



Wednesday, February 23, 2005
From Save Our Shorelines Society

**Submission to Legislative Council Transport Panel
Regarding Route 4 / South Island Line / West Island Line Proposals**

Save our Shorelines submitted comments and proposals relating to the proposed development of Route 4 to the Panel meeting in May 2004 and the Society stands by those comments today. For the current Panel meeting SOS would like to reiterate certain points relevant to the minutes of the previous meeting and the agenda of the current one.

It has been a premise of the governments' plans for R4 from the earliest times that it should be constructed "mainly in tunnel form" and yet the current preferred option 1 provides tunneled road for less than 25% of the full R4 alignment. Thus it does not comply with the original intent.

Option 2 is now proposed as a fully tunneled route but this option has little merit in terms of solving perceived traffic problems or serving the community between Kennedy Town and Aberdeen. It is also the most expensive option. Any benefits accrued from tunneling and thus protecting the shoreline are far outweighed by the MTRC tunneled rail option which has the added benefit of serving the community between Kennedy Town and Aberdeen through intermediate stations and of providing an ALTERNATE transport system giving residents the choice of road and rail based movement and reducing pollution levels. The rail option may have a higher initial cost than the Option 1 R4 but the costs for rail can be recouped through revenue whereas the road is not revenue earning in any form. Whilst SOS does not endorse the road-option in any form we are surprised that the government has not proposed a compromise route that combines Options 1 and 2, reducing the impact of the first whilst increasing the effectiveness of the second. This seems to indicate a lack of in-depth thinking in the road proposals that casts further doubt on the validity of either road option.

It is a major concern of SOS and of the community members that we have consulted, that the Option 1 shoreline route of R4 will remove for ever a major community asset through 75% of the R4 alignment. The Panel paper itself states that the South side of Hong Kong enjoys 'high aesthetic and visual values' and yet proposes that these be permanently compromised with the alignment of R4, cutting the community off from the shore, forming a physical barrier that threatens health and does nothing to enhance the environment through which it passes.. This is particularly emphasized at the Kennedy Town end of the road where the two current proposals for the access and connection to existing roads represents an example that is contrary to every contemporary direction in urban shoreline planning. SOS would refer the panel to

our publication on shoreline planning with specific reference to the communities' expressed wish to enhance rather than to lose entirely its access to shorelines for leisure activities and enhanced quality of life. The proposals for the raised road and for the open road stretches along the Pok Fu Lam coast are simply irresponsible and reflect antiquated thinking in terms of planning and community development. In view of recent public sentiment on development in the Central Harbour area and the outcry against similar shoreline road planning between Central and Wanchai it is hard to understand how the Panel can even contemplate the proposals that have been tabled for R4 in these areas.

In the minutes of the meeting for May 2004 paragraph 5 it is suggested that 'local' groups were in favour of R4 whilst green groups were against it. This seems to indicate that outside sentiment is against the road whilst local preference is for it. This is not true. It should be noted that SOS was founded as a community group based in the Kennedy Town / Pok Fu Lam / Aberdeen area and has canvassed opinions on R4 in that area for more than four years. These opinions, from residents of high, middle and lower income units, have been overwhelmingly pro-rail and against the option of a shoreline road. We understand that the MTRC has undertaken similar canvassing with the same results and would emphasise that the issue of R4 is both a local and a Hong Kong-wide issue with similar sentiment across the board.

Albert Chan and Selina Chow have proposed that the government select one of the two options (road or rail) and then put that selection up for public review and consultation. This proposal risks public criticism comparable to that of the West Kowloon Project and WDII. If sentiment is to be gauged through public consultation it should be done with BOTH options included along with all relevant data for and against each option.

