

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(1) 2230/02-03  
(These minutes have been seen  
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/EA/1

**Panel on Environmental Affairs and  
Panel on Transport**

**Minutes of joint meeting held on  
Monday, 23 June 2003, at 2:30 pm  
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

**Members present** : Members of the Panel on Environmental Affairs

Hon CHOY So-yuk (Chairman)  
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan (Deputy Chairman)  
\* Dr Hon David CHU Yu-lin, JP  
\* Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, JP  
Hon Martin LEE Chu-ming, SC, JP  
Hon SIN Chung-kai  
Hon WONG Yung-kan  
\* Hon LAU Kong-wah  
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP  
Dr Hon LAW Chi-kwong, JP  
Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee, SC, JP

Members of the Panel on Transport

# Hon Miriam LAU Kin-ye, JP (Chairman)  
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo  
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, JP  
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip  
Hon LEUNG Fu-wah, MH, JP  
Hon WONG Sing-chi

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- Members absent** : Members of the Panel on Environmental Affairs
- Hon Henry WU King-cheong, BBS, JP  
Dr Hon LO Wing-lok  
\* Hon LAU Ping-cheung
- Members of the Panel on Transport
- Hon Albert HO Chun-yan  
Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-ye, GBS, JP  
Hon CHAN Kwok-keung  
Hon Andrew WONG Wang-fat, JP  
Hon LAU Chin-shek, JP  
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP  
Dr Hon TANG Siu-tong, JP
- (\* Also members of the Panel on Transport)  
(# Also members of the Panel on Environmental Affairs)
- Public officers attending** : **For item II**
- Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
- Mr Paul TANG  
Deputy Secretary (Environment and Transport) T1
- Mr Thomas CHOW  
Deputy Secretary (Environment and Transport) E2
- Highways Department
- Mr C K MAK  
Director
- Mr C W CHOW  
Chief Engineer (Major Works)
- Environmental Protection Department
- Mr K S CHAN  
Principal Environmental Protection Officer  
(Noise Management and Policy)
- Clerk in attendance** : Miss Becky YU  
Chief Assistant Secretary (1)1

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**Staff in attendance** : Mrs Mary TANG  
Senior Assistant Secretary (1)2

Miss Mandy POON  
Legislative Assistant 4

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**I. Election of Chairman**

In the absence of a quorum for a joint meeting in the beginning, members agreed that the meeting be proceeded as a quorate meeting of the Panel on Environmental Affairs to be chaired by Miss CHOY So-yuk. A quorum for the joint meeting was subsequently reached at 2:35 pm.

**II. Tolo Highway Widening — the Use of noise barriers from the Tolo Highway Widening Project**

(LC Paper No. CB(1) 1854/02-03 — Referral from Members after meeting with North District Council on 24 April 2003 regarding the construction of acoustic barriers at the road sections near Choi Yuen Estate and Fanling Centre on Fanling Highway

LC Paper No. CB(1) 2013/02-03(01) — Paper provided by the Administration

LC Paper No. CB(1) 2036/02-03(01) — Referral from Members after meeting with Yuen Long District Council on 5 June 2003 regarding the provision of noise barriers)

2. The Deputy Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Environment and Transport)T1 (DSETW(ET)T1) said that the Administration wished to seek members' in-principle support for the proposal to re-use the noise barrier materials recovered from the Tolo Highway - section between Ma Liu Shui Interchange and Island House Interchange Widening Project. It would then proceed to work out details of the proposal and to consult the District Councils before seeking funding approval from the Finance Committee. The Chief Engineer (Major Works)/Highways Department (CE(MW)/HyD) gave a power-point presentation on the proposal using computer animation to illustrate the visual effects of the noise barriers to be installed for the three retrofitting projects at -

- (a) Fanling Highway near Choi Yuen Estate;
- (b) Fanling Highway near Fanling Centre; and
- (c) Yuen Shin Road near Kwong Fuk Estate.

