

立法會
Legislative Council

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Panel on Transport
Meeting on 17 July 2009

Updated background brief on Kowloon Southern Link

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the Kowloon Southern Link (KSL) project and summarizes the major views and concerns expressed by Members about the project at previous meetings of the Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways (the Subcommittee).

Background

2. KSL is one of the six railway projects recommended for implementation in the Government's Railway Development Strategy 2000¹ (RDS-2000). Its strategic function is to link up East Rail (ER) and West Rail (WR) at the southern part of the Kowloon peninsula, running from the existing WR Nam Cheong Station to the existing ER East Tsim Sha Tsui (ETS) Station, with one station in-between at West Kowloon at the site now occupied by Canton Road Government Offices. Upon completion of KSL, both ER and WR will terminate at the Hung Hom Station with cross-platform interchanges provided. KSL will provide passengers along the WR catchment in the Northwest New Territories (NT) with a direct link to urban Kowloon. They can also use KSL to access Northeast NT through the interchange with ER at the Hung Hom Station.

3. In response to the Government's invitation, the then Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC) submitted a Project Proposal for KSL in July 2001. In its proposal, KCRC suggested that an additional station at Canton Road (the CAR Station) should be considered under the schematic design.

4. In further developing details of the KSL scheme, KCRC considered

¹ The Railway Development Strategy 2000 maps out the preferred railway network expansion plan for Hong Kong up to 2016.

that using the cut and cover option as originally planned to construct the railway tunnels underneath Canton Road would cause substantial disruption to the area. KCRC subsequently proposed to build the tunnels and station at Canton Road using the bored tunnel option, with the station concourse sited off Canton Road either to the east or to the west. However, this option would require the resumption of several properties to provide the site to enable excavation for and construction of the station concourse. As there would be two railway stations (i.e., the existing MTR Tsim Sha Tsui Station and the ETS Station which was under construction then), within 600 metres walking distance of Canton Road, there was no justifiable transport need to support this option. KCRC subsequently approached Wharf Estates Development Limited (Wharf) to explore the feasibility of providing the CAR Station in the future redevelopment of its property on Canton Road. However, no agreement was reached, as Wharf indicated that they would claim compensation at such a high level that would make the CAR Station financially not viable.

5. KCRC had also examined two alternative proposals from Sino Properties for a station located within or adjacent to China Hong Kong City, but both proposals were found to be infeasible. Considering the urgent need to take forward KSL as planned, KCRC in November 2003 did not take forward any immediate plan to provide a station at Canton Road.

6. The KSL scheme was gazetted under the Railway Ordinance (Cap. 519) (RO) on 26 March 2004 with just one station at West Kowloon. Following the gazettal of the project, Wharf came up with a revised proposal of building the CAR Station within their Harbour City premises. At the Subcommittee meeting on 3 June 2004, members requested the Administration and KCRC to study Wharf's revised proposal. Subsequently, a Steering Group chaired by the then Environment, Transport and Works Bureau and a Working Group chaired by the Highways Department with members from both KCRC and Wharf were set up to further develop the proposal. In order to avoid unduly delaying the KSL project, 30 November 2004 had been set as the deadline for KCRC and Wharf to reach agreement or otherwise.

7. By the deadline of 30 November 2004, KCRC and Wharf had not reached agreement on the provision of the CAR Station. At the Subcommittee meeting on 11 December 2004, a motion was passed urging the Administration to defer gazettal of the KSL scheme for not more than one month until 11 January 2005, and to immediately engage KCRC and Wharf in discussion to resolve issues in relation to the provision of the CAR Station. In response to the motion, the Administration convened further meetings with KCRC and Wharf. However, as Wharf's requirements (as detailed in the Legislative Council (LegCo) Brief File Ref: ETWB(T)CR 12/1016/99 dated January 2005) could not be met and no agreement could be reached, the Administration decided to proceed with planning and implementing KSL without the CAR Station.

