

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)60/06-07
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/PLW/1

Panel on Planning, Lands and Works

**Minutes of special meeting
held on Monday, 26 June 2006 at 4:30 pm
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building**

- Members present** : Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon James TIEN Pei-chun, GBS, JP
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan
Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, S.B.St.J., JP
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Hon Daniel LAM Wai-keung, BBS, JP
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, SBS, JP
- Members attending** : Hon CHAN Kam-lam
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
- Members absent** : Hon WONG Yung-kan, JP
Hon CHOY So-yuk, JP
Hon LI Kwok-ying, MH

**Public officers
attending**

: Agenda item I

Mr Robin IP
Deputy Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands
(Planning and Lands) 1

Mr Thomas CHOW
Deputy Secretary for the Environment, Transport and
Works (Transport) 1

Mr L T MA
Project Manager (Hong Kong Island & Islands)
Civil Engineering and Development Department

Ms Phyllis LI
Chief Town Planner/Special Duties (1)
Planning Department

Mr Lawrence KWAN
Chief Engineer/Traffic Engineering (HK)
Transport Department

**Attendance by
invitation**

: Agenda item I

Harbour-front Enhancement Committee – Sub-committee
on Wan Chai Development Phase II Review

Mr K Y LEUNG
Chairman

Maunsell Consultants Asia Limited

Mr Dickson LO
Managing Director

Mr Peter CHEEK
Associate

City Planning Consultants Limited

Ms Flora LAI
Senior Town Planner

Clear The Air

Ms Annelise CONNELL
Chairperson

Dr Andy GREEN
Advisor

The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers

Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok
Vice President

Designing Hong Kong Harbour District/
The Experience Group, Limited

Mr Paul ZIMMERMAN
Convenor, Designing Hong Kong Harbour District and
Principal, The Experience Group, Limited

Society For Protection Of The Harbour

Mr Dennis LI
Director

WWF Hong Kong

Mr Markus SHAW
Chairman

The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors

Dr Paul HO
Chairman of Quantity Surveying Division

Individual

Ms LAM Chui-lin
Eastern District Council member

Association of Engineering Professionals in Society

Ir LEE Ping-kuen
Senior Vice-Chairman

The Hong Kong Institute of Planners

Ms PONG Yuen-ye
Vice-President

Action Group on Protection of The Harbour

Ms CHENG Lai-king
Representative

The Hong Kong Construction Association Ltd.

Mr David SUFF
Vice-President

Mr Alex WONG
Assistant Secretary General

Save Our Shorelines

Mr John BOWDEN
Chair

The Hong Kong Institute of Architects

Professor Bernard LIM
President

Mr Michael CHIANG
Chairman, Planning & Lands Committee

Clerk in attendance : Ms Anita SIT
Chief Council Secretary (1)4

Staff in attendance : Mr WONG Siu-ye
Senior Council Secretary (1)7

Ms Christina SHIU
Legislative Assistant (1)7

I Wan Chai Development Phase II Review – Harbour-front Enhancement Review – Wan Chai, Causeway Bay and Adjoining Areas: Outcome of Public Engagement at the Envisioning Stage

(LC Paper No. CB(1)1833/05-06(03) -- Submission dated 21 June 2006 from The Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects

LC Paper No. CB(1)1519/05-06(03) -- Information paper provided by the Administration

LC Paper No. CB(1)1519/05-06(04) -- Background brief on “Wan Chai Development Phase II Review” prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat

LC Paper No. CB(1)1706/05-06(01) -- Information paper on “Wan Chai Development Phase II Review – Follow-up to the discussion on 23 May 2006” provided by the Administration)

Members noted the following papers tabled at the meeting –

- (a) Speaking note of Ms LAM Chui-lin, Eastern District Council member;
- (b) Submission dated 26 June 2006 from Action Group on Protection of The Harbour; and
- (c) Submission dated 23 June 2006 from The Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong.

(Post-meeting note: The above papers (LC Paper Nos. CB(1)1868/05-06(01) to (03) respectively) were subsequently issued to members on 27 June 2006.)

2. The Chairman welcomed representatives of the Administration and deputations to the meeting. He said that the purpose of the present special meeting was to listen to the views of interested groups and individuals. He then invited the Administration to give a briefing before the deputations presented their views.

