

Supplementary note
12 December 2005

**Legislative Council Panel on Transport
Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways**

**Northern Link
and Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link**

Annex To follow up the meeting of the Legislative Council Panel on Transport's Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways on 12 December 2005, we attach the hard copy of our PowerPoint presentation on the Northern Link and Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link for Members' reference.

Environment, Transport and Works Bureau
15 December 2005



- One of our established transport policies is to use railways as the backbone of our passenger transport system.
- In the railway development strategy formulated by Government, various proposed local railway schemes and a cross-boundary scheme are set out.
- In the 2005-06 Policy Address, the Chief Executive mentioned that Government was examining the project proposal for Northern Link (NOL) and the feasibility report on the Hong Kong section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link (ERL) submitted by the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation (KCRC).
- As shown in the map above, the NOL will connect the West Rail (WR) to the East Rail (ER) via the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line. The NOL is the remaining part of the railway loop serving the Kowloon Peninsula and the New Territories.
- The proposed NOL runs from the current Kam Sheung Road Station of WR to Chau Tau where it will connect with the Lok Ma Chau Spur Line under construction. In future, passengers of the NOL can interchange with ER at Chau Tau station, without having to travel to Lok Ma Chau station first and then make a reversed trip for connection with the ER. Upon completion of the NOL, passengers from both the western and northwestern parts of the New Territories can choose to travel by train for crossing the boundary at Lok Ma Chau. At present, they have to take road-based transport.
- In 2002, the Environment, Transport and Works Bureau (ETWB) and the Ministry of Railways of the Mainland set up a Joint Expert Group to conduct an investigative study on the ERL. A technical sub-group has also been formed under the Joint Expert Group to examine the related technical issues. The scope of the study covers the urgency, functions, regional transport needs, possible alignments, station locations, boundary crossing points, patronage forecast and technical options of the ERL project.



- One of the conclusions of the investigative study is that the project is worth pursuing because of its significant strategic value in connecting Hong Kong to national express rail network under planning or construction.
- Among them, the Beijing-Guangzhou Passenger Line will be using Shibi in Guangzhou as terminus, but will further extend to Longhua in Shenzhen. In addition, the Hangzhou-Fuzhou-Shenzhen Passenger Line will also terminate at Longhua in Shenzhen.
- Works for the Wuhan-Guangzhou section of the Beijing-Guangzhou Passenger Line have started since 2004 and are expected to be completed in 2009. Construction of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen section will commence in the near future for completion in 2010. According to the Mainland's current railway development plan, works for the Hangzhou-Fuzhou-Shenzhen Passenger Line will start in 2010 and take about five years to complete.
- The ERL project will effectively connect Hong Kong to Longhua in Shenzhen and Shibi in Guangzhou, i.e. connecting Hong Kong to the Beijing-Guangzhou and Hangzhou-Fuzhou-Shenzhen Passenger Lines.



- The Pearl River Delta (PRD) has embarked on planning the PRD Rapid Transit System (RTS), which will include the Guangzhou-Zhuhai axis and Guangzhou-Shenzhen axis covering major cities in the PRD. It is expected that the two axes and some of the spur lines will be completed in 2010. Through the ERL, HK will be more directly linked to the important cities in the PRD by railway.



- In the early stage of the study, the HKSAR Government and the Ministry of Railways followed the preliminary idea and assumed that the Hong Kong section and the Mainland section of the ERL would be new dedicated rail lines. However, according to our assessment, if the Hong Kong section were to adopt the dedicated corridor option, its financial performance might not be satisfactory. Later on, both sides came up with new ideas for the design of the rail link, taking into consideration the latest developments in town planning and railway planning in the Mainland and Hong Kong. The Mainland proposed to combine the Guangzhou-Shenzhen section of the RTS with the ERL. We gave consideration to using the existing West Rail, the NOL under planning and the Kowloon Southern Link under construction to form the Hong Kong section, connecting the urban area to Northwest New Territories, and then construct a tunnel under Shenzhen River to extend the ERL to Longhua via Huanggang.
- In view of the location of the terminus of the Mainland section and the idea put forward by us, we proposed to locate our terminus of the ERL in West Kowloon.
- In November 2004, we commissioned KCRC to conduct a feasibility study on this new idea and KCRC has completed the study. The study covers the new idea (i.e. the Shared Corridor Option) as well as the Dedicated Corridor Option.