8. On 7 January 2005, the Administration gazetted amendments to the KSL scheme for public consultation under RO, to address the concerns expressed in the objections received when the KSL scheme was gazetted on 26 March 2004. In June 2005, LegCo was informed by way of a LegCo Brief that the KSL scheme authorized by the Chief Executive in Council under RO would have one intermediate station, to be located at West Kowloon. The alignment of the KSL scheme is shown at **Appendix I**.

9. Works for the KSL project have commenced since September 2005. KCRC and the Administration informed the Subcommittee at the meeting on 17 February 2006 that core construction works were expected to fully commence from the latter half of 2006 for completion in 2009.

Discussion of the project by the Subcommittee

10. The Subcommittee held a series of meetings with the Administration and KCRC from 2002 to early 2006 to monitor the progress of the KSL project, and the major concerns expressed by members are summarized in paragraphs 12 to 15.

11. Recent discussions on the projects by the Subcommittee at its meetings on 21 November 2008 and 16 January 2009 are given in paragraphs 16 to 20.

Discussion in 2002-2006

12. In late 2003, the Subcommittee noted with grave concern about KCRC's decision to drop its plan to provide a station at Canton Road under KSL, and subsequently invited deputations including Yau Tsim Mong District Council (YTMDC) and Canton Road Association to give views on the matter at its meetings. Sharing the view expressed by these deputations that there was a strong call in the community for the provision of the CAR Station, members requested the Administration to take a more active role in co-ordinating the discussions between KCRC and Wharf in the development of a viable proposal for taking forward the CAR Station.

13. The Subcommittee considered that the CAR Station would bring about substantial economic benefits and enhance tourism development in the Tsim Sha Tsui area. They called on the Administration and KCRC to consider various options to take forward the provision of the CAR Station, such as locating the station at other sites and it was suggested that the technical feasibility of constructing the CAR Station in Kowloon Park should be explored. KCRC subsequently provided an information note explaining why this was not practicable based on a risk analysis of various factors that had been

examined by the Corporation.

14. Some members criticized the Administration for committing a planning blunder for RDS-2000 in not including the CAR Station under the KSL project. They also considered it unacceptable that, in the absence of the CAR Station, passengers would have to walk for more than 10 minutes from ETS Station to Canton Road for daily commuting. On the other hand, some members considered that, notwithstanding the desirability of having the CAR Station, the KSL scheme should not be deferred for an unduly long period, as its early completion could bring substantial transport benefits to the residents in Northwest NT, and help increase the patronage of WR and improve its financial position. These members considered that there should be no more delay caused to the KSL project.

15. The Subcommittee was also keen to ensure smooth progress of the construction works for the KSL project and that appropriate measures would be taken to minimize their impact on business operations and traffic in the affected areas. In response to members' concerns, the Administration decided that the section of the rail tunnel between the station at West Kowloon and the Canton Road/Salisbury Road junction to be constructed by bored tunnelling method would be extended to the Salisbury Road/Nathan Road junction. As a result, the disruption to road traffic, pedestrians, commercial premises, Hong Kong Cultural Centre and Space Museum would be significantly reduced. This would also allow at least three eastbound and three westbound lanes of Salisbury Road to remain open to traffic throughout the 36-month construction period.

Recent discussion of the Subcommittee in 2008 and 2009

16. On 21 November 2008, the Administration and MTRCL briefed the Subcommittee on the progress of KSL. In examining the Administration's plan on the pedestrian connectivity of Austin Station of KSL with its neighbouring area, members emphasized the need to look after the convenience of the railway/ferry travellers carrying luggage during rainy or inclement weather traversing between Austin Station and China Hong Kong City (CHKC) or the Airport Express Kowloon Station. Subcommittee members considered it rather inconvenient for passengers at Austin Station heading to CHKC to have to first access the existing public pedestrian Austin Road Subway, and walk along a footpath of 150 metres without any cover from the subway exit to CHKC. Subcommittee members also considered it far from satisfactory that passengers at Austin Station heading to Kowloon Station can only make use of the existing Jordan Road Footbridge and walk through a shopping mall to Kowloon Station. The Subcommittee conducted a visit to Austin Station in December 2008 to understand whether adequate facilities are in place to meet passengers' needs.

