

立法會
Legislative Council

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**Public Works Subcommittee of the Finance Committee
of the Legislative Council**

**Minutes of the 8th meeting
held in the Chamber of Legislative Council Building
on Wednesday, 21 April 2004, at 10:45 am**

Members present:

Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, JP (Chairman)
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Kenneth TING Woo-shou, JP
Dr Hon Eric LI Ka-cheung, GBS, JP
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, JP
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, JP
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, JP
Hon SIN Chung-kai
Hon Andrew WONG Wang-fat, JP
Hon WONG Yung-kan
Hon YEUNG Yiu-chung, BBS
Hon LAU Kong-wah, JP
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-yee, JP
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon CHOY So-yuk
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Dr Hon LAW Chi-kwong, JP
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Dr Hon TANG Siu-tong, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP
Hon Henry WU King-cheong, BBS, JP
Hon WONG Sing-chi

Hon IP Kwok-him, JP
Hon LAU Ping-cheung

Members absent:

Dr Hon David CHU Yu-lin, JP
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan

Public officers attending:

Miss Amy TSE, JP	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury)3
Mr Y C LO, JP	Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works)
Mrs Carrie LAM, JP	Permanent Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands (Planning and Lands)
Mr Rob LAW, JP	Director of Environmental Protection
Miss Janice TSE	Principal Assistant Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) (Works)
Ms Annie CHOI	Deputy Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Transport)3
Ms Elizabeth TAI	Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Transport)2
Mr MAK Chai-kwong, JP	Director of Highways
Mr WONG Po-chi	Chief Highway Engineer/Bridges and Structures Highways Department
Ms Ernestina WONG	Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Transport)5
Mr CHOW Ying-shun, JP	Assistant Director of Highways (Development)
Mr LAM Kwong-shun	Acting Chief Traffic Engineer/Kowloon Transport Department
Mr Charles WONG	Principal Assistant Secretary for Security (B)
Mr C C LEE, JP	Chief Fire Officer (Headquarters) Fire Services Department
Mr S O LAU	Acting Chief Ambulance Officer Fire Services Department
Mr C H YUE, JP	Director of Architectural Services
Ms Mona WOO	Chief Property Manager (Site Utilisation) Government Property Agency
Mrs Cherry TSE, JP	Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower (2)
Mr David WONG	Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and Manpower (Infrastructure & Research Support)

effectiveness of these enhanced parapets in retaining an errant double-decked bus travelling at about 50 to 60 kilometres per hour (km/h) at an impact angle of 20 degrees. As there was limited knowledge worldwide about the performance of parapets or barriers during the impact of a double-decked bus, full-scale impact tests for representative types of bridge parapets and roadside barriers would be conducted to confirm the effect. DHy stressed that no parapet design could achieve different containment levels at the same time. A stronger parapet could withhold penetration of a heavy vehicle, but might cause severe damages to a light vehicle. It was therefore important to strike a balance between the risk of penetration by the vehicle and the containment level of the parapet.

3. Mr Albert CHAN supported the early implementation of parapets strengthening works to improve highway safety for both road users and nearby residents. However, he understood that the TMR reconstruction and improvement project would commence soon and some TMR sections might be widened and altered. He was concerned whether the parapet strengthening works at these sections would be wasted. Ms Emily LAU shared Mr CHAN's concern. In response, DHy said that all posts, rails and three-beam barriers installed under Phase 1 strengthening works were used to strengthen the existing parapets and barriers, and they would be retained as far as practicable. Some of the existing parapets and barriers which had been in service for more than 10 years were beyond economical repair and would be replaced during the reconstruction of TMR. Mr CHAN expressed reservation as to whether all the strengthening facilities could be retained, and urged better co-ordination to be made between the two projects to minimize wastage.

4. Noting that the proposed studies would commence in June 2004 for completion in December 2005, Ms Miriam LAU and Ms Emily LAU enquired how the new designs developed in the studies could be applied in the Phase 1 and Phase 2 strengthening works. In response, DHy emphasized that the existing parapet design standards adopted in Hong Kong were generally in line with international standards. The proposed studies entailed a comprehensive review of the containment levels of existing parapets and barriers as well as the development and validation of new designs suitable for Hong Kong. The new designs would be adopted for new roads and bridges in the future. Preliminary findings of the studies would be available in mid-2005, and new designs would be developed and validated thereafter. The Permanent Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Works) (PSW) and the Deputy Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Transport)³ (DS(T)³) advised that the implementation programme for the proposed strengthening works was proposed in response to the request of the Transport Panel for early

implementation of the strengthening works at the 39 priority locations on 16 road sections. Phase 1 strengthening works were straight-forward and their effectiveness had been confirmed by computer simulations. The Highways Department would deploy its term contractors to carry out Phase 1 works to shorten the implementation period. Phase 2 strengthening works would include the remaining strengthening works and any further enhancement of Phase 1 works after the results of the design validation were available. As Phase 2 works would involve design of parapets and barriers, tenders would be invited for the contract.

