

立法會
Legislative Council

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Panel on Transport

Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways
Meeting on 24 November 2014

**Updated background brief on the construction of
the Shatin to Central Link**

Purpose

This paper provides updated background information on the construction of the Shatin to Central Link ("SCL"). It also summarizes the major views and concerns expressed by the Legislative Council Members during previous discussions on this project.

Background

2. SCL, with a total length of 17 kilometres, consists of two sections –

(a) Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section:

This is the extension of Ma On Shan Line from Tai Wai to Hung Hom, via Southeast Kowloon and connects to the West Rail Line. It will increase the Shatin-Kowloon rail capacity and provide railway service to the new developments in Southeast Kowloon; and

(b) Hung Hom to Admiralty Section:

This is an extension of the existing East Rail Line ("ERL") from Hung Hom across the Harbour to Hong Kong Island. It can interchange with Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section at

Hung Hom. It will increase the cross-harbour rail capacity and enhance the connectivity between the New Territories and Hong Kong Island.

The proposed alignment plan is at **Appendix I**.

3. In March 2008, the Executive Council decided to proceed with the implementation of SCL project using the "concession approach". Under the "concession approach", the Administration is responsible for the construction costs of SCL whilst the MTR Corporation Limited ("MTRCL") is entrusted with the planning and design of the project. Upon completion of the construction, MTRCL will be granted a service concession for the operation of the railway line while the Administration will receive a service concession payment annually.

4. The Finance Committee ("FC") approved the funding for the design and site investigation works of SCL in May 2008. Also, FC approved the funding of about \$ 695 million, including \$152.6 million in July 2010 and \$ 541.6 million in June 2011 for the construction of protection works in Wan Chai Development Phase II and for SCL tunnel at Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter respectively. The Administration has carried out the preliminary design in parallel with public consultation for SCL since late 2008. SCL scheme was subsequently gazetted on 26 November 2010 and the statutory consultation process also commenced. Taking into consideration public concerns, amendments to the scheme were gazetted on 15 July and 11 November 2011 respectively.

5. The Administration submitted the following funding applications to FC in February 2011 for approval –

- (a) the construction of the advance railway works of SCL at the Admiralty Station and Ho Man Tin Station (at an estimated cost of \$6,254.9 million in money-of-the-day ("MOD") prices); and
- (b) the construction of the advance non-railway works of SCL (at an estimated cost of \$1,448.2 million in MOD prices).

The funding applications were approved by FC at its meeting on 18 February 2011.

6. Besides, the Administration further submitted the following funding applications to FC for approval –

- (a) SCL – construction of railway works – remaining works (at an estimated cost of \$65,433.3 million in MOD prices); and
- (b) SCL – construction of non-railway works – remaining works (at an estimated cost of \$5,983.1 million in MOD prices).

The funding applications were approved by FC at its meeting on 11 May 2012. The estimated construction cost for the entire SCL project is about \$ 79,800 million in MOD prices¹. The construction works for Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section commenced in 2012 and is expected to be completed in 2018, whereas Hung Hom to Admiralty Section is expected to be completed by 2020.

Major concerns expressed by the Legislative Council Members

7. Members have expressed views on SCL project in the Third, Fourth and Fifth Legislative Councils. Their major concerns on this subject are summarized in the ensuing paragraphs.

Delay in the implementation of SCL project

8. At the Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways ("the Subcommittee") meetings in December 2010, March 2012 as well as the meeting of the Public Works Subcommittee ("PWSC") of FC in April 2012, members expressed grave concern about the delay of the implementation of Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section and Hung Hom to Admiralty Section, which were originally scheduled for completion in 2015 and 2019 respectively. They also urged the Administration to advance the completion date of SCL project. Besides, a Member on 6 July 2011 shared similar concern and therefore raised a Council question enquiring whether the Administration had assessed the impact of each year of delay in the commissioning of SCL on the crowdedness of ERL, the Ma On Shan Line and the two major interchange stations, namely Tai Wai Station and Kowloon Tong Station.