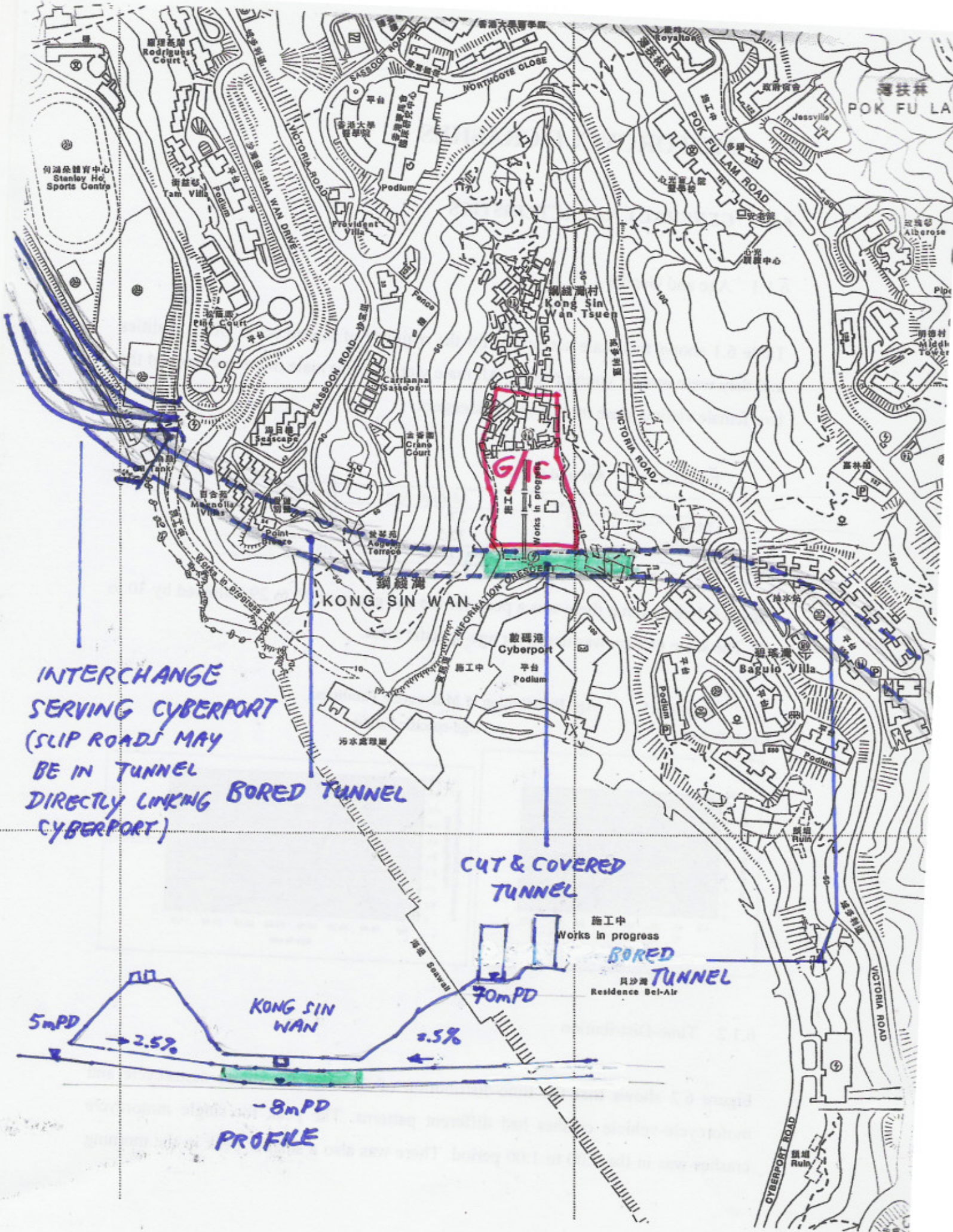
Section 20 of the May 2004 meeting minutes suggests that the MTRC proposals do not "address the needs of the local community". This is a simplification of the issues. Whilst the local community has already expressed its preference for a rail option and respect for the environment it must be understood that the objective of railway development must be to bring transport and other benefits to the community at large – not just to the local community. The MTRC proposal includes transport benefits that extend far beyond the immediate area of Kennedy Town, Pok Fu Lam and Aberdeen. The road option does not do this. In addition, protection of the environment through minimal intervention that the rail option makes possible must be one of the greatest benefits that can be given to the community as a whole.