Briefing by the Administration

3. The Deputy Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (Planning and Lands) 1 (DS/P&L1) said that when the same subject was discussed at two previous meetings, representatives of relevant bureaux and departments had explained that at present, many vehicles not destined for Causeway Bay, Wan Chai

and Central had to pass through the Connaught Road Central/Harcourt Road/Gloucester Road Corridor (the Corridor), leading to traffic congestion. Therefore, there was a compelling need to construct the Central-Wan Chai Bypass (CWB). Different options and variations formulated by the relevant consultants engaged by the Government (the Consultants) for constructing CWB had been presented to members. Explanation had also been given on the need for reclamation in constructing CWB for providing connection with existing roads, constructing slip roads and tackling the constraints arising from the tunnel structure of the Mass Transit Railway Tsuen Wan Line. The Administration acknowledged the need to satisfy the “overriding public need test” laid down by the Court of Final Appeal in relation to the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance (Cap. 531) (PHO) in any harbour reclamation. Among the various options and variations examined, Tunnel Option Variation 1 was found to involve the least amount of reclamation (about 15 hectares) and thus could best meet the “overriding public need test”.

4. As for harbourfront enhancement opportunities, DS/P&L1 said that if Tunnel Option Variation 1 was adopted, there would be five locations along the harbourfront from Wan Chai to North Point where enhancement works could be carried out, including the areas to the east and west of Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC), ex-Wan Chai Public Cargo Working Area (PCWA), Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter (CBTS) and the connection point of CWB and the Island Eastern Corridor (IEC) at North Point. The proposal would satisfy the public’s aspiration for a continuous waterfront promenade and connecting Victoria Park with the waterfront. At its meeting on 13 June 2006, the Sub-committee on Wan Chai Development Phase II Review (Sub-committee on WDII Review) of the Harbour-front Enhancement Committee (HEC) supported the adoption of Tunnel Option Variation 1 as a basis for the Consultants to prepare the Concept Plan for WDII (Concept Plan).

5. DS/P&L1 further said that various forms of pedestrian links, including at-grade links, elevated walkways and landscaped decks, had been planned to bring people to the waterfront. The Administration would actively seek opportunities for enhancing the connectivity, environment and design of the waterfront, including using water-related features, to create a vibrant waterfront with diversified facilities for public enjoyment. These enhancement ideas and the construction form of CWB would be incorporated into the Concept Plan, and forums and exhibitions would be held starting from the third quarter of 2006 to solicit views from the public. The Administration hoped that the project could be implemented as soon as possible to alleviate traffic congestion along the northern shore of the Hong Kong Island and provide opportunities for enhancing the harbourfront of Wan Chai, Causeway Bay and adjoining areas.

Presentation by deputations

Clear The Air (CTA)
(LC Paper No. CB(1)1833/05-06(01))

6. Ms Annelise CONNELL, Chairperson of CTA, said that the Administration had confirmed that CWB would fail unless electronic road pricing (ERP) was also implemented, and CWB by itself would not reduce the traffic congestion which was identified as the need for constructing CWB. Dr Andy GREEN, Advisor of CTA, delivered his presentation, the details of which were given in the relevant submission. He added that ERP was operated on the “user pays” principle and the charging scheme would consist of a charging zone and an electronic virtual bypass. It was fair because the tariffs were based on road usage. It could be implemented easily within a short period of time by adopting the technology used in other parts of the world. The technological risk and equipment cost would be low and it was quick and safe. It was flexible and could be improved and expanded to other congested areas. Unlike constructing new transport infrastructure, it would not lead to induced traffic arising from the building of new roads.

The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (HKIE)
(LC Paper No. CB(1)1845/05-06(01))

7. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok, Vice President of HKIE, delivered his presentation, the details of which were given in the relevant submission. He added that from the technical point of view, “zero reclamation” in constructing CWB was not feasible. The construction of CWB should be carried out as soon as possible together with enhancement works for the harbourfront.

Designing Hong Kong Harbour District (DHKHD)/The Experience Group, Limited
(LC Paper Nos. CB(1)1845/05-06(02) and 1582/05-06(01))

8. Mr Paul ZIMMERMAN, Convenor, DHKHD and Principal, The Experience Group, Limited, said that WWF Hong Kong had agreed to give its presentation time to him. He delivered his presentation, the details of which were given in the relevant submissions. He added that in constructing CWB, the Administration was shifting traffic problems to North Point and it was unfair to residents of North Point. They might take legal action against the proposed reclamation in North Point for constructing massive transport infrastructure. He pointed out that the trade-offs between vehicular capacity and harbourfront enhancement, and social and economic costs and benefits should be carefully weighted. He raised the idea of dismantling IEC, re-constructing it in the form of a tunnel and creating a new waterfront by reclaiming the area along the shore currently occupied by IEC. The premium for the land created could be used for funding the project.