¹ Source: The Administration's paper entitled "Progress update of the construction of the Shatin to Central Link" issued in June 2014 [LC Paper No. CB(1)1722/13-14(03)]

9. At the Subcommittee meeting on 4 July 2014, members noted that there was a cumulative delay of at least 11 months for Tai Wai to Hung Hom section. As far as Hung Hom to Admiralty section was concerned, there was also a risk in completing the works by the end of 2020 as scheduled. Members expressed worry that archaeological works and manpower shortage problem would further delay the construction progress of SCL. In this connection, they urged the Administration to formulate measures to alleviate the heavy traffic flows anticipated in busy areas such as Tsim Sha Tsui before the commissioning of Hung Hom to Admiralty Section two years later. They also suggested that the Administration should arrange the commissioning of SCL by phases, similar to the backup plan to skip Sai Ying Pun Station of the West Island Line.

Possible cost overrun

10. At the Subcommittee meetings on 17 July 2007 and 27 March 2008, members were concerned about the funding arrangements for SCL and discussed whether the Administration should adopt the "ownership approach" or "concession approach". As mentioned in paragraph 3, the Administration decided to adopt the "concession approach" for SCL project. Under this approach, the Administration should be responsible for the construction costs of SCL.

11. At the Subcommittee meetings in November and December 2010, January 2011 and March 2012, members in general expressed grave concern over the upsurge in SCL project cost. The Administration and MTRCL explained that the upsurge in project estimate from \$38.17 billion (in April 2007 prices) to over \$60 billion according to the latest estimate was attributed to the significant increase in construction material prices, changes made to the design upon incorporating public's views, and the need to cope with various technical requirements. Some members viewed that the construction works of SCL should commence as soon as possible, otherwise the inflated prices of construction materials would further increase the construction cost. At PWSC meeting on 18 April 2012, a member urged the Administration to put in place effective cost control measures in view of the huge investment involved.

Archaeological features discovered at To Kwa Wan Station

12. Members at the Subcommittee meeting on 4 July 2014 noted that archaeological features were discovered at To Kwa Wan Station and

expressed concern about the arrangements for the monuments and antiques unearthed from SCL construction sites, including whether the Administration and MTRCL would set up an independent archaeological expert group to ensure impartiality in protecting the monuments and antiques; and which party would be the decision maker to finalize the arrangement. Besides, a member suggested renaming To Kwa Wan Station as "Sung Wong Toi Station" and setting up a museum to display monuments and antiques unearthed in the course of construction of SCL.

Manpower situation

13. At the Subcommittee meetings on 4 June 2010, 7 January 2011 and 23 March 2012, members urged MTRCL to give priority to local workers in the recruitment for SCL project and provide them with adequate training. In response, MTRCL advised that they had all along liaised closely with worker unions, Hong Kong Contractors Association and Hong Kong Construction Industry Council on matters of recruitment and training of local workers. In January 2011, MTRCL employed over 6 000 construction workers and most of them were local workers. During the construction peak period of SCL project, MTRCL would employ over 17 000 local construction workers. It would also stipulate in contracts to require all contractors to provide necessary training to young workers.

14. Members at the Subcommittee meeting on 4 July 2014 expressed grave concern about labour shortage problem for the construction works in SCL project because it might further delay the construction progress mentioned in paragraph 9. In this connection, members urged the Administration to formulate remedial measures, such as application for labour importation, to ease the problem. Also, they suggested that relevant bureaux should jointly discuss and review the construction industry's delivery capacity to implement the five railway projects simultaneously.

Design of train cars

15. Members at the Subcommittee meetings on 4 November 2010, 7 January 2011, 23 March and 30 March 2012, and 22 November 2013 showed worry that the train capacity would be reduced after the replacement of 12-car trains with 9-car trains for ERL. In response, MTRCL advised that if 9-car trains instead of the existing 12-car trains were used, the train frequency would be increased from about three

minutes to about two minutes. As 27 trains would be operated in an hour, the carrying capacity of ERL would not be affected.