17. The Administration subsequently informed members that, in the light of members' views, the Transport Department (TD) would widen the footpath linking the subway and CHKC to 3.5 metres wide, whereas the Highways Department would improve the paving along the footpath to make the walk for passengers with small baggage more pleasant.

18. Subcommittee members, however, maintained the view that a direct subway link between Austin Station and CHKC should be provided. At the Subcommittee meeting on 16 January 2009, members urged the Administration to explore providing such a direct subway link at a site adjacent to CHKC, which was reserved for the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD). Members requested that before such a subway connection is provided, a cover should be provided on the footpath linking Austin Road Subway and CHKC. The Administration subsequently undertook to provide a temporary cover over the existing footpath. The cover installation together with the footpath widening/repaving works would be completed before the commissioning of KSL. A plan showing the proposed temporary walkway cover is in **Appendix I**.

19. The Administration also advised that the Transport and Housing Bureau had commenced discussion with the WKCD Office on how to incorporate a pedestrian connection between Austin Station and CHKC through the site currently reserved for WKCD. In addition, MTRCL was working with TD to see if the existing Green Minibus services could be enhanced with stops near Austin Station and CHKC with fare concessions provided for the railway passengers.

20. The Subcommittee also expressed concern about the pedestrian connectivity between Austin Station and other railway stations nearby (Kowloon Station and Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (XRL) Terminus). The Administration advised that MTRCL was studying a proposal to have the three railway stations interconnected by subways with travellers and footbridges. The study result would be available when the design of the XRL terminus is finalized towards the end of 2009. In the interim, in order to facilitate the interchange arrangement for KSL passengers, MTRCL proposed to provide an additional stop for the existing Airport Express Shuttle Bus Service at Austin Station and it would submit an application to TD.

