立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. PWSC 13/09-10
(These minutes have been seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/F/2/2

Public Works Subcommittee of the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council

Minutes of the 2nd meeting held in the Conference Room A of Legislative Council Building on Wednesday, 4 November 2009 at 8:30 am

Members present:

Ir Dr Hon Raymond HO Chung-tai, SBS, S.B.St.J., JP (Chairman)
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Fred LI Wah-ming, SBS, JP
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP
Hon Miriam LAU Kin-yee, GBS, JP
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Hon LEE Wing-tat
Hon CHEUNG Hok-ming, GBS, JP
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
Hon KAM Nai-wai, MH
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king
Hon CHAN Hak-kan
Hon Tanya CHAN
Dr Hon LEUNG Ka-lau
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, BBS
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBS, JP

Members absent:

Hon LAU Wong-fat, GBM, GBS, JP
Hon Timothy FOK Tsun-ting, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan

Public officers attending:

Ms Doris HO Pui-ling	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury)3
Mr MAK Chai-kwong, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)
Mr Thomas CHOW Tat-ming, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands)
Ms Anissa WONG, JP	Permanent Secretary for the Environment
Miss Sandra LAM	Principal Assistant Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Works)
Mrs Marigold LAU LAI Siu-wan, JP	Director of Architectural Services
Mr John CHAI Sung-veng, JP	Director of Civil Engineering and Development
Mr LAU Ka-keung, JP	Director of Drainage Services
Mr WAI Chi-sing, JP	Director of Highways
Mr MA Lee-tak, JP	Director of Water Supplies
Mr Jack CHAN Jick-chi	Commissioner for Heritage Development Bureau
Mr Raymond CHAN Kin-sek, JP	Head of Geotechnical Engineering Office Civil Engineering and Development Department
Miss Margaret FONG Shun-man, JP	Commissioner for Tourism Commerce and Economic Development Bureau
Miss Patricia SO Pui-sai	Assistant Commissioner for Tourism (4) Commerce and Economic Development Bureau
Mrs Christina KWONG LAU Po-yuk	Chief Engineer (Kowloon)1 Civil Engineering and Development Department
Mrs Apollonia LIU LEE Ho-kei	Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport)5 Transport and Housing Bureau
Mr WONG Hang-chi	Deputy Director of Highways
Mr CHU Shun-wah	Chief Highway Engineer (Works) Highways Department
Mr CHEUNG Kai-ying	Chief Traffic Engineer (Kowloon) Transport Department

Clerk in attendance:

Ms Debbie YAU	Chief Council Secretary (1)6

Staff in attendance:

Mrs Constance LI	Assistant Secretary General 1
Ms Angel SHEK	Senior Council Secretary (1)1
Mr Frankie WOO	Senior Legislative Assistant (1)3
Ms Christy YAU	Legislative Assistant (1)1

Action

The Chairman welcomed members and representatives of the Administration to the first meeting of the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC) in the 2009-2010 session. He advised that he would not impose a time limit for members speaking unless it was necessary.

PWSCI(2009-10)13 — Forecast of submissions for the 2009-10 Legislative Council session

2. The Chairman advised members that pursuant to an agreement reached between the Legislative Council (LegCo) and the Administration since the 2001-2002 legislative session, the Administration had been providing forecasts of submissions to PWSC at the beginning of each legislative session. The Administration had now provided the forecast of the submissions for the 2009-2010 session to enable members and other LegCo Members to have a preliminary view of the projects and to facilitate the consultation process of capital works projects. The meeting noted that the 2009-2010 forecast had been circulated to relevant Panels for members to indicate whether any projects should require detailed discussions at meetings of the relevant Panels, before the funding applications were submitted to PWSC.

Block Allocations

PWSC(2009-10)71 — Block allocation Subhead 5001BX under the Capital Works Reserve Fund

3. The Chairman advised that the proposal sought to increase the approved allocation for Subhead 5001BX by $100 million from $1,100 million to $1,200 million, in order to advance the landslip preventive works for some 40 substandard slopes so that the works could commence before the onset of the coming rainy season and additional jobs could be created for the construction sector. An information paper on the proposal had been circulated to the Panel on Development on 20 October 2009.