5. Mr LAU Kong-wah referred to paragraph 23 of the Administration's paper and sought clarifications on the containment capabilities of the P1 group parapets. DS(T)3 advised that second generation P1 group parapets could retain an errant double-decked bus travelling at about 35 to 40 km/h at an impact angle of 20 degrees. With the installation of strengthening facilities, P1 group parapets could retain an errant double-decked bus travelling at about 50 to 60 km/h.

6. Mr LAU Kong-wah enquired about the full-scale impact tests for testing the performance of parapets or barriers during the impact of a double-decked bus. DHy said that it would not be cost-effective to carry out too many impact tests as a double-decked bus would be destroyed in each test. Whilst there could be many different combinations of impact speeds and angles in real-life situations, representative types of parapets and barriers, impact speeds and angles would be selected based on computer simulation findings for the impact tests. Past accidents on TMR would be taken into account in the tests. DHy agreed to report to Transport Panel the method and findings of the proposed studies on the enhancement of parapets and barriers in due course.

Admin

7. In response to Ms Miriam LAU's enquiry about the participation of tertiary institutions in the studies, DHy said that tertiary institutions were interested in the studies but they did not have the testing equipment for the impact tests. They would develop a computer model for the computer simulations and assist in reviewing the design standards, setting detailed requirements for containment levels, designing new parapets and barriers, and exploring the use of multiple containment parapets in Hong Kong. Consultants would be engaged to undertake the more urgent computer simulations and the full-scale impact tests.

8. The item was voted on and endorsed.

PWSC(2004-05)2

152TB

**Footbridge across Po Kong Village Road
at the junction with Tsz Wan Shan Road**

9. Members noted that the Administration had circulated an information paper on the project to Transport Panel in March 2004.

10. Mr Henry WU said that he supported the project but had reservation about the provision of an escalator at the north end of the footbridge. Although the estimated hourly pedestrian flow at peak hours would reach 3 000, Mr WU considered it not justified to provide the escalator because students would be the main users of the footbridge and the pedestrian flow would reach its peak only when students went to schools. The provision of the escalator for students was also not consistent with the Government's advocacy of walking to promote good health. Mr WU also enquired about the capital and recurrent costs of the escalator.

11. In response, DHy advised that the capital cost of the escalator was roughly \$2 million, and the recurrent operation and maintenance cost was around \$100,000 per annum. Apart from students, other pedestrians including the elderly would use the footbridge to reach Tsz Wan Shan Road Rest Garden and Tze Wan Shan (South) Bus Terminus. If a ramp was used in replacement of the proposed escalator, the ramp length would exceed 60 metres and would occupy more space of the adjacent Tsz Wan Shan Road Rest Garden. According to the relevant guideline of the Transport Department, the provision of escalators would be considered for a footbridge with pedestrian flow over 3 000 persons per hour. The Chief Traffic Engineer/Kowloon Transport Department (CTE/Kln) added that the efficiency of escalators in handling pedestrian traffic was more than two times that of staircases in terms of speed and volume. The proposed escalator would also attract students to use the footbridge to cross Po Kong Village Road instead of jaywalking. The lifts provided at the two ends of the footbridge were intended to serve mainly the disabled and their efficiency in handling pedestrian traffic was very low. The Principal Assistant Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (Transport)5 (PAS(T)5) supplemented that the Administration had considered Mr Henry WU's concern and the escalator was proposed so as to transport a large number of students within a very short period during the peak hours. She also advised that the project was supported by the Wong Tai Sin District Council (WTSDC).

12. Mr Henry WU was not convinced of the Administration's response. In view of the high capital and recurrent costs, he suggested that the escalator be replaced by a

widened staircase instead of a 60-metre ramp. Mr Kenneth TING concurred with Mr WU and considered that if needed, the schools concerned might also co-ordinate to adjust their school starting and ending time to avoid congestion of pedestrians on the footbridge.