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Design of noise barriers

3. Mr WONG Sing-chi said that he was pleased that the Administration had finally agreed to install noise barriers along Fanling Highway near Choi Yuen Estate and Fanling Centre after repeated requests from residents over the past 10 years. He appealed for members' support for the early implementation of the proposal as traffic noise was seriously affecting residents, particularly those at Choi Yuen Estate which was only 20 feet away from Fanling Highway. Given that the proposed cantilever type noise barriers differed quite significantly from the enclosed design recommended in the feasibility study, he enquired if the former design would be equally effective in mitigating the traffic noise. The Director of Highways (D of Hy) advised that the study referred to was a preliminary study aiming at assessing the feasibility of various options for the provision of noise barriers for this section of Fanling Highway. A more detailed study was conducted in the past few months and concluded that the cantilever type noise barriers were effective in reducing the traffic noise affecting 70% to 80% of residents. Unlike the enclosed design, cantilever type noise barriers did not have to accommodate lighting requirement and they would not affect overhead gantry. They were also easy to install and to meet fire safety requirement and much lower in height. At the Chairman's request, the Administration agreed to provide the cost of the feasibility studies for this section of Fanling Highway.

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4. While supporting in principle the proposal to re-use the noise barrier materials recovered from the Tolo Highway, Ir Dr Raymond HO queried the need to install noise barriers of eight metres tall and at the median of carriageways. Mr WONG Yung-kan echoed that the height of the noise barriers and their provision at the median would affect the accessibility of fire engines and ambulances in the event of emergency as illustrated by the traffic accident on 16 June 2003 at the northbound carriageway of Tolo Highway where firemen had to re-direct traffic. The limited number of exits was also a cause for concern. D of Hy explained that cantilever type barriers were in fact only five metres in height with canopies of three metres. Given the height of buildings in Hong Kong and their close proximity to roads, it was necessary to install noise barriers at the median to enable more effective abatement of traffic noise. The road and fire safety aspects of noise barriers would be studied at the detailed design stage, and would be submitted for members' consideration when funding was sought. He assured members that the existing noise barriers had met the safety requirements.

Colour scheme

5. Ms Miriam LAU said that Members of the Liberal Party had no strong views on where the noise barrier materials should be re-used so long as local residents were consulted in advance. Noting that the proposed colour scheme of noise barriers as illustrated in the animation was more acceptable than most existing noise barriers, she asked if the pastel colour scheme was a mere re-arrangement of recovered noise barrier materials, and if so, whether the same colour scheme could be used to replace the aesthetically unacceptable black and white colour scheme of the noise barriers along Tolo Harbour. D of Hy explained that as the recovered noise barrier materials were not sufficient to cover the three proposed projects, acquisition of additional new materials was required. The pastel colour scheme was made possible through

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combination of the new and recovered noise barrier materials. As regards the existing noise barriers along Tolo Harbour, D of Hy remarked that these were much more aesthetically acceptable after the height of the noise barriers was lowered. Whether the proposed pastel colour scheme was better was a matter of preference and he assured members that the District Councils would be consulted on the proposal as soon as possible.

6. Given that the existing colour scheme of the noise barriers along Tolo Harbour was a source of distraction and complaints had been received from road users, Ms Miriam LAU urged the Administration to re-consider improving the colour scheme when some of the works had yet to be completed. Ir Dr Raymond HO also expressed concern about the visual intrusion and distraction brought about by noise barriers to road users. As a frequent driver and user of Tolo Highway, Mr Tommy CHEUNG said that he found the colour of the noise barriers very distracting and he would support the use of plain white panels rather than coloured ones in future. D of Hy advised that modification to the noise barriers at this stage would not be desirable as this would involve road closures. At present, the southbound Tolo Highway was already completed and opened for use while 80% to 90% of the northbound was completed. The full opening of Tolo Highway was expected to commence in late June 2003. According to the Transport Department, there was no concrete evidence to suggest that the noise barriers would affect road safety by distracting drivers' attention who should focus on the road rather than the noise barriers.

7. While supporting the proposal to re-use the noise barrier materials, Mr LAU Kong-wah remarked that more should be done to mitigate the visual impact of noise barriers for the comfort of motorists. D of Hy said that the Administration would learn the experience from the Tolo Highway Widening Project and would consult District Councils on the design of noise barriers. Suitable adjustments would be made to the heights of the barriers to achieve an optimum effect. As to whether the coloured noise barriers used at the Tolo Highway were more expensive than the conventional types, D of Hy said that there were two types of materials, viz, transparent and absorptive type. The absorptive type was not particularly expensive and was adopted after a tendering process, having regard to the cost effectiveness of the material.