Landslip Preventive Measures programme and monitoring system

4. Mr WONG Kwok-hing expressed support for the proposal. He enquired whether the proposed works would cover all the high-risk slopes that were prone to landslips in the coming rainy season. The Head of Geotechnical Engineering Office, Civil Engineering and Development Department (H of GEO, CEDD) advised that the proposed works were among the last batch in the 10-year Landslip Preventive Measures (LPM) programme (2000-2010). Under the current planning, stabilization works would be completed for 380 man-made slopes in 2009-2010. It was expected that all the high-priority man-made slopes would be stabilized upon completion of the LPM programme by 2010, after which the Administration would focus on the studies and works for natural terrains. As the conditions of upgraded man-made slopes might deteriorate following rainstorms, the Administration would continue to monitor the conditions of these slopes. The public would be reminded to stay vigilant to landslip warnings and keep away from the slopes concerned.

5. Mr WONG Kwok-hing enquired whether a monitoring system with on-site devices would be set up at the slopes to monitor their safety conditions after the stabilization works. Mr KAM Nai-wai enquired whether the Administration would conduct regular inspection, say once every five years, of the slopes.

6. H of GEO, CEDD advised that monitoring devices would be used before and during the stabilization works to check the changes in groundwater levels at the slopes. After the stabilization works were carried out, on-site monitoring devices would not be required but the Administration would continue to monitor the conditions of the slopes through regular inspection and maintenance to ensure their safety and stability over a longer term. Every government man-made slope in Hong Kong was maintained by a designated government department which would conduct routine inspections and maintenance for the slopes under its purview every year.

7. In reply to the Chairman about the timing for completion of the proposed works, H of GEO, CEDD said that due to different conditions of the 44 substandard slopes under the proposal, some of the works could be completed before the onset of the coming rainy season while others were expected to complete at a later time.

8. Prof Patrick LAU enquired about the reason for the reduction of estimated spending for the landslip preventive works in 2010-2011 as shown in the Enclosure to PWSC(2009-10)71. The Director of Civil Engineering and Development (DCED) said that the reduction reflected the changes in expenditure due to advancement of works for some 40 substandard slopes from 2010-2011 to 2009-2010 if the current proposal was approved. In reply to Prof LAU's further enquiry, H of GEO, CEDD advised that the LPM programme included upgrading works for slopes distressed by the June 2008 rainstorm, such as those in Tai O, and the relevant works achieved good progress.

Landscaping and environmental impact

9. Miss Tanya CHAN conveyed the concerns of some local residents about the use of sprayed concrete by CEDD to stabilize the substandard slopes. While using sprayed concrete was a more effective and quicker way to repair the slopes than soil nails, she noted that it would affect the growth of trees and plants on the slopes. Miss CHAN asked whether the Administration would consider re-establishing these slopes by soil nailing works instead. She further asked what landscaping measures would be adopted for the slopes under the current programme. Ms Miriam LAU said that she was very much against the use of sprayed concrete to stabilize the slopes as it would cause much damage to the plants. Observing that such technique was rarely used in other cities in the Mainland, she urged the Administration to make reference to the Mainland practice and use a more sustainable approach in carrying out slope stabilization works.

10. H of GEO, CEDD explained that sprayed concrete might be used as a necessary emergency measure to cover slip scars to prevent further deterioration. For example, the technique was used as emergency repairs at locations of significant residual landslide risk after the exceptionally heavy downpour in June 2008. He stressed that implementation of sprayed concrete would be conducted strictly according to the technical guidelines on good practices in slope landscaping works. For long-term maintenance, the sprayed concrete in some slopes would be removed and replaced by vegetation covers. Trees would be planted on slopes with a gradient of 30 degrees or less, and shrubs and climbers on the steeper surface.

