant Finance Committee (FC) meeting. Notwithstanding any changes that might be required, she was confident that the additional costs could be covered under the provision for contingencies.

13. Mr LAU Kong-wah did not agree that the item should be deferred. He also did not consider it appropriate to use the provision for contingencies in this manner. He stressed that in preparing the funding requirement for a capital works project, the Administration should ensure that the cost for every aspect of works was worked out carefully and well justified.

14. The Chairman pointed out that the Subcommittee had always been concerned about the provision of noise barriers under capital works projects. Time and again, members had raised questions about the location, design as well as effectiveness of the noise barriers. He opined that it might be opportune to review the existing statutory requirements under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (EIAO) (Cap. 499).

15. Mr CHAN Kam-lam considered that the provision of noise barriers for the affected dwellings should be planned in accordance with the statutory requirements. Notwithstanding the relatively small number of affected dwellings, anyone adversely affected by the project should enjoy the same statutory protection.

16. Mrs Selina CHOW did not agree that the item should be deferred because the provision of noise barriers in the project was planned in accordance with the existing statutory requirements. As a review of the statutory requirements would take a long time to complete, she was worried that any further delay in the implementation of the Capital Works Programme would have an impact on the employment situation of the construction industry.

17. Mr LEE Wing-tat said that it was the duty of this Subcommittee to ensure that public resources on capital works were spent prudently and rightfully for meeting specific needs. As such, the Administration had the obligation to provide all relevant information to justify the use of public funds for the purpose. Citing the previous case of the noise barriers at Cheung Pei Shan Road, he said that even when the requirements under EIAO were complied with, the local residents might still

have views on the measures to mitigate the traffic noise impact. The Chairman added that although the noise barriers were designed by professionals, it did not necessarily mean that the demands of the local residents were fully addressed. Mr Patrick LAU said that the design of noise barriers should have regard to the characteristics of individual sites.

18. The Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (Planning and Lands) (PS(PL)) said that the study on the provision of noise barriers was conducted in accordance with the EIAO requirements in an objective and scientific manner. She agreed that members should be provided with the necessary information before the relevant FC meeting and that sufficient time should be allowed for members to study the information in considering the need for the noise barriers.

19. The Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Environment) pointed out that an Environmental Assessment Study for the proposed works was completed in September 1998. The Civil Engineering and Development Department further completed an environmental study, including the noise impact, for To Shek Street and Shui Chuen Au Street in February 2003. The design of noise barriers under the present proposal was done in accordance with the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines.

20. Mr CHENG Kar-foo opined that as the environmental studies were conducted in 1998 and 2003, changes taken place at To Shek Street since the conduct of these studies might not have been catered for. He requested the Administration to provide the updated information on the noise level at the relevant NSRs.

Admin 21. Mr LAU Kong-wah also requested the Administration to provide information on the reasons for the non-provision of noise barriers in front of the Ronald MacDonald House. The Administration should also consider whether those barriers could be provided at the said location even though the expected noise might be within statutory limit and advise on the estimated cost for the additional provision.

22. Mr LAU Kong-wah noted that water supply facilities would be built for the private housing developments in Areas 34 and 52 of Shui Chuen O, and queried whether such use of public funds was tantamount to providing subsidy to private developers.

23. PS(PL) explained that the Government had a responsibility to plan and provide the necessary water supply facilities in the same way as providing the necessary infrastructure such as roads to serve the development of Hong Kong. To supplement, DCED stated that the present proposal entailed the provision of infrastructure at Areas 34 and 52 in Shui Chuen O which was essential for private housing development as well as the associated government/institution/community (GIC) facilities including an indoor game hall, a fresh water pumping station, a fresh water reservoir and tentatively two schools. The construction of such GIC facilities was not covered under the proposed project. Notwithstanding the use of public funds to provide the said GIC facilities, the value-added would be reflected in the

Admin land premium. At Mr LAU Kong-wah's request, DCED undertook to provide information in relation to the construction cost of the water supply facilities for the private development in Areas 34 and 52.