13. Mr Fred LI sought clarification on the number of escalator to be provided at the footbridge. Noting that four schools in the Po Kong Village Road School Village had commissioned in September 2002 and the remaining schools would be commissioned in September 2004, he urged the Administration to expedite the project to provide a safe passageway for pedestrians. Ms Emily LAU enquired about the additional time required if the escalator was to be replaced by a widened staircase.

14. DHy replied that a one-way escalator would be provided at the north end of the footbridge. No escalator would be provided at the south end where the footbridge would land at a high platform. The construction period had already been shortened from 21 months to 18 months. The Administration would work closely with the contractor with a view to further shortening the construction period by one to two months. As regards members' suggestion of replacing the escalator with a staircase, PSW and DHy advised that if the boundary of the project site was adjusted due to the changes in design, a few more months might be required for the gazettal of the revised project. Further consultations with WTSDC and schools in the Po Kong Village Road School Village were also required.

15. Mr Andrew WONG considered that if the escalator was simply replaced by a staircase, there should be no need to adjust the project site boundary. He also cautioned that the proposed provision of an escalator might set up a precedent case and become a new standard for new footbridges in other districts.

16. In reply to Ms Emily LAU's enquiry, CTE/KIn confirmed that the proposed provision of an escalator for the footbridge was raised by WTSDC.

17. Mr IP Kwok-him and Dr TANG Siu-tong supported the early implementation of the project but expressed reservation about the provision of the proposed escalator. Mr IP also requested the Administration to confirm the changes in the capital and recurrent costs and the project implementation programme if the escalator were to be replaced by a widened staircase. DHy undertook to provide the information before the relevant Finance Committee (FC) meeting.

18. Miss CHAN Yuen-han said that WTSDC had been calling for a walkway system similar to the Central-Mid-Levels Escalator in Tze Wan Shan in view of the

aging population in the district. She stressed that the proposed footbridge had been endorsed by WTSDC, which should be consulted if the footbridge design was to be changed.

19. Mr Abraham SHEK supported the project including the proposed provision of an escalator. He considered that the escalator would benefit the elderly and persons with minor physical disability.

Admin

20. Mr Fred LI was concerned about the interim traffic measures to facilitate students and other pedestrians to cross Po Kong Village Road prior to the completion of the footbridge project. In response, CTE/KIn advised that signalized pedestrian crossings would be provided and he undertook to provide members with details of the interim traffic measures before the relevant FC meeting.

21. Ms Emily LAU requested the Administration to provide some examples of footbridges provided with both lifts and escalators. PAS(T)5 advised that this type of footbridge was not common in Hong Kong. Two examples were the subway of Kowloon Park Drive crossing Salisbury Road and the footbridge along Mong Kok Road. Escalators were provided for the subway and footbridge in view of the high pedestrian flow in these two areas. DHy supplemented that lifts and escalators were also provided in the footbridge crossing Hennessy Road adjacent to the Southern Centre and the newly completed footbridge at Central off Exchange Square.

Admin

22. The item was voted on and endorsed. Mr Henry WU and Mr Andrew WONG expressed objection to the item on account of the proposed provision of an escalator. Ms Emily LAU, Mr IP Kwok-him and Dr TANG Siu-tong indicated that they had reservation about the project. Ms Emily LAU and Mr Andrew WONG requested that this item be voted on separately at the relevant FC meeting.

HEAD 703 - BUILDINGS

PWSC(2004-05)1

125BF

Kowloon Tong fire station-cum-ambulance depot with Kowloon Fire Command Headquarters

23. Members noted that the Administration had circulated an information paper on the project to the LegCo Panel on Security in February 2004.

24. In reply to Mr TAM Yiu-chung's enquiry about the additional manpower resources required to operate the new fire station-cum-ambulance depot, the Chief Fire Officer (Headquarters) (CFO(HQs)) advised that 50 new posts would be created for the new fire station.

25. Mr TAM Yiu-chung and Ms Emily LAU were concerned about the noise impacts of the public address systems at fire stations and ambulance depots, and the sirens on fire appliances and ambulances. CFO(HQs) said that the Administration had undertaken to implement a number of mitigation measures to alleviate the noise impacts on the nearby residents. Written instructions had been issued to all operational units to tune down the volume of the public address systems during late hours to minimize the noise nuisance. In particular, those loudspeakers installed in open drill yards would be switched off. Guidelines on the proper use of sirens and warning lights when fire appliances and ambulances turned out from a fire station or ambulance depot were also issued. Folding doors of the appliance rooms of fire stations and ambulance depots would also be closed at night to reduce the noise. According to past experience, nearby residents of fire stations were generally satisfied with the results of these mitigation measures. The Kowloon City District Council and local residents had been briefed on the daily operation of the proposed fire services facilities and the noise mitigation measures to be implemented, and they were satisfied with the arrangements.