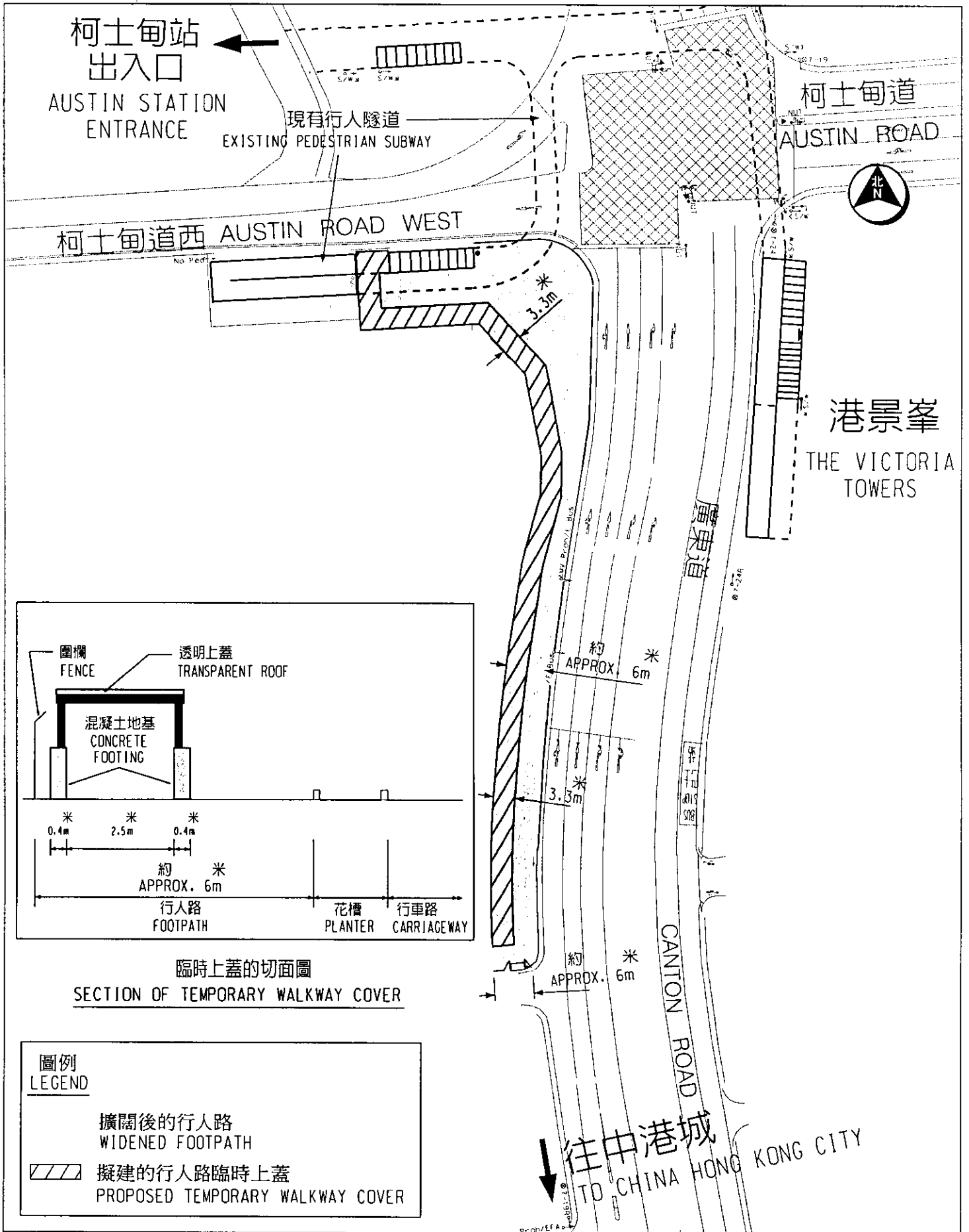
Latest development

21. Hon Andrew CHENG raised a written question on the commissioning of KSL at the Council meeting on 20 May 2009. The question and the Administration's reply are in **Appendix II**.

22. The Administration has proposed to brief members on the progress and fares of KSL at the Panel meeting scheduled for 17 July 2009.

23. A list of relevant papers is in **Appendix III**.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
14 July 2009



擬建廣東道行人路臨時上蓋 (近柯士甸道西)

PROPOSED CANTON ROAD TEMPORARY WALKWAY COVER (NEAR AUSTIN ROAD WEST)

LCQ9: Commissioning of Kowloon Southern Link

■ Annex

Following is a question by the Hon Andrew Cheng and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Ms Eva Cheng, at the Legislative Council meeting today (May 20):

Question:

Regarding the impact of the Kowloon Southern Link ("KSL") on other public transport services and train fares upon its commissioning in the second half of this year, will the Government:

(a) set out each of the route numbers of the services of franchised buses, public light buses or residents' coaches which need to be adjusted, together with the districts in which they are operating, and the details of such adjustments (including the routes to be cancelled); and

(b) inform this Council whether it knows if the MTR Corporation Limited will increase the fares for travelling on the West Rail from North-west New Territories to the urban areas; and whether it will extend the West Rail Line Day Pass and the West Rail Line Monthly Pass concessionary schemes, which will expire in June this year, and extend the coverage of such schemes to KSL; if so, of the details?

Reply :

President,

(a) Upon commissioning, the Kowloon Southern Link (KSL) will provide an alternative transport service for the public. The Transport Department (TD) expects a decrease in the utilisation of some franchised bus routes as some bus passengers switch to KSL. Corresponding changes have to be made with a view to maintaining efficient public transport services to cater for passengers' demand. Proposed measures in the public transport service plan (the service plan) include adjustment, modification or reduction of some franchised bus services. To tie in with these measures, we also plan to strengthen related services to provide alternative routes for passengers.