Station facilities

16. At the Subcommittee meetings on 27 March 2008, 2 March, 23 March and 30 March 2012, and PWSC meeting on 18 April 2012, members showed concern about provision of station facilities, such as platform screen doors or automatic platform gates, toilet facilities, lifts and escalators, barrier-free access facilities and digital broadcasting systems. In response, MTRCL explained that to cater for the needs of persons with disabilities or special needs, facilities, like tactile guide paths, tactile station layout maps with audible device and escalator audible warning signals, would be provided at SCL stations. Other facilities of the new railway lines would also be enhanced, including ticket machines, public toilets, as well as platform screen doors or automatic platform gates.

Display of art in stations

17. Members at the Subcommittee meetings on 2 March and 23 March 2012 as well as PWSC meeting on 18 April 2012 expressed concern about station design of SCL. They urged the Administration and MTRCL to make reference to some overseas infrastructural projects to set aside a proportion of public areas in SCL stations for display of art. On 4 January 2013, MTRCL informed the Subcommittee members that the MTR Station Art Programme was implemented for new railway projects, SCL included. Artwork to be displayed at stations along SCL would adopt the principles to strengthen community engagement and provide a more pleasant journey for passengers. The Subcommittee expressed appreciation of MTRCL's goodwill to promote art and to enhance the space inside railway stations. Regarding the display of art pieces, some members considered that MTRCL should formulate a policy to replenish or replace the art pieces on display. Some members also considered that MTRCL should provide a less commercial environment inside stations by reducing the number of advertising light boxes at MTR stations to give more space for display of art pieces.

Latest developments

18. The Administration plans to update the Subcommittee members on the progress of the construction of SCL at the meeting to be held on 24 November 2014.