24. Mr LAU Kong-wah enquired about the progress of the two new schools tentatively proposed to be built in Areas 34 and 52 in Shui Chuen O. He considered that in view of the large number of primary schools in Sha Tin not being able to admit primary one students, the Administration should first ensure the effective use of existing schools before seeking to build new schools. DCED said that the information was yet to be provided by the Education and Manpower Bureau. He was given to understand that the two school projects were under review.

25. The item was voted on and endorsed. Mr CHENG Kar-foo requested that this item be voted on separately at the relevant FC meeting.

**PWSC(2005-06)5            94TB            Sha Tin New Town, stage 2 – pedestrian and cycle subway at Lion Bridge**

26. The Chairman advised members that an information paper on the project was circulated to the Panel on Transport on 22 April 2005.

27. Whilst supporting this proposal, Mr LAU Kong-wah enquired whether the Administration had considered improving the cycle track near KCRC Tai Wai Station. With the completion of the proposed project, he said that more cyclists would travel from Sha Tin to Tai Wai. As requested by the Sha Tin District Council, the cycle track near Tai Wai Station should be improved for the purpose of segregating cyclists from pedestrians.

Admin 28. The Chief Engineer (Traffic Engineering)(NTE) Transport said that upon completion of the present project, cyclist could ride from the Sha Tin Central Park to Man Lai Court in Tai Wai and be connected to the existing cycle track in Tai Wai. The Administration would consider the improvement works at individual spots which were proposed by the public or the local District Council. At the request of Mr LAU Kong-wah, the Administration agreed to provide information on improvement works to the section of cycle track from Tai Wai Station to Man Lai Court, particularly for the purpose of segregation of cyclists and pedestrians before the relevant FC meeting.

29. Referring to paragraph 22 of the Administration's paper, Mr CHENG Kar-foo enquired about the location of the 41 trees to be felled and considered the Administration should try to save these trees. DCED pointed out that these 41 trees were in the areas where the two pedestrian and cycle subways were to be constructed. The Administration had considered different designs of the subways to minimize the number of trees that had to be felled.

30. In response to Mr CHENG Kar-foo's enquiry on the reasons for not transplanting the 41 trees, the Chief Engineer (Tseung Kwan O and Sai Kung), Civil

Engineering and Development Department explained that in consultation with the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, it was decided to fell the 41 trees of which some belonged to species that would have difficulty to survive after transplanting and some were already damaged.

31. The item was voted and endorsed.

## **HEAD 706 – HIGHWAYS**

### **PWSC(2005-06)1      19TC      Area traffic control and closed circuit television system for Tuen Mun and Yuen Long districts**

32. Members noted that an information paper on the proposal was circulated to the Panel on Transport on 22 April 2005.

33. Referring to the serious traffic congestion affecting east Kowloon and other areas of the territory on 9 May 2005, Mr TAM Yiu-chung was concerned about the effectiveness of the ATC and CCTV systems in use. He enquired whether the incident had reflected any deficiencies in the ATC and CCTV systems or this was mainly a result of the Administration's inability to respond timely to the prevailing traffic condition. He also asked whether the problems identified in the incident had shed any light on improvements to be made to the new ATC and CCTV systems to be installed under the proposed project.

34. In reply, the Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Transport)<sup>2</sup> (PAS(T)<sup>2</sup>, ETWB) explained that ATC system provided real-time coordination and adjustment of traffic control signals within an area by computer having regard to changes in traffic flow level with a view to maximizing the use of road capacities and minimizing delay to traffic. The CCTV system provided traffic operators at the control centre of the Transport Department (TD) with real-time traffic information to facilitate quick remedial actions to be taken when necessary to cope with the abnormal traffic conditions and/or traffic incidents. PAS(T)<sup>2</sup>, ETWB however pointed out that difficulties had been encountered in taking immediate remedial actions given the extensive traffic congestion on 9 May 2005 which affected a number of strategic roads in the territory. Nevertheless, the Administration would endeavour to put the ATC and CCTV systems to their best use, enhance internal co-ordination under emergency and enhance the functioning of the Emergency Transport Co-ordination Centre to facilitate better handling of similar unforeseen emergency situations with substantial traffic impacts in the future.

