



九廣鐵路公司
Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation

新聞稿
Press release

Canton Road Station excluded from the Kowloon Southern Link

(Hong Kong, 6 December 2004) The Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC) announced today that the Corporation has decided to proceed with the Kowloon Southern Link (KSL) project without a Canton Road (CAR) Station. This is a decision made after months of discussion with Wharf, with the active participation of the Government.

A KCRC spokesman said, "It is unfortunate that no agreement could be reached between the two sides. We understand the wish of the public and the business community to have a station at Canton Road. Within the constraints placed on the Corporation, we have tried our best to meet their expectation."

The Canton Road (CAR) Station was not included in the original scheme recommended in the Government's Railway Development Strategy 2000. The provision of a station at Canton Road was first included in a preliminary proposal that the KCRC submitted to the Government in July 2001. It was stated in the proposal that the Corporation was considering to construct the station either by open cut methods under Canton Road or by resuming two multi-storey buildings on the east side of Canton Road. With the limited information then available, both the KCRC and the Government considered the open cut option to be the more practical.

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For information, please contact
Grace Lam, General Manager, Corporate Affairs
Tel : 2688 1585
Mobile : 9613 9976

Tracy Lai, Senior Corporate Affairs Manager
Tel : 2688 1993
Pager : 7111 8218 *5258





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At that time, the marginal weekday patronage for KSL in 2016 was forecast to be 270,000 with West Kowloon Station (WKN) and CAR Station, and 245,000 if only WKN is to be built. In other words, CAR Station would only bring along an incremental patronage of 25,000. With this level of patronage, the KCRC recognised that the CAR Station could not generate any return and would lower the overall return for the KSL project as a whole, although the project remained financially viable. Nonetheless, taking into consideration the potential benefit that the CAR Station would bring to the community, the Corporation decided to proceed on the basis of providing two stations on KSL.

Subsequently, in undertaking more detailed design and site investigation, insurmountable technical difficulties were found to be associated with building a station either by open cut methods under Canton Road or by resuming buildings on the east side of Canton Road. The Corporation thus decided to drop any immediate plans to provide a station at Canton Road in November 2003. The scheme without a CAR Station was gazetted on 26 March 2004.

In response to the strong views expressed by the public and the business community, echoed in the request from the Legislative Council in June this year, the KCRC undertook a joint study with Wharf and the Government on the feasibility of constructing a station at Canton Road within the Harbour City development. Two schemes were actively explored, namely, a basement scheme whereby a station would be constructed below the existing World Finance Centres, North & South Towers; and a redevelopment scheme which involved an underground station being built as part of a re-development by Wharf of the World Finance Centres. After detailed study, both KCRC and Wharf concluded that the basement scheme presented unacceptably high risks and the only technically viable scheme was the redevelopment scheme.

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Grace Lam, General Manager, Corporate Affairs
Tel : 2688 1585
Mobile : 9613 9976

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As part of the process of examining the technical feasibility of the CAR Station, KCRC took the opportunity to re-visit the patronage projection, especially in light of recent changes in the Government's population planning and GDP growth forecasts, and the patronage levels experienced on West Rail since its opening. Because of the reduction in population growth along the West Rail and KSL alignment, the KSL marginal weekday patronage in 2016 has since been revised downward to 190,000 if only WKN Station is built and to 207,000 if the CAR Station is also provided. As the CAR Station is now forecast to only bring in an incremental patronage of 17,000, the financial viability of the CAR Station has deteriorated yet further from the situation first forecast in 2001, as has the overall KSL project return. Moreover, the KCRC's financial position as a whole has weakened considerably since 2001, due in large part to the cash operating losses following opening of West Rail.

The KCRC Managing Board has debated whether or not to proceed with the CAR Station given the less positive financial picture. Having regard to community aspirations but being conscious of the Corporation's weakened financial position, the Managing Board has decided that a CAR Station could be provided as long as the negative impact of the station on the KSL project return would be no greater in real terms than first forecast in 2001. Given the drop in incremental patronage for the CAR station between the original and latest forecasts, it was recognised that an additional source of funds would need to be found to preserve the 2001 position. The KCRC has thus looked for possible options to fill the gap.

For information, please contact
Grace Lam, General Manager, Corporate Affairs
Tel : 2688 1585
Mobile : 9613 9876

Tracy Lai, Senior Corporate Affairs Manager
Tel : 2688 1993
Pager : 7111 8218 *5258

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It was considered that, with Wharf holding the largest property portfolio in that area of Canton Road and with plans for future redevelopment, it would be in Wharf's interest to see the CAR Station constructed.

The KCRC Managing Board decided to invite Wharf to consider cooperating in the construction of the CAR Station project and thereby share in the capital costs.

Unfortunately, the KCRC has been unable to secure a commitment from Wharf to share the cost of the station.

"Being a government-owned corporation, KCRC has to balance social and public community considerations against the requirement in law to act in accordance with prudent commercial principles," the spokesman said. "We therefore cannot proceed alone with a station which would result in a worse impact on the KSL project return than in 2001. Nonetheless, given the views expressed by the public and the business community, we have offered to make a substantial contribution towards the cost of providing a station. That we have been unable to reach an agreement with Wharf is disappointing."