Completion schedule and costs

8. Given that site investigation and preliminary design for the three retrofitting projects had been completed, and that they were in fact an extension of the Tolo Highway Widening Project without the need for re-tendering, Mr Andrew CHENG questioned why it would still take two years to complete these projects. D of Hy clarified that the projects were not an extension of the Tolo Highway Widening Project and thus a new round of tendering exercise was required. Apart from re-using the 9 000 square metres of noise barrier materials, additional materials as well as retrofitting works were needed for re-installation of the noise barriers. He added that the schedule for completion of the three projects was only an initial estimate. The Administration had yet to consult the District Councils before proceeding with funding

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application.

9. While raising no objection to the proposed tendering of the three retrofitting projects, Mr CHENG enquired about the means to ensure the cost effectiveness of these projects given that the capital and recurrent cost of the recovered noise barriers were already included in the original contract for Tolo Highway Widening Project. To ensure timely completion of these projects, he suggested that the Administration should consult the Tai Po District Council at its meeting in July 2003 with a view to expediting the process. D of Hy explained that the original contract for Tolo Highway Widening Project had been completed. There was no further obligation on either party to the contract, except that the materials recovered from the Project would be stored for future use. The retrofitting projects to be tendered would be new contracts with specific provisions on the re-use of materials under storage.

10. Mr LAU King-wah enquired about the additional cost incurred from recovering the noise barrier materials from Tolo Highway Project. D of Hy advised that this was estimated to be around \$8 million. It was expected that the Administration would reach a settlement on all contractual claims and additional works with the original contractors of the Tolo Highway Widening Project by next month. The total cost for the contract, amounting to \$740 million exclusive of the reserve of \$120 million, was well within budget. DSETW(ET)T1 added that the resources would not be wasted as the recovered noise barrier materials would be re-used in the retrofitting projects.

11. Mr LAU asked if all the 9 000 square metres of recovered noise barrier materials would be absorbed by the three retrofitting projects. D of Hy answered in the affirmative as the total amount of materials to be used in the three retrofitting projects would be much greater than those recovered from the Tolo Highway Widening Project. By way of illustration, the length of the noise barriers for the road sections at Fanling Centre, Choi Yuen Estate and Yuen Shin Road would be 1 000, 1 600 and 250 metres respectively. While the height of the noise barriers would depend on the noise impact on receivers, the estimated total amount of materials to be used would be around 21 000 square metres, meaning that about 12,000 square metres of additional materials would be required.

Provision of noise barriers in other districts

12. Mr SIN Chung-kai said that he was envious of the provision of noise barriers at the proposed three road sections and questioned why the same was not applicable to Kwai Tsing District where residents were also exposed to excessive traffic noise generated along Tsing Yi North Bridge. D of Hy said that as the three road sections were part of the Tolo Highway northern section, the provision of noise barriers of the same type, make and colour at these locations could be regarded as natural extensions of the provisions at Tolo Highway. Besides, site investigation and preliminary design for these road sections had been completed. The Deputy Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Environment and Transport)E2 (DSETW(ET)E2) added that the three retrofitting projects formed part of the Administration's plan to provide noise barriers at existing roads. Progress of the design and planning for the

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remaining 29 road sections identified for retrofitting, including those at Kwai Tsing, would be reported to the relevant Panels and District Councils. Mr SIN expressed concern that the provision of noise barriers at the remaining 29 road sections might be aborted due to the financial deficit. DSETW(ET)E2 assured members that this would not be the case. The Administration would work out an implementation timetable taking into account the availability of resources.

13. Ms Emily LAU remarked that the entire Tolo Highway should be provided with noise barriers if the three road sections were regarded as natural extensions of such provisions. She further pointed out that the provision of noise barriers would create more employment opportunities for construction workers and was more worthwhile than other road improvement works such as those along the Tai Kok Tsui Road Flyover. D of Hy affirmed that the three retrofitting projects had covered most areas along Tolo Highway affected by traffic noise. Mr WONG Yung-kan opined the road sections along Wan Tau Tong and Tai Wo Estate should also be provided with noise barriers.

**III. Any other business**

14. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 3:30 pm.

Council Business Division 1  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
17 July 2003