Society For Protection Of The Harbour (SPOTH)
(LC Paper No. CB(1)1552/05-06(01))

9. Mr Dennis LI, Director of SPOTH, delivered his presentation, the details of which were given in the relevant submission. He added that the brief and instructions given to the Consultants should be released to provide assurance to the public that the Consultants had been instructed to comply with the requirements laid down in the judgment of the CFA, drawings should be prepared to show the extent of reclamation and the existing and proposed shorelines, and information on the planning for the reclaimed land under WDII should be made available to the public.

WWF Hong Kong (WWF)

10. The presentation time for WWF had been given to Mr Paul ZIMMERMAN.

The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors (HKIS)
(LC Paper No. CB(1)1833/05-06(02))

11. Dr Paul HO, Chairman of Quantity Surveying Division of HKIS, delivered his presentation, the details of which were given in the relevant submission. He added that buying back the two franchised harbour crossings was a possible option in alleviating traffic congestion.

Ms LAM Chui-lin, Eastern District Council member
(LC Paper No. CB(1)1868/05-06(01))

12. Ms LAM Chui-lin delivered her presentation, the details of which were given in the relevant submission.

Association of Engineering Professionals in Society (AEPS)
(LC Paper No. CB(1)1845/05-06(03))

13. Ir LEE Ping-kuen, Senior Vice-Chairman of AEPS, delivered his presentation, the details of which were given in the relevant submission.

The Hong Kong Institute of Planners (HKIP)
(LC Paper No. CB(1)1895/05-06(01))

14. Ms PONG Yuen-ye, Vice-President of HKIP, declared interest that she was a member of HEC and the Expert Panel on Sustainable Transport Planning and Central-Wan Chai Bypass (Expert Panel) in the capacity of representative of HKIP. She delivered her presentation, the details of which were given in the relevant submission.

(*Post-meeting note: The speaking note from HKIP (LC Paper No. CB(1)1895/05-06(01)) was received after the meeting and subsequently issued to members on 29 June 2006.*)

Action Group on Protection of The Harbour (AGPTH)
(LC Paper No. CB(1)1868/05-06(02))

15. Ms CHENG Lai-king, Representative of AGPTH, delivered her presentation, the details of which were given in the relevant submission. She added that the Central and Western District Council had passed a motion objecting to the conclusion of no possible “zero reclamation” alignment for constructing CWB. She hoped that the Legislative Council would take this into consideration.

The Hong Kong Construction Association Ltd. (HKCA)
(LC Paper No. CB(1)1845/05-06(04))

16. Mr David SUFF, Vice-President of HKCA, delivered his presentation, the details of which were given in the relevant submission. He added that HKCA’s interest in the project was not purely to secure the much-needed construction works for its members. HKCA had a social conscience and its members acknowledged the need to protect the environment. HKCA supported the CWB project because it would provide relief to traffic congestion along the Corridor with minimum reclamation, provide opportunities for enhancing the harbourfront, connect Victoria Park with the waterfront and retain CBTS. HKCA supported the tunnel option and preferred Variation 1, which would keep the extent of reclamation to a minimum, require a lesser extent of temporary traffic diversion during the construction period and provide the much-needed enhancement to the fragmented shoreline.

Save Our Shorelines (SOS)

17. Mr John BOWDEN, Chair of SOS, said that the Administration should clarify the format of the on-going public consultation, and explain how opinions and queries raised would be assessed and published. Community groups and environmental protection organizations were anxious to avoid the appearance of public consultation without any real response to the issues raised during the process. For instance, the proposed forms of Road P2 and other surface roads were challenged during public consultation. Although the Envisioning Stage Public Engagement Report mentioned these challenges, it did not comprehend the significance of their frequent reference and treated them as minor comments. Particular attention should be given to avoid the over-provision of surface roads, which were planned without clear and well substantiated evidence.

The Hong Kong Institute of Architects (HKIA)

18. Professor Bernard LIM, President of HKIA, said that HKIA appreciated HEC and the Administration for their public consultation work on harbourfront enhancement. Tunnel Option Variation 1 was acceptable because it would require the least extent of reclamation and the impact on Victoria Park and traffic disruption at the connection point with IEC would be kept to the minimum. The feasibility of dispensing with reclamation to the east of HKCEC and utilizing the area for leisure activities to reduce the impact on the landscape could be explored. There should be a timetable for implementing the harbourfront enhancement measures and the public should continue to be given the opportunity to participate in formulating the enhancement measures, such as conducting design competitions for the enhancement measures at important landscape locations like Victoria Park. Models should be available for display to the public to facilitate comparison of the various options for evaluation.