35. Mr CHENG Kar-foo opined that while members supported the Intelligent Transport Systems which comprised the ATC and CCTV systems during the Administration's consultation in 2001, it would be necessary for the Administration to examine critically the effectiveness of the proposed ATC and CCTV systems for managing traffic situations in Tuen Mun and Yuen Long having regard to their rapid

developments in the past few years.

36. Ms Miriam LAU expressed similar concerns and doubted whether the proposed ATC and CCTV systems in Tuen Mun and Yuen Long could achieve the effect of allowing quick remedial actions to be taken to cope with abnormal traffic conditions and/or traffic incidents as the Administration had claimed in its proposal. She requested the Administration to illustrate with examples on success of the ATC and CCTV systems in this regard.

37. In reply, PAS(T)2, ETWB said that assessment on the benefits of ATC and CCTV systems had been made by comparing the traffic conditions in the district before and after the installation of the systems. She advised that experiences in other districts served by ATC system showed that full implementation of the ATC system would reduce the journey time, delay and number of stops by an average of 30%, 45% and 40% respectively. It was expected that similar benefits could be produced by implementing the system in Tuen Mun and Yuen Long. PAS(T)2, ETWB referred to the recent example of the success in managing the traffic conditions on the first few working days after the substantial toll increase of the Eastern Harbour Crossing (EHC) in early May. She said that effective traffic arrangements had been facilitated through using ATC systems for coordination and adjustment of traffic control signals to maximize the use of road capacities and to minimize delay to traffic.

38. Miss CHAN Yuen-han pointed out that the success in traffic management during the first few working days after the EHC toll increase had been the result of the joint efforts of relevant bureaux/departments, including the Education and Manpower Bureau and the Hong Kong Police Force, instead of the success of TD in using its ATC systems. She was dissatisfied with the poor coordination of TD during the serious traffic congestion on 9 May 2005.

39. Referring to the serious traffic congestion on 9 May 2005, Mr CHENG Kar-foo was particularly concerned about the effective and timely dissemination of traffic information to the public during emergency. Mr CHENG suggested that to improve the dissemination of traffic information to the public, the Administration should explore the feasibility of making available the real-time traffic information provided by its CCTV cameras to major public transport operators and the electronic media so that real-time traffic information could be disseminated through different channels in a more expeditious manner. Ms Miriam LAU shared Mr CHENG's concern. Miss CHAN Yuen-han also expressed grave concern about the failure in timely dissemination of traffic information during the incident on 9 May 2005 and strongly requested the Administration to make improvements in this regard.

40. In response, the Chief Engineer/Traffic Control (Acting), Transport Department (CE/TC, TD) advised that TD had been providing real-time traffic visual information from CCTV cameras installed at strategic locations to the television operators. Moreover, the information from over 100 CCTV cameras in the territory had already be made available for public access on TD's website and the department was planning to extend the provision of information from other CCTV

cameras located in different areas through the internet, including the cameras to be installed in Tuen Mun and Yuen Long under the current proposal.

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41. Mr CHENG Kar-foo urged TD to review the existing means for dissemination of traffic information to the public in the light of the serious traffic congestion on 9 May 2005. He cautioned that immediate actions should be taken to prevent future reoccurrence of extensive traffic congestion, otherwise, the image of Hong Kong as an international city would be tarnished. In this connection, Mr CHENG requested the Administration to provide, before the relevant meeting of the Finance Committee, supplementary information on measures to enhance the dissemination of traffic information from the CCTV cameras to both public transport operators and the media. PAS(T)2, ETWB undertook to provide the information requested by Mr CHENG.