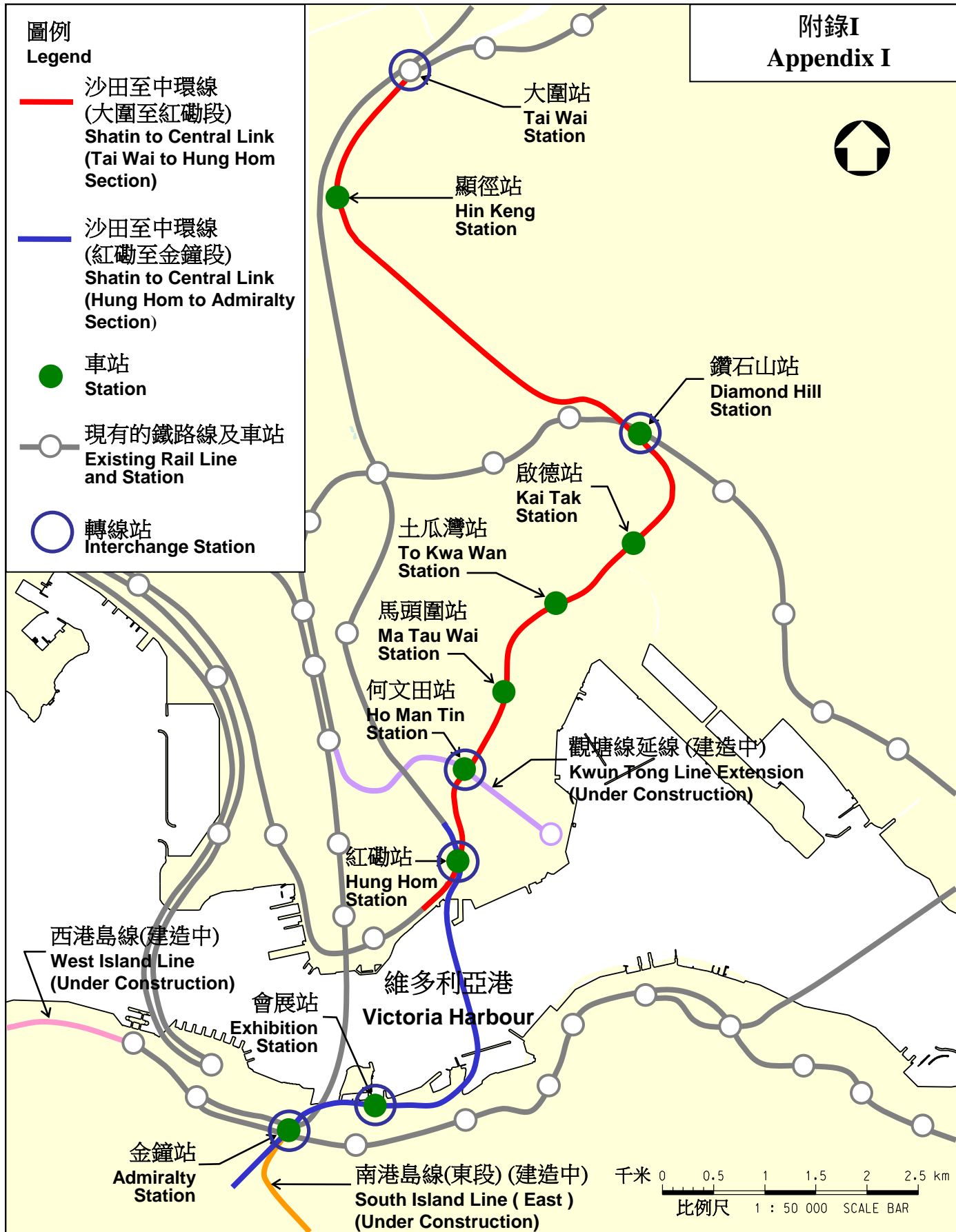
Relevant papers

19. A list of relevant papers is at **Appendix II**.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
20 November 2014

圖例
Legend

- 沙田至中環線
(大圍至紅磡段)
Shatin to Central Link
(Tai Wai to Hung Hom Section)
- 沙田至中環線
(紅磡至金鐘段)
Shatin to Central Link
(Hung Hom to Admiralty Section)
- 車站
Station
- 現有的鐵路線及車站
Existing Rail Line and Station
- 轉線站
Interchange Station



圖則名稱 drawing title

沙田至中環線的走線

Alignment of the Shatin to Central Link

圖號 drawing no.

HRWSCLO03-SK0427

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路政署
HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT

Shatin to Central Link

List of relevant papers

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
16.7.2007	Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways	Administration's paper on progress of Shatin to Central Link Project	CB(1)2058/06-07(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0716cb1-2058-1-e.pdf
		Minutes	CB(1)2454/06-07 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rd070716.pdf
27.3.2008	Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways	Legislative Council Brief on Shatin to Central Link and MTR Kwun Tong Line Extension	THB(T)CR 10/1016/99 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp-thbtcr10101699-e.pdf
		Administration's paper on funding application for the design of the Shatin to Central Link	CB(1)1036/07-08(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0327cb1-1036-3-e.pdf
		Minutes	CB(1)1374/07-08 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rd080327.pdf

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
11.3.2009	Council meeting	Hon Starry LEE raised a question on the impact of infrastructural projects in To Kwa Wan and Ma Tau Kok districts	http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/200903/11/P200903110149.htm
31.3.2009	Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways	Administration's paper on progress of Shatin to Central Link Project	CB(1)1137/08-09(05) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0331cb1-1137-5-e.pdf
		Minutes	CB(1)1544/08-09 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20090331.pdf
28.10.2009	Council meeting	Hon James TO raised a question on the construction of Shatin to Central Link railway in the Kai Tak Development Area	http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/200910/28/P200910280123.htm
18.11.2009	Council meeting	Hon Mrs Regina IP raised a question on the temporary supporting facilities of Shatin to Central Link	http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/200911/18/P200911180197.htm