Response by the Administration

19. DS/P&L1 said that the Expert Panel had thorough deliberations on whether there was an overriding public need to construct CWB and the Expert Panel's report had been discussed in detail by the Sub-committee on WDII Review. The Expert Panel and the Sub-committee on WDII supported the construction of CWB. With regard to the requirement for minimum reclamation, the Consultants were engineering professionals and they had identified Tunnel Option Variation 1 as the option which would require the least extent of reclamation, and many professional organizations agreed to this. As for enhancement of the harbourfront, the Consultants had put forward several ideas, such as a cultural district to the west of HKCEC, for arts and cultural fairs, performance venues, and an expo promenade; a green leisure zone along the Wan Chai shoreline, with landscaped recreational area and alfresco dining (outdoor cafes, etc.) to add vibrancy to the waterfront; a marine recreational zone at the ex-Wan Chai PCWA basin with public sailing activities, venue for visiting sailing ships and sightseeing opportunities; a water recreational and entertainment zone at CBTS, preserving the existing typhoon shelter, and with a landscaped deck providing an extension of Victoria Park to the waterfront; and another green leisure zone along the North Point shoreline, with landscaped recreational areas. There would be water-related features in the design and more details would be available when the preparation of the Concept Plan was completed. Drawings and models would be available to facilitate the public in understanding the enhancement measures.

20. The Deputy Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Transport) 1 (DS/T1) said that the Administration had taken on board the recommendations of the Expert Panel and there were traffic management measures in place and under planning. Currently, about 90% of the passenger trips in Hong Kong were made through public transportation. The rate of private vehicle ownership in Hong Kong was merely 50 vehicles per 1 000 persons and many

private vehicles were used only occasionally. In European countries, the expenses incurred in possessing a private vehicle were much lower than those in Hong Kong; Hong Kong had high first registration tax, duty on petrol and car-parking fees. To further reduce the occupancy rate of private vehicles would require a drastic increase in relevant tax items and the effectiveness of the measure, if implemented, might not be as good as that in other countries. The Administration had been adopting a basket of measures to manage traffic along the Corridor. The measures included the restrictions on loading and unloading activities, changes to traffic lane demarcations and rationalization of franchised bus services which led to a 17% reduction in the number of bus trips. The Administration would continue its efforts in implementing measures to enhance traffic flow by reducing bottlenecks and negotiating with the two tunnel companies on measures to achieve a more balanced distribution of traffic among the three harbour crossings.

21. DS/T1 further explained that with CWB in place, the utilization rate of the Western Harbour Crossing would increase even if its tolls were higher. The Administration had also strengthened its crisis management capabilities in responding to emergency traffic incidents through further enhancing internal coordination. The Administration would continue to explore the feasibility of ERP and test the sensitivities of various pricing scenarios. He emphasized that both the Administration and the Expert Panel believed that an alternative route was a pre-requisite for implementing ERP. CWB would provide an alternative route for the Corridor. As for the impact on North Point, vehicles heading for North Point or areas to the east of North Point would have to pass through North Point irrespective of whether CWB was constructed. After the completion of CWB and assuming that all the planned developments in Central Reclamation Phase III and the Tamar site were materialized, there would not be any traffic congestion along the Corridor because the volume to capacity ratio of the Corridor would only be 0.9 by 2016, which would be much lower than 1.2, a ratio indicating that serious traffic congestion would occur.

22. The Project Manager (Hong Kong Island & Islands) of the Civil Engineering and Development Department (PM/CEDD) pointed out that in designing the connection point of CWB with IEC, the Consultants would need to take into consideration the extent of reclamation, the disruption to traffic during the construction period, the impact on Victoria Park and the noise impact to sensitive receivers. There should be benefits for local residents by identifying opportunities for harbourfront and landscape enhancement. The Concept Plan would be displayed to facilitate the public's understanding of the enhancement ideas.