26. Ms Emily LAU recalled that in the past proposals, the Administration usually justified the need for new fire stations based on the pledged response time. Noting that population growth was now used to justify the proposed fire station, Ms LAU requested the Administration to clarify how the need for new fire stations was determined. In response, CFO(HQs) advised that there was an objective penalty point risk assessment system in place for the purpose. Various factors including population size and density, usage, plot ratio and height of the buildings in the district concerned would be taken into account in determining whether a new fire station was required. As regards the proposed fire station-cum-ambulance depot at Baptist University Road, CFO(HQs) said that there was currently no fire station within Lok Fu, Beacon Hill and Kowloon Tong areas. These areas were classified as "less congested built-up areas" for which building fire calls should be met within a response time of six minutes. At present, fire services for these areas were provided by Ma Tau Chung Fire Station, Shek Kip Mei Fire Station and Wong Tai Sin Fire Station, which were each about three kilometres away. Due to the distant locations of these three fire stations, fire appliances normally take about eight minutes to reach the

centre of Kowloon Tong area. This exceeded the approved six-minute graded response time and hence a new fire station was proposed.

27. Ms Emily LAU noted that at one stage an agreement was reached to jointly develop the proposed fire station with a school to make use of an adjacent vacant site, and she enquired about the actions taken by the Administration since the joint development proposal was dropped. The Chief Property Manager (Site Utilization) (CPM(SU)) said that the Government Property Agency (GPA) was responsible for co-ordination of joint development and utilization of Government sites and premises. It was a standing arrangement for GPA to invite all bureaux and departments to jointly develop new projects to maximize site utilization. When the joint development for the proposed fire station was dropped in early 2004, GPA had immediately invited other joint development initiatives but there was no demand for accommodation in the proposed development. Ms Emily LAU expressed grave concern about the existing arrangement to maximize site utilization of Government projects and considered that there might be inadequacies in the existing arrangements of finding joint users between/among different compatible departments to achieve maximum utilization of Government sites. CPM(SU) noted Ms LAU's concern and would consider ways to improve in future joint user search exercises.

Admin

28. The item was voted on and endorsed. Ms Emily LAU expressed reservation about the project.

PWSC(2004-05)4	256ES	Secondary school at Site 10, West Kowloon Reclamation, Sham Shui Po
	319EP	A 36-classroom primary school at Site 10, West Kowloon Reclamation, Sham Shui Po

29. Members noted that the Administration had consulted the LegCo Panel on Education (Education Panel) on the planning and provision of public sector school places at the Panel meeting held on 30 January 2004.

30. Mr WONG Sing-chi said that Members of the Democratic Party (DP) supported this proposed, as the proposed secondary school would be used to re-provision an existing school with sub-standard premises and the proposed primary school was needed to implement the whole-day primary schooling policy.

31. The item was voted on and endorsed.

**PWSC(2004-05)5 329EP Primary school at Sheung Shing Street,
Ho Man Tin**

32. Members noted that, similar to PWSC(2004-05)4, the Administration had consulted the Education Panel on the planning and provision of public sector school places at the Panel meeting held on 30 January 2004.

33. Mr WONG Sing-chi said that Members of DP supported this proposal as the proposed school was needed for the reprovisioning and whole-day conversion of an existing primary school.

34. In response to Ms Emily LAU's concern about the oversupply of school places in the Kowloon City District, the Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower (2) (DS(2), EMB) advised that the school was a very popular school in the district. In view of the surplus aided school places in the district, the Administration had agreed with the school to progressively reduce its total number of operating classes from 36 to 30.

35. The item was voted on and endorsed.

**HEAD 708 - CAPITAL SUBVENTIONS AND MAJOR SYSTEMS AND
EQUIPMENT**

**PWSC(2004-05)6 38EC A direct subsidy scheme school
(secondary-cum-primary) at Harmony
Road, Siu Sai Wan**

36. Members noted that, similar to PWSC(2004-05)4, the Administration had consulted the Education Panel on the planning and provision of public sector school places at the Panel meeting held on 30 January 2004.

37. Mr IP Kwok-him declared interest that he was the Executive Secretary of Hon Wah Educational Organization, the school sponsor of the proposed school, and said that he would not participate in the discussion and voting on this item.