The V/C ratio projections included in the Agenda document for the current meeting show that the figures for the R4 option 1 are close to or the same as those for the SIL/WIL option. The road option shows only marginally better results but ignores the major environmental benefits that accrue to a rail option but which are entirely absent from the road proposal. With these points in mind there seems to be no question that the R4 option brings with it little overall benefit to the community as a whole whilst being more expensive in the long term and environmentally damaging to a degree that the Panel should be unwilling to tolerate.

Save Our Shorelines

701 Hoseinee House, 69 Wyndham Street, Central, Hong Kong Tel:28930213 Fax: 31059713
e-mail : hksos@aol.com

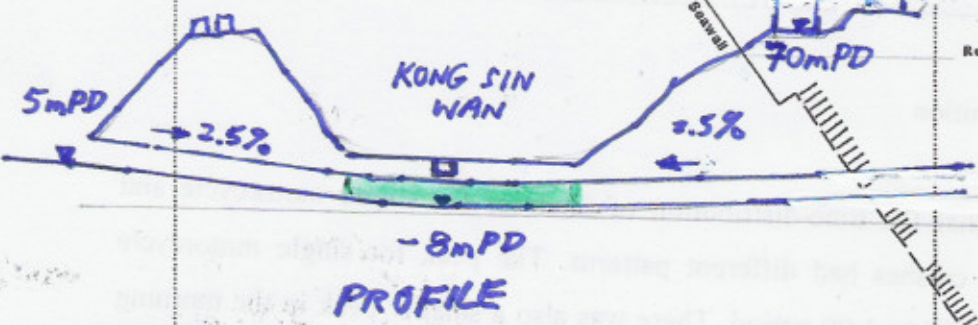
<http://www.sos.org.hk>



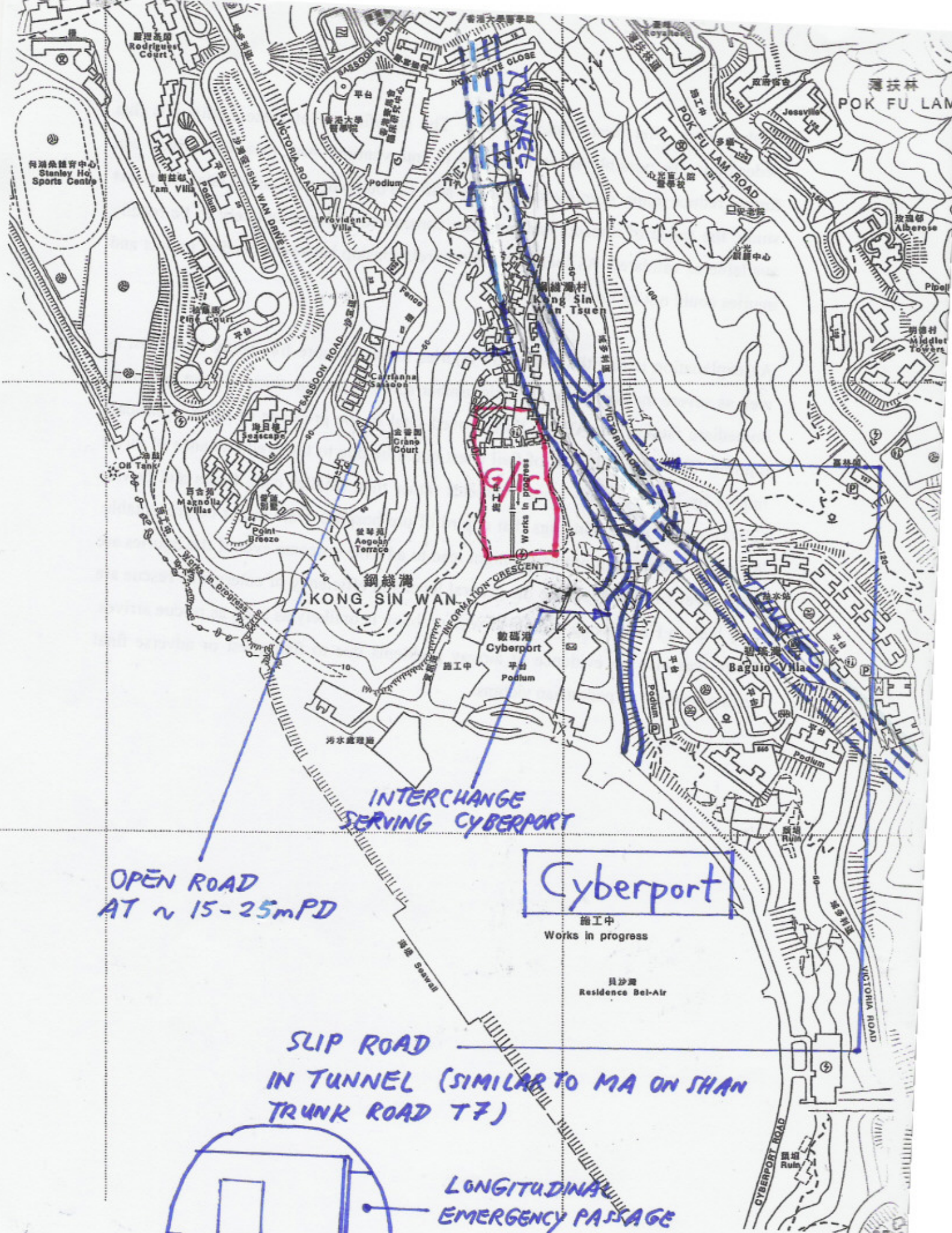
INTERCHANGE
SERVING CYBERPORT