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
20.1.2010	Council meeting	Hon Starry LEE raised a question on the temporary works area of Shatin to Central Link	http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201001/20/P201001200116.htm
4.6.2010	Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways	Administration's paper on funding application – protection works for Shatin to Central Link in Wan Chai Development Phase II	CB(1)2088/09-10(02) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0604cb1-2088-2-e.pdf
		Minutes	CB(1)2844/09-10 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr09-10/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20100604.pdf
4.11.2010	Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways	Administration's paper on progress of Shatin to Central Link Project	CB(1)277/10-11(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1104cb1-277-1-e.pdf
		Minutes	CB(1)1068/10-11 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20101104.pdf
6.12.2010	Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways	Administration's paper on funding application – advance works for Shatin to Central Link	CB(1)603/10-11(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp1206cb1-603-1-e.pdf

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
		Minutes	CB(1)1161/10-11 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20101206.pdf
7.1.2011	Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways	Administration's supplementary information paper on funding application – advance works for Shatin to Central Link	CB(1)987/10-11(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0107cb1-987-1-e.pdf
		Minutes	CB(1)1547/10-11 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr10-11/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20110107.pdf
18.5.2011	Council meeting	Hon Starry LEE raised a question on the impact on various railway projects due to recent court judgement on environmental impact assessment	http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201105/18/P201105180192.htm
6.7.2011	Council meeting	Hon CHAN Hak-kan raised a question on the programme for Shatin to Central Link project	http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201107/06/P201107060194.htm

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
2.3.2012	Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways	Administration's paper on progress of the Shatin to Central Link	CB(1)1154/11-12(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0302cb1-1154-3-e.pdf
		Administration's supplementary information paper on Shatin to Central Link - Progress report (follow-up paper)	CB(1)1340/11-12(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0302cb1-1340-1-e.pdf
		Minutes	CB(1)1772/11-12 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20120302.pdf
23.3.2012	Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways	Administration's paper on Shatin to Central Link – Funding Application for the Main Works	CB(1)1326/11-12(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0323cb1-1326-1-e.pdf
		Administration's supplementary information paper on Shatin to Central Link – Progress report (follow-up paper)	CB(1)1340/11-12(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0302cb1-1340-1-e.pdf
		Minutes	CB(1)2479/11-12 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20120323.pdf

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
30.3.2012	Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways	Legislative Council Brief: Shatin to Central Link – authorization of scheme following receipt of objections	THB(T)CR 10/1016/99 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0330-thbtcr10101699-e.pdf
		Administration's supplementary information paper on issues raised by the Subcommittee at its meeting on 23 March 2012	CB(1)1434/11-12(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0330cb1-1434-1-e.pdf
		Minutes	CB(1)2480/11-12 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20120330.pdf
18.4.2012	Public Works Subcommittee	Administration's paper on "61TR – Shatin to Central Link – construction of railway works – remaining works"	PWSC(2012-13)1 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/english/fc/pwsc/papers/p12-01e.pdf
		Administration's paper on "62TR – Shatin to Central Link – construction of non-railway works – remaining works"	PWSC(2012-13)2 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/english/fc/pwsc/papers/p12-02e.pdf

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
		Minutes	PWSC57/11-12 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/english/fc/pwsc/minutes/pwsc20120418.pdf
11.5.2012	Finance Committee	Minutes	FC183/11-12 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr11-12/english/fc/fc/minutes/fc20120511.pdf
21.5.2014	Council Meeting	Hon CHAN Hak-kan raised a question on monuments and antiques unearthed at railway construction Sites	http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201405/21/P201405210429.htm
4.6.2014	Council Meeting	Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan raised a question on construction works of Shatin to Central Link	http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201406/04/P201406040323.htm
18.6.2014	Council Meeting	Hon Christopher CHUNG raised a question on Antiquities and monuments excavated from works site of MTR Shatin to Central Link	http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201406/18/P201406180605.htm

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
4.7.2014	Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways	Administration's paper on progress update of the construction of the Shatin to Central Link	CB(1)1722/13-14(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr13-14/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/papers/tp_rdp0704cb1-1722-3-e.pdf
		Minutes	CB(1)139/14-15 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr13-14/english/panels/tp/tp_rdp/minutes/rdp20140704.pdf

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