42. Ms Miriam LAU urged the Administration to consider effective means of making real-time traffic information readily accessible to commuters and the public, such as through variable message signs to alert motorists of congestions at strategic roads so that they could make an informed choice on the routings for their journeys. She enquired whether digital indicators would be provided in the proposed systems for Tuen Mun and Yuen Long.

43. PAS(T)2, ETWB responded that while the present proposal did not include the provision of variable message signs, consideration would be given to installing such facilities on strategic roads and major expressways including the Shenzhen Western Corridor. CE/TC, TD supplemented that the Administration had yet to overcome the technical difficulties in the installation of variable message signs in the urban areas given the space constraint along these busy roads.

44. Mrs Selina CHOW also expressed concern about the importance of dissemination of the real-time traffic information to road users, particularly motorists on the move. Mrs CHOW opined that the provision of the journey time under the present Journey Time Indication System was unsatisfactory as this could not provide adequate information for motorists to make informed choices of their routings well ahead of critical diversion points. She urged the Administration to critically assess the objectives of the CCTV system and the effective means to achieve the objectives.

45. In response, PAS(T)2, ETWB thanked members for their valuable advices and undertook to consider means to improve dissemination of real-time traffic information to road users and motorists.

46. Noting the extensive area of coverage of the proposed ATC and CCTV systems from Enclosure 1 of the information paper, Ms Miriam LAU expressed concern about the impact of the civil works on road traffic during the works period and sought information on the proposed mitigation measures to minimize such impact.

47. CE/TC, TD explained that the civil works involved in the proposed ATC and CCTV systems for ducting and installation of vehicular detectors would involve small-scale openings on pavements near each of the signalized junction and minor slot cutting on the carriageways. These civil works would have minimal impact on pedestrian and vehicular traffic. CE/TC, TD assured members that the contractors would be required to carry out the civil works involving opening of roads outside the peak hours and to put in place necessary mitigation measures to minimize the impact on pedestrian and vehicular traffic during the civil works.

48. Noting that the expenditure for the proposed works would be phased from 2005-06 to 2008-09 with the majority of the expenses incurred in 2007-08, Mrs Selina CHOW was concerned about the prolonged duration of the relevant works contracts and enquired about the reasons for the long duration required for installation of the proposed systems.

49. In response, PAS(T)2, ETWB advised that subject to funding approval, the installation works under the proposed project would commence in early 2006 for completion in mid 2008. The estimated duration of work for the proposed project was comparable to other projects for installation of ATC and CCTV systems, especially given the extensive area covered by the systems and the time required for the design and installation of equipment for interfacing with the Light Rail Transit System. CE/TC, TD added that the phasing of expenditure for the project set out in paragraph 11 of the paper represented the expenditure pattern rather than the progress of installation of the proposed systems. He assured members that TD would proceed as soon as possible to tendering of the relevant works contracts for the implementation of the project when approval for funding was obtained. The Permanent Secretary for Environment, Transport and Works (Works) (PS(W)) advised that while the works under the proposed project were expected to be completed in mid 2008, the full payment to contractors concerned would spread over to 2008-09 taking into account the time required to settle the final bills and to release retention money, etc. in compliance with the contract requirements. The expenditure pattern for the proposed project was considered reasonable.

50. Mrs Selina CHOW enquired whether the timely delivery or completion of works would be one of the factors for consideration during the tendering process, so that tenderers with low tender price and longer duration for work completion would get a lower score. In reply, PS(W) explained that in the evaluation of tenders, the assessment panel would examine the tenders against the technical specification as well as terms and conditions laid down in the tender document. Apart from the tender price, important factors on the technical aspect and the timely delivery or completion of works would be taken into account in awarding scores to tenderers. As such, the proposed works duration had been taken into consideration in the established tendering procedures.

51. The item was voted on and endorsed.

## **HEAD 703 – BUILDINGS**

### **PWSC(2005-06)6      391RO    Tourist District Enhancement Programme – The Peak**

52.      Members noted that the proposal had been discussed at the meeting of the Panel on Economic Services (ES Panel) on 25 April 2005.