TD is consulting the relevant District Councils on the proposed adjustments to the franchised bus services. Views of District Councils and local communities will be taken into account when formulating the service plan. Details of TD's current proposed plan are at Annex.

The service plan will be implemented in a progressive manner. Upon commissioning of KSL, suggested related bus service modification will be implemented to enhance connectivity with the new rail link. Subsequently, other suggested changes will be made gradually in the light of the situation on the ground to ensure smooth implementation.

As for green minibuses (GMB), we do not foresee any significant impact on their services upon commissioning of KSL. TD will monitor the utilisation of GMB services concerned and make appropriate service adjustments where necessary.

Regarding residents' service buses, we do not foresee any

impact on their services.


(b) As KSL will form a part of the MTR network, fares will be set according to the existing fare structure. KSL is expected to commence service in the third quarter of 2009. The MTR Corporation (the Corporation) will brief the Legislative Council Panel on Transport on the progress and fares of KSL before the commissioning of KSL.

West Rail Line Monthly Pass and West Rail Line Day Pass are promotion measures introduced by the pre-merger Kowloon Canton Railway Corporation to tie in with the opening of the West Rail Line, so as to encourage passengers to use the new rail line. Upon the rail merger on December 2, 2007, the Corporation extended the expiry of these promotions to June 30, 2009. The Corporation is reviewing the promotions, with a view to announcing the results of the review and the decision on whether to extend the promotions as soon as practical.

Ends/Wednesday, May 20, 2009

Issued at HKT 12:31

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Kowloon Southern Link

List of relevant papers

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
25.5.2000	Panel on Transport	Legislative Council Brief on Railway Development Strategy	TBCR 16/1016/97 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr99-00/english/panels/tp/papers/legcobr.pdf
		Administration's paper on Railway Development Strategy 2000	CB(1)1672/99-00(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr99-00/english/panels/tp/papers/a1672e01.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)2071/99-00 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr99-00/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp250500.pdf
27.9.2002	Subcommittee on matters relating to the implementation of railway development projects	Legislative Council Brief on Kowloon Southern Link	ETWB(T)CR12/1016/99 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr01-02/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/etwb_t_cr_12_1016_99_e.pdf
	(This subcommittee has been renamed as the Subcommittee on matters relating to railways with effect from the 2002-2003 legislative session)	A set of presentation materials provided by the Kowloon Canton Railway Corporation on Kowloon Southern Link	CB(1)2614/01-02(02) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr01-02/chinese/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp09_27-2614-2ce-scan.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)809/02-03 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr01-02/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rd02092_7.pdf
6.6.2003	Subcommittee on matters relating to railways (Formerly known as the Subcommittee on matters relating to the	Administration's information paper on Kowloon Southern Link	CB(1)1836/02-03(02) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr02-03/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp06_06cb1-1836-2e.pdf

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
	implementation of railway development projects)	Minutes of meeting	CB(1)2202/02-03 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr02-03/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rd030606.pdf
25.11.2003	Subcommittee on matters relating to railways	Administration's paper on Kowloon Southern Link Progress Report	CB(1)348/03-04(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1125cb1-348-3e.pdf
		Middle Road Subway Network Proposal	CB(1)657/03-04(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1125cb1-657-1e.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)701/03-04 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rd031125.pdf
3.6.2004	Subcommittee on matters relating to railways	Submission from Canton Road Association (English version only)	CB(1)2018/03-04(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0603cb1-2018-1e-scan.pdf
		Supplementary information provided by the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC) on "Kowloon Southern Link"	CB(1)2440/03-04(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0603cb1-2440-1e.pdf
		Administration's information paper on Kowloon Southern Link	CB(1)2007/03-04(02) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0603cb1-2007-2e.pdf