"The East Rail East Tsim Sha Tsui (ETS) Station will be able to meet the needs of passengers travelling to the Harbour City area of Canton Road as, in the absence of being able to provide a CAR Station, the Corporation has committed to spend \$300 million to further extend the existing passenger subway link underneath Middle Road to Peking Road, thus shortening the walking distance from ETS Station to Canton Road to just 10 minutes without the need to cross roads at ground level. For those passengers wishing to travel to location further

For information, please contact
Grace Lam, General Manager, Corporate Affairs
Tel : 2688 1585
Mobile : 9613 9976

Tracy Lai, Senior Corporate Affairs Manager
Tel : 2688 1993
Pager : 7111 6218 *5250





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north on Canton Road, the WKN Station provides a convenient alternative.” (see Appendix)

“For over a million residents in the northwest New Territories, the KSL can provide them with an efficient and direct rail link to the urban area. “Without the CAR Station, the strategic importance of KSL will not be lessened with WKN and ETS located nearby and a user-friendly pedestrian subway system,” the spokesman added.

Following the gazetting of the KSL scheme on 26 March this year, the Corporation has been working on the amendments to the KSL scheme, taking into consideration the views and concerns from the public. The Government is expected to gazette the amendments under the Railway Ordinance in mid-December for further public consultation.

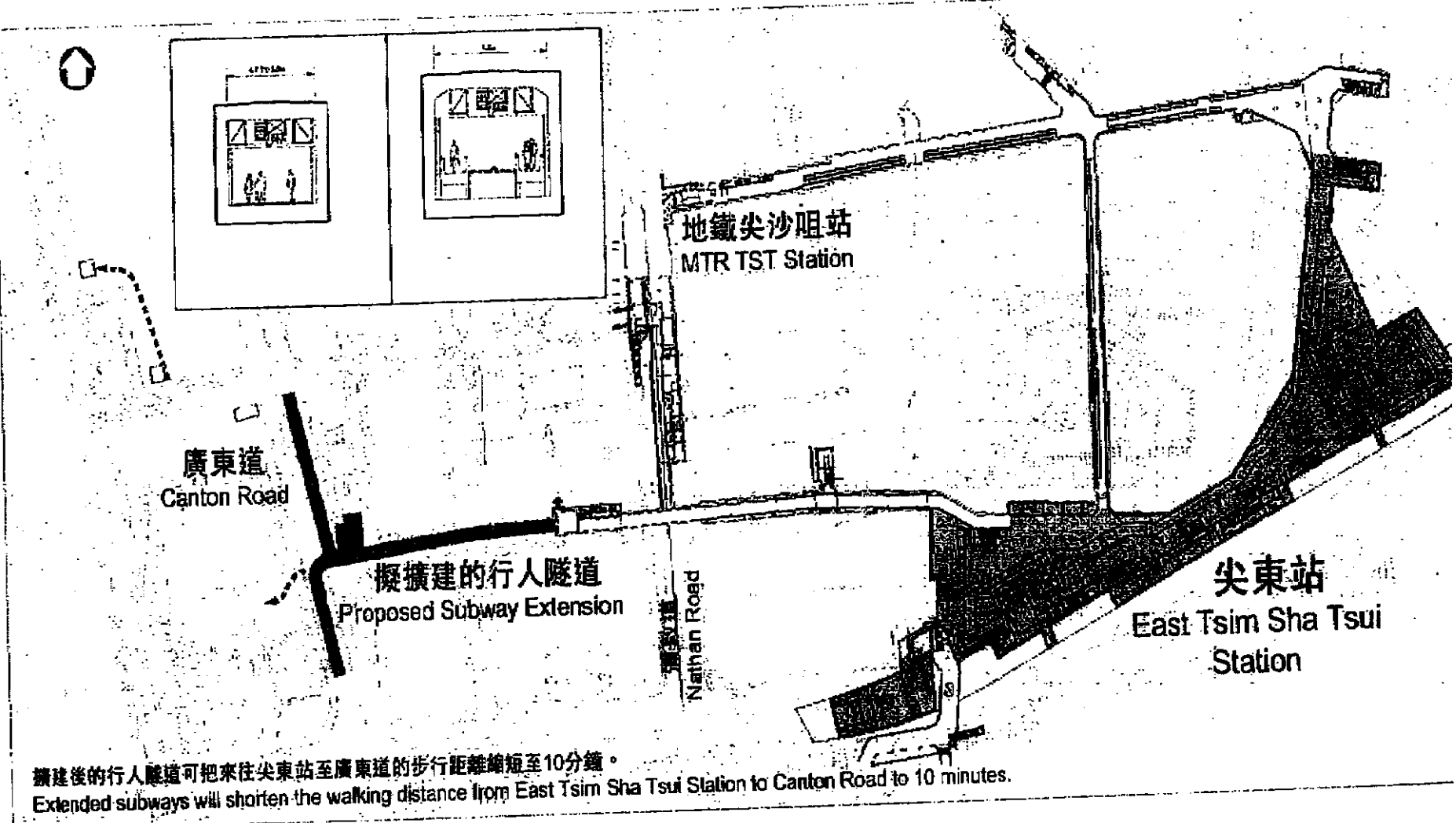
Linking up the West Rail terminus at Nam Cheong Station with the East Rail ETS Station, construction of the 3.8-km KSL is expected to commence in 2005, with completion targeted in 2009.

- End -

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Pager : 7111 8218 *5258





擴建後的行人隧道可把來往尖東站至廣東道的步行距離縮短至10分鐘。
Extended subways will shorten the walking distance from East Tsim Sha Tsui Station to Canton Road to 10 minutes.

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