53.      The Chairman informed members that during the discussion at the ES Panel, members had expressed views on the design of the project and requested the Administration to strengthen the elements of the Victorian style in the design of Victoria Peak Garden. Members also requested the Administration to consider suitable improvement measures to improve the traffic condition along the section of Peak Road between Magazine Gap Road and Peak Galleria, to explore ways to improve the accessibility of the Victoria Peak Garden, and to provide more public toilets in the Peak area. Whilst most Members speaking at the meeting had expressed support for the project, a Panel member expressed doubt about the cost-effectiveness of the project. He considered that the proposed improvement works did not seem to result in substantial improvement to the environment of the Peak. While the major improvement works were to be undertaken at the Victoria Peak Garden, the patronage of the garden was expected to remain low given the inconvenience of access to the garden.

54.      Mr CHENG Kar-foo said that the main purpose of tourists visiting the Peak was to have a panoramic view of the Victoria Harbour and the urban area on both sides of the Harbour. The other attractions at the Peak were less important to them. He was therefore concerned whether the scale of the proposed improvement works costing \$142.6 million was justified. He in particular expressed reservation on the proposed improvement works at the Victoria Peak Garden. He believed that visitors to the garden would mainly be local people rather than tourists. For local people, he believed that most of them would prefer having the existing style of the garden preserved thereby maintaining a reminiscent atmosphere rather than having the garden converted to a Victorian style garden. He added that he personally was fond of a Victorian style garden but did not consider it appropriate to use a huge amount of public money to provide such a garden at the Peak.

55.      The Commissioner for Tourism (CT) advised that it was necessary for Hong Kong to make continuous improvements to existing tourist attractions to enhance the competitiveness of Hong Kong as a tourist destination given the increasingly strong competition from neighbouring countries/places. The Central and Western District Council (C&WDC) and other stakeholders consulted were supportive of the Victorian design approach and the proposed improvements.

56.      CT further advised that the proposed improvement works to be carried out at the Victoria Peak Garden accounted for about 18% of the estimated total project cost. The low patronage of the Victoria Peak Garden in the past was mainly due to lack of appeal of the garden. The proposed improvement works would create three new tourism nodes at the Mount Austin Playground, the Former Gate Lodge and

Victoria Peak Garden respectively. It was anticipated that with these new tourism nodes, tourists would have greater incentives to stay longer at the Peak.

57. The Director of Architectural Services (DArchS) supplemented that the Victorian style of architecture was the theme adopted for the proposed improvement works at the Peak. As such, elements of the Victorian style had been incorporated into the design of the various improvement works, down to some minor details, covered under this project. Given its historical background and unique setting, the Victoria Peak Garden provided very good opportunities for bringing out this theme, thereby providing its visitors with a deepened and enriched experience at the Peak.

58. Miss TAM Heung-man said that she shared the view of Mr CHENG Kar-foo regarding the proposed improvement works at the Victoria Peak Garden. She noted that the Administration estimated that the number of visitors to the Peak would increase from 4.5 million in 2004 to 5 million by the time the project was completed in 2007. The Administration also considered that the improvement works would lengthen the visitors' stay at the Peak and this in turn would bring about more tourism spending. Miss TAM questioned that the increase in number of visitors to the Peak might mainly be a natural result of the growth of visitor arrivals in Hong Kong rather than a result of the proposed improvement works. She also asked whether the Administration had a more precise estimate on the additional tourism spending that the proposed improvement works would generate.

59. In response, CT advised that the projection in the number of visitors to the Peak had been made based on surveys conducted among tourists travelling to Hong Kong. On the cost-effectiveness of the project, she explained that tourists staying longer at the Peak would likely extend their stay in Hong Kong correspondingly. As such, encouraging tourists to stay longer at the Peak would benefit not only the commercial enterprises at the Peak but also the overall local economy.