23. Mr K Y LEUNG, Chairman of the Sub-committee on WDII Review, said that one of the missions of HEC was to involve the public in enhancing the harbourfront and there had been extensive public engagement during the Envisioning Stage. The Expert Panel had assimilated their views in formulating its recommendations on the measures to be taken to tackle the traffic congestion at the Corridor and the Sub-committee on WDII had made reference to the

recommendations in planning for the harbourfront. It was hoped that the harbourfront enhancement proposals could be finalized after the alignment and construction form of CWB had been decided. The Town Planning Board, Legislative Council and relevant District Councils had been briefed on the technical aspects of constructing CWB and the opportunities for harbourfront enhancement. The Consultants would prepare a Concept Plan for the next stage of public engagement. The views of professional organizations would be solicited upon release of the Concept Plan to the public in August 2006.

Discussion

Traffic management measures and traffic load

24. Ir Dr Raymond HO pointed out that the planning for CWB had been on the drawing board for some 30 years and CWB would fill in the missing link of the east-west strategic trunk road network. While the population of some one million of the Hong Kong Island would basically remain steady, the presence of three harbour crossings would attract traffic originating from other districts in Kowloon, the New Territories and even the Mainland. The development of Hong Kong was mainly economy-driven and it should not be dampened by traffic problems. The exhaust air emitted from vehicles trapped in traffic congestion would also aggravate air pollution. As the Expert Panel supported the construction of CWB and “zero reclamation” would not be feasible, the construction of CWB should be implemented without any further delay. The Administration should be decisive in implementing the project. As for ERP, he pointed out that there had been many objections to implementing ERP during previous studies and it had already been demonstrated that ERP was not suitable for Hong Kong. Hong Kong Island had a hilly and steep terrain, flat land was scarce and an alternative route was absent. Without an alternative route, the implementation of ERP would not be effective and traffic would merely be shifted to other areas.

25. DS/P&L1 thanked Ir Dr HO for supporting the construction of CWB as soon as possible. The Administration hoped that the project would be implemented early to alleviate traffic congestion along the northern shore of the Hong Kong Island and to provide opportunities for enhancing the harbourfront of Wan Chai, Causeway Bay and adjoining areas for public enjoyment. In relation to ERP, DS/T1 pointed out that the Administration also considered that an alternative route was a pre-requisite for implementing ERP. Otherwise, all drivers travelling in the east-west direction would be charged even if they were only passing through the toll area. The primary objective of discouraging drivers to enter congested areas would be defeated if an alternative route was absent. It would be unfair and there would be many objections to such an arrangement.

26. Mr Abraham SHEK asked whether the Administration had any solutions or remedies if the recommendation to construct CWB turned out to be incorrect. In response, Mr K Y LEUNG, Chairman of the Sub-committee on WDII Review, said that there were eight members in the Expert Panel who were all professionals

and they had examined the traffic data submitted by the Transport Department in detail before arriving at a conclusion. Apart from the recommendation to construct CWB, the Expert Panel had also recommended short-term, medium-term and long-term measures to achieve sustainable transport planning.

27. Mr Albert CHAN asked whether the assumptions used for assessing the need for CWB had been updated on the basis of the latest demographic and economic data. In reply, DS/T1 said that the need and the timing for constructing CWB had undergone numerous reviews. The need for constructing CWB was first confirmed in the 1980s and was re-confirmed in 1989 during a comprehensive transport review. Further reviews were carried out during the mid-1990s to late 1990s. In 2005, another review was conducted based on the latest demographic and economic data provided by the Planning Department and it was again confirmed that there was a need to construct CWB.

28. Mr Alan LEONG shared the view that models and drawings should be prepared for display to facilitate the public's understanding of the project. He expressed concern on whether it would provide a sustainable transport solution if there were new developments at the existing sites of the Central Government Offices and Murray Building in the future. The Administration should provide the assumptions used in making the projections on the capacity of CWB as requested at the last meeting. In relation to the work of the Expert Panel, he asked whether the Expert Panel had conducted other areas of work in addition to studies on transport issues.

29. In response, DS/P&L1 said that there would be drawings and models when the Concept Plan was available and the public could express their views. As regards CWB, DS/T1 said that CWB was not planned to cater for the traffic in Central, Wan Chai or Causeway Bay only, but for the whole of Hong Kong Island to fill in the missing link of the strategic trunk road network. As recommended by the Expert Panel, the Administration would implement appropriate traffic management measures before and after the completion of CWB. The Administration would continue its efforts to achieve sustainable transport planning and management. According to the terms of reference of the Expert Panel, its scope of work centred on the need for the construction of CWB and related transport issues because many of the concerns expressed during the early stages of the work of HEC were on these subjects.

