

Dear LEGCO Member,

The South Island MTR Line will help ease traffic congestion and reduce the number of polluting double-decker buses using the Aberdeen Tunnel every day. But how this MTR line is built will demonstrate the image our government wants to convey to the people and to the world at large about this city for generations to come.

At a time when green buildings, clean energies and sustainable development are the talk of every developed nation, Hong Kong cannot bring a disfiguring above ground railway into one of the most beautiful places on Hong Kong Island and pretend it will have little impact.

You cannot cover the sound of birds with the sound of trains, shadow the most photographed cotton-tree in Hong Kong with five storeys of concrete and cover a nullah next to the birthing ground of a colony of 700 egrets with a three-storey-high concrete railway and pretend this is ok.

The beauty and relevance of our dwindling natural habitat and surrounding should be the government's top priority, as it will be the best asset this city will have in the future.

Competing Asian cities are working hard at creating more green spaces, preserving original landscapes, trees, birds' habitats and waterways in order to create a better quality of life.

All this is done to attract foreign companies and their high paying jobs.

What leverage will Hong Kong have in the future if it does not pursue similar policies today?

The MTR Corporation's interests lies in a cheap, quick and easy solution, creating the best return on investment for their shareholders. But it is the Hong Kong government's responsibility to preserve the city's most valuable assets and demand the best solution for its future generations.

Hong Kong needs to honor its vow to move towards sustainable development, respect for the environment and a better place for the people of Hong Kong. It needs to make sure the quick monetary rewards of today are not an obstacle to the right solution for the future.

The South Island MTR Line will be here for generations, so please make sure it is done right and put it underground.

Thank you.

Sophie Rey

Hong Kong