60. Miss CHOY So-yuk supported the idea of creating new tourism nodes at the Peak so as to enrich the experience of tourists at the Peak and to disperse visitors from the commercial core area. She also considered that the proposed improvement works at the Victoria Peak Garden worth supporting. She asked whether consideration had been given to the use of trolleys and electric carts to transport visitors to and from the garden. She also suggested that more prominent signage should be provided to guide visitors to the garden. Referring to Enclosure 4 to the Administration's paper, she said that she did not find the design of the Mount Austin Playground with the proposed enhancement more appealing than the existing playground. She also opined that where improvements to public toilets were made, western-style public toilets should be provided to cater for elderly people and those who had difficulty in using Japanese-style toilets.

61. Miss CHAN Yuen-han expressed support for the project. She did not support widening Mount Austin Road to facilitate vehicular access to the Victoria Peak Garden as the presence of more vehicles on the road would adversely affect those visitors walking up the garden. She considered that the existing pavilion was not appealing in design and did not serve as a good rain and wind shelter, and

therefore she supported demolishing the pavilion and providing new Victorian style structures in its place. She however emphasized that the existing stone surrounding wall and grass field of the garden should be maintained. Miss CHAN also shared the view of Miss CHOY So-yuk that the design of the Mount Austin Playground with the proposed enhancement did not appear to be more appealing than the existing playground.

62. Mrs Selina CHOW declared interest that she was the Chairman of the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB). She said that whilst at present, the main purpose of tourists to the Peak was to have a panoramic view of the Hong Kong, HKTB and the Administration held the view that the proposed improvement works could enhance the appeal of the Peak to tourists and hence induce their wish to stay longer at the Peak area. She noticed that compared to the previous design presented to the ES Panel, the present design of the proposed enhancement at the Victoria Peak Garden had improved much and could more effectively bring out the Victorian atmosphere. She shared Miss CHAN Yuen-han's view that the existing grass field of the garden should be maintained. She also reiterated the view that the Administration should explore ways, in particular transport means, to improve the accessibility of the garden.

63. CT confirmed that the Administration had reviewed the design of the Victoria Peak Garden taking into account the views expressed by members at the ES Panel meeting on 25 April 2005. The present design had included more masonry work and Victorian style elements in the kiosk, toilet and the four pavilions. She advised that the grass field in the existing Victoria Peak Garden and the stone surrounding wall would be retained. Additional directional signage would be installed to guide visitors to the garden.

64. Regarding the design of the proposed enhancement at Mount Austin Playground, DArchS clarified that the existing public toilet in the playground, which was the main structure in the playground, would be retained and the improvement to be made was to replace its roof with a different material and colour to make the outlook of the toilet consistent with the overall design theme of the Peak.

65. On ways to improve the accessibility of the Victoria Peak Garden, CT advised that the Administration had conducted extensive consultation with the Central and Western District Council (C&WDC) and the Peak residents affected by the project. In view of the substantial geotechnical and construction works required, the residents did not support the widening of Mount Austin Road. The option of constructing a footpath linking Mount Austin Playground and Victoria Peak Garden had also been explored. Different alignments had been looked into but were found technically not feasible mainly due to the steep gradient of the slope. The Administration had also consulted relevant experts on the use of environmentally friendly trolleys to transport people to the garden via Mount Austin Road. The advice obtained was that the models of such trolleys currently available in the market did not possess the needed horse-power to overcome the steep gradient at certain sections of the road. Having explored these options, the Administration, C&WDC members and Peak residents came to the consensus that visitors should be

encouraged to walk up Victoria Peak Garden. To this end, the route would be packaged as a walking trail with interim stops at Mount Austin Playground and the former Gate Lodge.

66. Ms Miriam LAU said that while she did not have strong views as to whether the existing Mount Austin Playground should be converted to a Victorian style garden, she considered that the present design of the playground with enhancement did not include sufficient elements to effect substantial improvement. She expressed support for providing a Victorian style garden at the site of the Victoria Peak Garden. She suggested that the Victorian appeal of both the Mount Austin Playground and the Victoria Peak Garden could be strengthened by adding Victorian style street lights, chairs with bronze statues etc. She also pointed out that for the Victorian style garden to be successful, there must be a rich collection of flowers and plants in the garden and they must be very well maintained.