30. Dr KWOK Ka-ki pointed out that the Expert Panel had made many recommendations and the construction of CWB was only one of them. He expressed concern on whether the Administration had carried out any measures in response to the recommendation of the Expert Panel to review the planning for Central and reduce the development intensity in Central Reclamation Phase III and Tamar. The Administration's planning should be aimed at reducing traffic congestion instead of aggravating the problem. Other transport measures such as ERP, buying back the two franchised harbour crossings, rationalization of tunnel usage and bus routes, providing subsidization on tunnel tolls and constructing new

mass transit railway lines should be pursued.

31. In reply, DS/P&L1 said that the outline zoning plan covering Central Reclamation Phase III had been approved by the Chief Executive in Council in 2002 after going through a statutory planning process which involved extensive consultation and detailed consideration. DS/P&L1 and DS/T1 reiterated that the road network would have sufficient capacity to accommodate traffic arising from all planned developments in the area. DS/T1 added that while the Administration had no intention to buy back the two franchised harbour crossings, negotiation on rationalization of tunnel tolls was already in progress.

32. Mr Paul ZIMMERMAN, Convenor of DHKHD and Principal of The Experience Group, Limited, pointed out that many trucks were using the Corridor during the peak period in the morning and considered that trucks could have been charged for using the Corridor during the peak period in the morning if there was ERP. Charging trucks for using the Corridor during peak periods but not non-peak periods could regulate the usage of the road system. He expressed concern that the opening of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Western Corridor would bring about increasing traffic demand and considered that ERP should be implemented as soon as possible to alleviate traffic congestion. As for the sustainability of CWB, unless there was an opportunity for creating a new corridor, a volume to capacity ratio of 0.9 by 2016 should be considered as the absolute limit because there might be surged traffic situations. CWB on its own would not necessarily be a sustainable solution because a lot of other issues had to be addressed.

33. Mr Michael CHIANG, Chairman of the Planning & Lands Committee of HKIA, commented that a single solution would not suffice and other traffic solutions such as mass transit railway and ERP should be considered in parallel with CWB in order to cater for the traffic demand in the long term.

34. Ms Annelise CONNELL, Chairperson of CTA, said that the Executive Council confirmed in the 2001 ERP study that ERP would be successful in Hong Kong. It was not implemented then only because the traffic had not yet reached a critical condition. She said that the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works and DS/T1 had stated in public that CWB would not be effective without implementing ERP in parallel and constructing CWB alone would fail to address traffic problems.

35. Ir Dr Raymond HO pointed out that there had been numerous discussions on ERP with the Administration within the Legislative Council after the Executive Council meeting and the Administration had provided updated information and responses to Members' questions. He said that mass transportation would be the best environmental-friendly transport mode and the North Island Line would be considered at an appropriate time for improving east-west traffic flow. The South Island Line was also being planned and actively discussed. Hong Kong would not rely completely on road systems to cater for traffic demand.

36. DS/T1 clarified that the Administration had not ever stated in public that both CWB and ERP were required for addressing the traffic situation. The Administration had only mentioned that a multi-pronged approach would be needed. Apart from CWB, a basket of other traffic management measures, which might include ERP, would be required in attaining sustainable transport management.

Harbourfront enhancement

37. Mr LEE Wing-tat commented that measures to enhance the continuity of the pedestrian links along the northern shore of the Hong Kong Island from Kennedy Town and North Point and the accessibility and environment of the harbourfront of the Hong Kong Island for public use should be carried out as soon as practicable if they did not hinge on the construction of CWB, especially for those costing less than \$15 million. He enquired whether the Administration had a list of possible sites where enhancement measures could be carried out, such as the ex-Wan Chai PCWA.

38. Ir Dr Raymond HO supported implementing measures to enhance the pedestrian links to and the environment of the harbourfront. Expressing a similar view, Mr Patrick LAU considered that good pedestrian links would reduce traffic load and therefore measures to enhance pedestrian links should be implemented as soon as possible.

39. In reply, DS/P&L1 said that as advised by the Legislative Council Secretariat, this Panel had already included an agenda item on harbourfront enhancement for discussion at the meeting on 25 July 2006. The Administration would provide a detailed information paper for the meeting to address members' concerns.

40. Mr Abraham SHEK enquired about the proposed enhancement measures that would be considered for implementation in both the short-term and long-term. While expressing support for constructing CWB, he asked whether the Administration would explore the feasibility of enhancing the harbourfront along IEC in North Point to better utilize the area.