(SLIP ROADS MAY
BE IN TUNNEL
DIRECTLY LINKING BORED TUNNEL
CYBERPORT)

CUT & COVERED
TUNNEL

BORED
TUNNEL
Residence Bel-Air



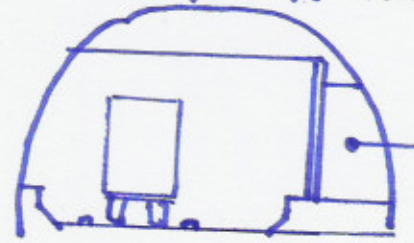
ALTERNATIVE ROUTE 1



OPEN ROAD
AT ~ 15-25mPD

INTERCHANGE
SERVING CYBERPORT

SLIP ROAD
IN TUNNEL (SIMILAR TO MA ON SHAN
TRUNK ROAD T7)



LONGITUDINAL
EMERGENCY PASSAGE

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE 2

Cyberport

Works in progress

貝沙灣
Residence Bel-Air

何鴻燊體育中心
Stanley Ho Sports Centre

羅拔高第
Rodriguez Court

新翠苑
Tam Villa

Carrianna
Salsoon

網織灣
KONG SIN WAN

數碼港
Cyberport

碧湖苑
Baguio Villa

薄扶林
POK FU LAM

POK FU LAM ROAD

VICTORIA ROAD

SASSOON ROAD

INFORMATION CRESCENT

CYBERPORT ROAD

VICTORIA ROAD

海邊街
Seawall

風坳
Ruin

碧湖苑
Middlet Towers

玫瑰閣
Aberose

嘉逸軒
Jessville

網織灣村
Kong Sin Wan Tsuen

Provident Villa

Podium

Podium

Podium

Crane Court

Point Breeze

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