67. CT said that Ms LAU's views and suggestions would be taken into account in preparing the detailed design of the project. She advised that the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) had a collection of some remnants of demolished old buildings in Hong Kong. The Administration planned to place some remnants of Victorian style structures at the Mount Austin Playground and the Victoria Peak Garden to strengthen the Victorian appeal of the playground/garden. DArchS added that ArchSD had already identified sources of Victorian style sculptures and building parts for use in the project.

68. Mr Abraham SHEK expressed concern that the design of the Victoria Peak Garden with enhancement did not include adequate facilities for sheltering visitors from fierce sunlight and strong winds, as he noted that no enclosed structures and only four pavilions were included in the design. He also asked whether the design for this project was undertaken by in-house staff of ArchSD.

69. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung asked the Administration to explain what Victorian style meant. Expressing reservation on the cost-effectiveness of the proposed improvement works at Victoria Peak Garden, Mr LEUNG also pointed out that given the frequent strong winds at this spot, it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to maintain the plants in the garden.

70. DArchS advised that the design for the project had been and would continue to be undertaken by in-house architects of ArchSD. For this project, the responsible architects had carried out a detailed research on Victorian style architecture. CT advised that the four Victorian style pavilions would be connected by a colonnade. In preparing the detailed design of the garden, special attention would be given to user needs. At Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung's request, CT undertook to provide additional information on the Victorian style structures proposed for Mount Austin Playground and Victoria Peak Garden.

Admin

71. Mr Patrick LAU asked whether the Administration would consider conducting an open design competition for the proposed improvement works, which he considered was the best way to come up with a good design for the improvement

works.

72. CT advised that as the present project was mainly concerned with improvement works, the Administration had no plan to conduct an open competition for the design of the project.

73. Mr CHENG Kar-foo maintained his view that the existing structures in the Victoria Peak Garden should be preserved at large, and he requested that this item be voted on separately at the relevant Finance Committee.

74. The item was voted on and endorsed.

**PWSC(2005-06)7      189SC      Community hall at the housing site in  
Area 103, Tin Shui Wai**

75. The Chairman informed members that this was a resubmission of a funding proposal endorsed by the PWSC at its meeting on 2 March 2005. During the discussion at the meeting, some members had put forward suggestions on the design of the proposed community hall (CH) and suggested shortening the duration of the construction period. After considering members' suggestions, the Administration had revised the design of the proposed CH and compressed the construction time-table. As a result, the estimated project cost had increased. The Chairman drew members' attention to the Administration's response to members' suggestion as set out in Enclosure 4 of the paper.

76. On behalf of Mr TAM Yiu-chung, Miss CHOY So-yuk advised that the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong supported the proposed project and requested the Administration to expedite the commencement of works. Miss CHOY enquired if air-conditioning and stage lighting would be provided for the proposed CH. As the CH usually had high headroom, Miss CHOY expressed concern on the effectiveness of the folding partitions in terms of noise insulation.

77. In response, the Deputy Director of Home Affairs(1) confirmed that air-conditioning and stage lighting would be provided for the proposed CH. He also said high quality noise insulating partitions would be used for the conversion of the multi-purpose hall and the conference room into five multi-purpose function rooms.

78. On behalf of Mrs Selina CHOW, Ms Miriam LAU expressed appreciation of the Administration's decision to shorten the duration of the construction period and provide an additional pedestrian access to the CH. Ms LAU urged the Administration to expedite the construction of the proposed CH.

79. Whilst expressing support for the project, Mr Abaraham SHEK noted that Tin Shui Wai had a high crime rate and a large number of youth but little community facilities. He urged the Administration to design the proposed CH and its programmes taking into consideration the characteristics of the district so as to

organize more cultural and training programmes for the residents. The Administration took note of Mr SHEK's suggestion.

80. The item was voted on and endorsed.

81. The meeting ended at 10:55 am.

Council Business Division 1  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
9 June 2005