41. In response, DS/P&L1 said that the Consultants had put forward several harbourfront enhancement ideas, such as a cultural district to the west of HKCEC; a green leisure zone along the Wan Chai shoreline; a marine recreational zone at the ex-Wan Chai PCWA basin; a water recreational and entertainment zone at CBTS, with a landscaped deck providing an extension of Victoria Park to the waterfront; and another green leisure zone along the North Point shoreline. More detailed information would be available in the Concept Plan.

42. PM/CEDD added that there were strong views from various District Councils for enhancing the pedestrian links along the northern shore of the Hong Kong Island. For instance, Central and Western District Council had expressed concern on when the waterfront promenade would be extended to Sheung Wan. Similarly, Eastern District Council had expressed concern on when the harbourfront in North Point would be enhanced and extended to connect with that in Quarry Bay. Improvements would have to be planned and implemented in stages. Before commencement of the construction works of CWB, the Administration would carry out short-term enhancement works at the ex-Wan Chai PCWA, allowing it to be connected to Golden Bauhinia Square and Causeway Bay.

43. Mr Albert CHAN considered that there should be holistic planning for the enhancement measures from Central to North Point rather than just focusing on Wan Chai, Causeway Bay and adjoining areas. He asked whether the Administration would undertake to amend the relevant outline zoning plans to reflect the new planning and land uses before implementing the construction of CWB.

44. In reply, DS/P&L1 said that there would be a statutory planning process for amending the relevant outline zoning plans for Wan Chai and North Point and there would be public consultation. As for Central, he pointed out that the relevant outline zoning plan had already been approved by the Chief Executive in Council in 2002 and the current planning was based on this approved outline zoning plan.

45. In relation to the work of HEC, Dr KWOK Ka-ki expressed doubt on whether HEC was able to achieve its objectives of protecting the harbour and enhancing the harbourfront. He queried whether HEC was only working for the interests of the Administration and criticized that enhancement works to harbourfront areas were lacking and much of the land was left idle and not put to better use.

46. DS/P&L1 said that HEC was established to advise the Administration on the planning, land uses and developments along the harbourfront. HEC had formulated the Harbour Planning Principles which served as guidelines for the planning of the harbourfront areas. Based on the advice of HEC, the Administration had carried out enhancement works to provide the waterfront promenade in the West Kowloon Reclamation and studies on enhancement works for the harbourfront in Central. The Sub-committee on WDII Review of HEC was identifying enhancement opportunities for the harbourfront areas in Wan Chai, Causeway Bay and adjoining areas. HEC was also conducting the Kai Tak Planning Review at present.

47. Mr K Y LEUNG, Chairman of the Sub-committee on WDII Review, added that HEC had provided advice on the design of the salt water pumping station of the Drainage Services Department in Sheung Wan. As a result, part of

the pumping station would be built underground, thus enlarging the waterfront park next to the pumping station and reducing the visual impact of the pumping station. He hoped that the proposed enhancement works could be carried out as soon as possible so that the harbourfront from the Central ferry piers to CBTS would be enhanced and connected. He added that the workload of HEC was quite heavy and a lot of work had yet to be completed.

48. Mr Paul ZIMMERMAN, Convenor, DHKHD and Principal, The Experience Group, Limited, said that the Expert Panel had not been briefed on the Harbour Planning Principles and it had not considered the value of the land to be used for constructing CWB. There were significant limitations in its recommendations because the criteria used only included vehicular flow and traffic demand without considering tradeoffs, such as the costs and benefits of increasing traffic capacity versus those of using more land for transport infrastructure.

49. In response, PM/CEDD clarified that the Expert Panel was aware of the Harbour Planning Principles. Some of its members were collaborators of HEC who had been following the work of HEC including the formulation of the Harbour Planning Principles. Although the Expert Panel was only tasked to provide recommendations on traffic issues, it also emphasized the importance of easy access to the harbourfront during its work and this could reflect that the Expert Panel had a thorough understanding of the subject matter. Other work such as the detailed design of Road P2 and surface road connections had not been entrusted to the Expert Panel and HEC would review such work at the Realization Stage and the Detailed Planning Stage.

Reclamation issues

50. Mr Patrick LAU enquired about the feasibility of reconstructing part of IEC to reduce the extent of reclamation and using the premium of the land to be created to cover the cost. As for the need to comply with the PHO, he enquired about the procedure and timing for carrying out the “overriding public need test”.