38. Mr WONG Sing-chi said that Members of DP did not support this project. He pointed out that according to the information provided by the Administration (*Appendix I to LC Paper No. CB(2)2401/02-03(01)*), there would be a drastic

decrease of 30.6% in the school age population aged 6 to 11 in the Eastern District from 2002 to 2010. There were also around 1 500 secondary school places and 1 300 vacant primary school places in the district as at December 2003. Considering that the Administration was planning to close down some schools which were under-enrolled, Mr WONG cautioned that it would be a waste of public money to build a new secondary-cum-primary school in the Eastern District.

39. In response, DS(2), EMB said that the proposed school was originally planned as a primary school in 2000. Taking into account the revised forecast demand for secondary and whole-day primary school places by the 2007/08 school year, the Administration had agreed with the school sponsor to convert the school into a “through-train” school which would mean a reduction in the number of primary classes to be provided. In addition, the proposed school would be the first “through-train” school in the Eastern District. DS(2), EMB pointed out that the proposed school was a direct subsidy scheme (DSS) school which would recruit students on a territory-wide instead of district basis. She also informed members that among the eight bi-sessional primary schools in the Eastern District, six of them had plans to convert to whole-day operation in the near future and, even on the conservative estimate of each half day session providing only 600 places, this would reduce the primary school places by roughly 3 600. Excluding the supply of DSS school places, a shortfall of around 6 primary classrooms was projected for the Eastern District in 2008.

40. Mr James TO referred to the forecast demand and supply of public sector primary and secondary school places tabled by the Administration (*Annex B to LC Paper No. CB(2)1058/03-04(01)*) and sought clarification on why for the Eastern District, there was a shortfall of 242 primary classrooms in 2004 notwithstanding that some 1 300 primary school places were vacant at present. Mr TO also queried that while the Administration would not count the proposed DSS school from the school place provision for the Eastern District on the ground that the enrolment of DSS schools was not district-based, some students in the district would choose to enroll with the DSS school and hence the presence of the DSS school would inevitably aggravate the oversupply situation of primary school places in the district.

41. DS(2), EMB advised that the projections provided by the Administration were based on the assumption that all the planned school projects would be approved by FC. The projections were denominated on “classrooms” rather than “school places”. She explained possible reasons behind the 1 300 vacant primary school places. For some schools adopting a traditional approach from primary four to

primary six, supply of places were calculated based on the assumption that there were 37 places available in each class. But due to the adoption of the “activity approach” mode of education for primary one to primary three classes, the schools would only take in about 32 students for these classes. Hence, statistically, following promotion of the same cohorts of students, there were a few vacant school places for a number of primary four to primary six classes. Moreover, some schools might not be keen to immediately fill the vacancies arising from students dropping out during the school year. DS(2), EMB acknowledged that the proposed DSS school would somehow pose competition to existing schools in the district. She however affirmed the Government’s policy of providing more choices for parents and the promotion of “through-train” schools to provide students with coherent learning experience. She also stressed that the current vacancy situation of public sector primary schools in the Eastern District had not taken into account the impending conversion of six existing bi-sessional schools in the district to whole-day operation.

42. Mr WONG Sing-chi considered that the Administration should promote the “through-train” mode among existing secondary and primary schools in the district instead of building a new “through-train” school. DS(2), EMB responded that EMB encouraged but would not oblige existing schools to form “through train”. Under the “through-train” mode, the relevant secondary school was obliged to take in all the students from the affiliated primary school. It was therefore not an easy decision for two existing schools, one primary and one secondary, to affiliate with each other to become a “through-train” school.

43. Mr YEUNG Yiu-chung said that the Democratic Alliance for Betterment of Hong Kong supported the project as it was one of the three categories of school projects supported by the Education Panel at the meeting held on 30 January 2004. He also pointed out that the proposed DSS school would recruit students from all over the territory, and hence should not be affected by the overall provision of school places at the district level. Mr WONG Sing-chi said that at the said meeting of the Education Panel, there was general support for the construction of new schools to implement whole-day primary schooling or to re-provision/redevelop existing sub-standard schools. For other categories of school projects, some Panel members stated that they would consider the proposals on a case by case basis.

44. In response to Miss CHAN Yuen-han’s enquiry about the consultation with the Eastern District Council (EDC) on the project, DS(2), EMB advised that EDC supported the project and welcomed the early implementation of the school project.

45. The item was voted on by a show of hands. Fifteen members voted for and six members voted against the item. The Chairman declared that the item was endorsed by the Subcommittee.

46. The meeting ended at 1:10 pm.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
13 May 2004