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
		Administration's information paper on Kowloon Southern Link Progress Report	CB(1)348/03-04(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1125cb1-348-3e.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)2442/03-04 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rd040603.pdf
24.6.2004	Subcommittee on matters relating to railways	Administration's paper on Kowloon Southern Link Canton Road Station	CB(1)2179/03-04(02) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0624cb1-2179-2e.pdf
		Letter from Canton Road Association to the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works stating its objection to the gazetted railway scheme for Kowloon Southern Link (in English version only)	CB(1)2044/03-04(04) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0603cb1-2044-4e-scan.pdf
		A set of diagrams provided by Wharf Estates Development Limited on "Kowloon Southern Link"	CB(1)2044/03-04(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/chinese/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0603cb1-2044-3ce-scan.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)2481/03-04 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr03-04/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rd040624.pdf
19.11.2004	Subcommittee on matters relating to railways	Submission from Wharf Estates Development Limited	CB(1)248/04-05(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1119cb1-248-1e.pdf

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
		Administration's information paper on Kowloon Southern Link Progress Report	CB(1)227/04-05(05) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1119cb1-227-5e.pdf
		Background brief on Kowloon Southern Link prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat	CB(1)216/04-05 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1119cb1-216-e.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)462/04-05 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rd041119.pdf
11.12.2004	Subcommittee on matters relating to railways	Administration's information paper on Kowloon Southern Link attaching a paper provided by the KCRC on "Progress of discussions between KCRC and Wharf on a possible Canton Road Station"	CB(1)430/04-05(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1211cb1-430-1e.pdf
		Press release on "Canton Road Station excluded from the Kowloon Southern Link" from KCRC	CB(1)430/04-05(02) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1211cb1-430-2e-scan.pdf
		Press release from The Wharf Group	CB(1)430/04-05(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1211cb1-430-3e.pdf
		Supplementary information paper on Kowloon Southern Link Canton Road Station provided by the KCRC	CB(1)457/04-05(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1211cb1-457-1e.pdf

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
		A map provided by the KCRC showing the catchment area of existing and proposed railway stations in the Tsim Sha Tsui area	CB(1)480/04-05(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/chinese/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1211cb1-480-1ce-scan.pdf
		A map provided by the KCRC showing the proposed subway connection from East Tsim Sha Tsui Station to Canton Road	CB(1)480/04-05(02) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/chinese/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1211cb1-480-2ce-scan.pdf
		Submission from Wharf Estates Development Limited entitled "Canton Road Station- Recount of Issues"	CB(1)480/04-05(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1211cb1-480-3e.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)997/04-05 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rd041211.pdf
7.1.2005	Subcommittee on matters relating to railways	Administration's information paper on Kowloon Southern Link	CB(1)609/04-05(04) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0107cb1-609-4e.pdf
		Submission from Wharf Estates Development Limited on Canton Road Station under Kowloon Southern Link	CB(1)667/04-05(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/chinese/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0107cb1-667-3ce-scan.pdf

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1002/04-05 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rd050107.pdf
21.6.2005	--	Legislative Council Brief on Kowloon Southern Link authorization of scheme following receipt of objections	ETWB(T)CR12/1016/99 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/etwb_t_cr_12_1016_99_e.pdf
13.9.2005	--	Legislative Council Brief on Kowloon Southern Link project agreement	ETWB(T)CR12/1016/99 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr04-05/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/etwb_t_cr_12_1016_99_a-e.pdf
17.2.2006	Subcommittee on matters relating to railways	Administration's information on Kowloon Southern Link Progress of Works	CB(1)792/05-06(04) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0217cb1-792-4e.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1265/05-06 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr05-06/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rd060217.pdf
21.11.2008	Subcommittee on matters relating to railways	Administration's paper on progress update on KSL and coordination of public transport services arising from the commissioning of KSL	CB(1)209/08-09(04) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1121cb1-209-4-e.pdf
		Background brief on KSL prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat	CB(1)210/08-09 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1121cb1-210-e.pdf

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)588/08-09 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20081121.pdf
16.1.2009	Subcommittee on matters relating to railways	Administration's paper on pedestrian connectivity of Austin Station with neighbouring areas	CB(1)577/08-09(04) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0116cb1-557-4-e.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1146/08-09 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20090116.pdf