51. In response, DS/P&L1 said that no premium would be involved because any land created under WDII would be used for enhancement of the harbourfront. The Administration had to comply with the PHO in carrying out any harbour reclamation works. The Administration would have to prove that there was indeed an overriding public need for carrying out harbour reclamation works before the statutory planning process and the construction of CWB could start.

52. PM/CEDD said that IEC was a very busy road and had a high east-west traffic load. The Consultants had to consider how to maintain its function in designing the connection point with CWB. Under Tunnel Option Variation 1, there would not be a need to demolish the slip roads at Hing Fat Street and Victoria Park. This option would have the least impact on the traffic of IEC. Other options derived from the community’s ideas would require demolition of those slip roads

and reconstructing them in a submerged form. A larger amount of reclamation would be required for these options. The Consultants had also made every effort to reduce the extent of reclamation required in Tunnel Option Variation 1 by modifying a section of the existing IEC at the connection point with CWB.

53. Responding to a concern raised by Mr Abraham SHEK about expert advice on reclamation issues, DS/P&L1 said that the Expert Panel had already submitted its report to HEC and the Consultants had offered professional advice and assessments and arrived at the recommendation that Tunnel Option Variation 1 would require the least extent of reclamation. Many professionals in the engineering field also supported adopting Tunnel Option Variation 1 as the basis for future work, and the Sub-committee on WDII Review had agreed that the Consultants would prepare a Concept Plan based on Tunnel Option Variation 1 for further public consultation. Apart from seeking expert advice, the Administration itself had made detailed and careful consideration to ensure that the final recommendation would be the best option.

Alignments and construction forms

54. Mr Michael CHIANG, Chairman of the Planning & Lands Committee of HKIA, considered that there could be other engineering solutions, for example immersed tube tunnel, for constructing CWB and if the CWB tunnel was below sea level, efforts should be made to avoid reclamation for that section of the CWB so as to retain more water surface.

55. In response, PM/CEDD pointed out that immersed tube tunnel was suitable in situations where there were no existing structures at the side of the tunnel. Otherwise, there would be settlements and the adjoining structures would be affected. Regardless of what other form of construction to be adopted in the end, consideration would be given to introducing water-related features on the reclaimed land above the part of CWB to the east of HKCEC as an enhancement measure. DS/P&L1 added that the shallow water tunnel option had been considered by the Sub-committee on WDII Review but as the tunnel structure would be above sea bed level and a seawall would be needed for protection, a shallow water tunnel would result in affecting the harbour to a larger extent and could not meet the requirements of the PHO. Besides, water quality would also be a concern. Therefore, the shallow water tunnel option was considered not feasible.

Project cost and consultancy work

56. Dr KWOK Ka-ki enquired whether there would be a costs and benefits analysis on the construction of CWB to demonstrate that it would be a reasonable solution when compared with other alternatives. He commented that the project, with an estimated cost of some \$20 billion, was extremely costly and the funds could be better utilized in areas such as education and medical services. There should be sufficient justifications to ensure that the \$20 billion project funds would be well spent. He expressed concern on possible conflict of interest as the

Consultants were to undertake the consultancy work for both the WDII Review and the design and supervision of the construction of CWB. He asked when the Administration would be able to provide copies of the consultancy agreements relating to CWB and the WDII Review which had been awarded to the Consultants and to provide information on the agreed consultancy fees under the agreements.

57. In reply, DS/ETW(T)1 said that the Administration would present a costs and benefits analysis to the Legislative Council before seeking funding approval for the project. At present, the project was only at an early planning stage and HEC would still have to proceed with the next two stages before deciding on how to construct CWB.

58. As regards the project cost, PM/CEDD explained that the estimated cost of \$20 billion would cover the cost of construction works and the cost of supervision of construction works by the Consultants, the latter of which would only account for a minor part of the total cost. He advised that the Consultants had been awarded two consultancy agreements, one by the Highways Department for the design and supervision of the construction works of CWB and the other by the former Territory Development Department (now CEDD) for the design and supervision of the construction works of the WDII project. The Consultants would not be responsible for carrying out the construction works, which would be undertaken by contractors selected through separate tendering exercises. The consultancy fees would not be dependent on the scale of the construction works and awarding consultancy agreements for the design and supervision of the construction works of a project was a common practice of the Administration. The Administration was already compiling the information requested by Dr KWOK.

59. In reply to the Chairman's enquiry, DS/P&L1 said that the Administration would provide the information requested by members at the meeting on 9 June 2006 as soon as possible.

II Any other business

60. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 6:55 pm.