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For information

11 January 2008

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

**Information Note on
(i) Land Use Planning in Southern District**

and

**(ii) Projected Patronage of South Island Line (East)
and Assessment of Impact of South Island Line (East)
on Other Public Transport Modes**

Introduction

At the request of the Subcommittee on Matters Relating to Railways, this paper presents information on (i) land use planning in the Southern District and (ii) projected patronage of the South Island Line (SIL) (East) and assessment of the impact of the SIL (East) on other public transport modes.

(i) Land Use Planning in the Southern District

Overview

2. The Southern District covers the southern part of Hong Kong Island extending from Shek O to Pok Fu Lam with a total area of about 4,000 ha and a population of about 275,000 according to the 2006 by-Census.

3. At present, about 40% (1614 ha) of the area of the Southern District are designated as country parks, including the Pok Fu Lam Country Park, Aberdeen Country Park, Tai Tam Country Park and Shek O Country Park. Another 25% (997 ha) are primarily green areas and zoned 'Green Belt'. These areas are covered with rich vegetation which

provide the district with a pleasant background of high aesthetic and visual value.

4. The built-up areas of the Southern District are mainly developed for residential use. The Aberdeen Harbour is a long-established tourist attraction. There are two existing industrial clusters at Wong Chuk Hang and Ap Lei Chau West. Local and district shopping centres are found in various sub-districts serving their immediate neighbourhoods.

5. Taking into account the district characteristics, the general planning intention for the Southern District is mainly to enhance the tourism and recreation resources, preserve the local character and general amenities and protect the natural environment.

Aberdeen/Ap Lei Chau/Wong Chuk Hang

6. The Aberdeen Harbour is the largest traditional fishing port on Hong Kong Island and the centre of boatyards and associated activities. Together with the Ocean Park, they are two of the most popular tourist attractions on Hong Kong Island. (Plan 1). In addition, there are many graded historical buildings/structures as well as declared monuments and sites of archaeological interest, including the Tin Hau Temple, Hung Shing Temple and Shui Yuet Temple (Plan 1), which have enhanced the value of the District as a major tourism node in Hong Kong. To further explore Aberdeen's tourism value, the Tourism Commission has plans to redevelop and revitalise both sides of the Aberdeen Harbour under the theme of "Fisherman's Wharf".

7. The Ocean Park is being redeveloped into a world-class marine-themed tourism facility with the number of attractions increasing from 35 at present to more than 70 by 2012/13. With the SIL (East), the travelling time between Admiralty and the Ocean Park will take as little as 4 minutes.

8. The Ocean Park redevelopment can also act as a catalyst to stimulate the growth of new developments as well as redevelopment proposals in the surrounding areas. The nearby Wong Chuk Hang Industrial Area (Plan 1) was rezoned from "Industrial" to "Other Specified Uses (Business)" in 2001 with the intention to allow greater

land use flexibility so as to facilitate its transformation into a more business-oriented area. Considerable redevelopment with the supply of new commercial and office space as well as hotel rooms is expected. Approval from the Town Planning Board for six hotel proposals have already been granted and lease modifications for seven commercial developments approved. It is anticipated that there will be a supply of about 3,300 hotel rooms and an addition of about 167 000 square metres of office/commercial floor space in Wong Chuk Hang.

9. Owing to the scarcity of land, the Wong Chuk Hang Estate site is the only available piece of government land situated along the proposed alignment of the SIL for depot development. We propose to reserve this site for consideration of using the property development rights above the depot and the MTR station to fill the funding gap for the SIL (East). More details about the proposed development intensity of the property would be available when the MTRCL has completed the design of the SIL (East). Separately, the Administration will identify suitable replacement sites elsewhere to meet Government's pledge of about three years average waiting time for public housing applicants.

10. As for Pok Fu Lam, no further large-scale developments or redevelopments will be planned given the scarcity of suitable land and the topographical constraints. Major residential, tourism and commercial developments will continue to concentrate in Wong Chuk Hang, Ap Lei Chau and Aberdeen. Improvement of the existing tourism and retail facilities is taking place in Stanley. The planning intention for Repulse Bay, Tai Tam and Shek O is to maintain their existing tranquil character and to ensure that the area will not be adversely affected by urbanisation. However, the proposed park and ride facilities, if located adjacent to the Ocean Park Station of the SIL, may bring about flexibility and convenience to residents in these areas who may wish to shift to the railway mode in going to the urban area.

11. All the above-mentioned tourism projects and redevelopments will result in more traffic to the Southern District. SIL (East) could relieve the increasing demand for road-based public transport and avoid the further deterioration of traffic conditions at the Aberdeen Tunnel. It is expected to improve the connectivity with the rest of the territory and

hence bring in more visitors and local residents to these tourist attractions.

(ii) Projected Patronage of SIL (East) and Assessment of the Impact of the SIL (East) on other Public Transport Modes

General

12. The SIL (East) has clear transport benefits for the Southern District. The 500-metre catchment population and employment of the four stations in the district will be about 121 000 and 46 000 respectively in 2016. About 170 000 passengers are expected to travel on the SIL (East) daily in 2016.

13. There are 65 franchised bus routes, and 41 routes operated by the green minibus (GMB) as well as the red minibus (RMB) trades which may be affected by the SIL (East).

14. We are looking into the impact of the SIL (East) on other public transport modes. We note that there will be progressive development, for example, those about tourism mentioned above, in the Southern District in the coming years and transportation demand will increase. A detailed assessment of the overall impact on the road transport mode can only be ascertained after our assessment of the different levels of intermodal coordination along the SIL (East) that would be required to enhance the co-ordination of public transport services, maintain their overall efficiency and minimise wasteful competition, and introduce new business opportunities for the public transport trades. The improved traffic conditions along Pokfulam Road due to the SIL (East) will, to some extent, increase the competitiveness of the other public transport modes using that corridor in serving the public of the Southern District. With SIL (East) going ahead first while SIL (West) being kept under review, we believe this would give other public transport operators time to adjust to the new operating environment.

Possible Mitigating Measures

15. The Administration will assist the affected public transport modes through service reorganisation to cope with the change in travel demands and patterns in Southern District where practicable. For scheduled services such as franchised buses and GMBs, mitigating measures would include reorganisation of route networks, adjustment of service frequencies, introduction of new feeder routes and/or conversion of existing routes to feeder services connecting the new MTR stations with nearby areas, and introduction of fare concession schemes for inter-modal interchanges with the new railway.

16. For non-scheduled services such as RMBs and taxis, measures will be taken to enhance their feeder roles. We will consider feeder routes serving residents living in Pok Fu Lam, Wah Fu and Aberdeen to the SIL (East). We will identify suitable locations close to the new rail stations for setting up taxi stands and general pick-up/set-down points. These measures will help open up new markets and bring about new business opportunities to these affected modes and could reduce the adverse impact on them.

Public Consultation

17. We will work out the mitigating measures for the further consultation with the other public transport modes in due course. The Administration will also inform the Southern District Council of the proposed mitigating measures and consider members' views for refinement of the measures.

18. Members are invited to note the contents of this paper.

Transport and Housing Bureau

Planning Department

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