11. Referring to the slopes along Tai Hang Road, Ms Miriam LAU said that it appeared to her that sprayed concrete slopes were still very prevalent in Hong Kong. The Chairman added that the slopes covered by sprayed concrete were also commonly found in the country parks. Mr Albert CHAN considered that the Administration should devise a timetable to replace the existing sprayed concrete slopes as soon as practicable. In response, H of GEO, CEDD explained that the use of sprayed concrete for slope work was quite common in the past, but nowadays the technique was used only as a last resort for slope safety reasons and mainly as emergency repairs. Whilst it would take time to provide these old slopes with landscaping treatments, the Administration had recently engaged consultants to study ways to improve the appearance of sprayed concrete slopes, with 15 slopes being selected for trial. DCED said that the Administration had deployed substantial resources on slope greening, especially for newly upgraded slopes. While noting that the appearance of some of the older slopes on Tai Hang Road had been improved by landscaping measures, he said that more vegetation works would be carried out for similar slopes in the territory.

12. Mr Albert CHAN said that he had repeatedly urged the Administration in the past to select local species for slope greening works as some of the foreign species were inhospitable to the native species. In particular, he requested the Administration not to choose Wedelia trilobata（蟛蜞菊）for future slope

landscaping works or removing existing ones altogether as it would seriously upset the living environment of native species. DCED said that it was a prevailing practice within the Government to choose native species as far as possible for slope landscaping.

13. Mr Albert CHAN further suggested that the Administration should improve the design of the drainage system at slopes to avoid causing obstruction and flooding during heavy rainfall. He observed that some drains were designed with sediment filters along the drainage system instead of just at the drainage inlets, while the former was considered to be more effective to prevent obstruction. DCED said that while the drainage system was designed to meet the required flood protection standard, drainage might be blocked by leaves and debris falling from the slopes from time to time. As such, the Administration considered it important and more practical to carry out regular clearance to ensure that the drainage system would function properly. DCED said that the Administration would continue to explore better drainage designs in the light of Mr CHAN's suggestion.

14. Noting that the project would generate about 19 800 tonnes of construction waste in total and in view of the shortage of public fill reception facilities, Prof Patrick LAU enquired about the Administration's measures to reuse the waste to minimize the impact on the environment. H of GEO, CEDD said that the Administration would strive to reduce construction waste to be generated by the project and reuse them as far as possible. Part of the inert construction waste would be reused on-site or in other construction sites, while 13 000 tonnes would be delivered to public fill reception facilities for subsequent reuse. The remaining non-inert construction waste would be disposed of at landfills.

Natural terrain

15. Recalling the landslide incident of the natural terrain in Pokfulam and its extensive impact on the downhill areas, Mr KAM Nai-wai enquired whether the Administration could speed up the implementation of landslip prevention measures for natural terrains scheduled for 2010. H of GEO, CEDD responded that the Administration had been conducting natural terrain hazard studies since December 2007, with a view to including those high-risk slopes under the LPM programme. In reply to Mr KAM's further enquiry, H of GEO, CEDD advised that a total of 2 700 natural terrain catchments, where landslides had taken place within 40 metres from residential areas in the past, had been identified as priority natural terrains for undertaking stability works. While those slopes had not posed immediate threat to the safety of local residents, the Administration planned to undertake mitigation works for them by batches, with at least 30 catchments each year.

16. Mr KAM Nai-wai expressed concern that it would take a long time to complete the mitigation works for all the 2 700 natural terrain catchments given only some 30 catchments would be dealt with each year. DCED highlighted that the present proposal related to the advancement of the landslips preventive works for some 40 substandard man-made slopes. The Chairman advised that issues

relating to landslide risk of natural terrains were outside the scope of the current proposal. The subject could be further discussed by the relevant Panel in future.

17. Referring to the slope near the San Francisco Towers in Wan Chai, Mr KAM Nai-wai expressed concern that it was difficult to identify the monitoring responsibility in some cases as the slopes concerned appeared to be neither man-made slopes nor natural terrains. H of GEO, CEDD said that fly-tipping activities at the natural terrain overlooking San Francisco Towers had led to the falling of dumped waste in the area. There was no question of stability of the slope concerned. He added that the Government had stepped up enforcement and education to combat fly-tipping activities, and would identify similar slopes for further actions.

Private slopes

18. Mr IP Kwok-him expressed support for the proposal and commended CEDD for its internationally-renowned efforts in landslip prevention. He remarked that landslip preventive works were particularly important on the Hong Kong Island in view of its hilly topography and the need to enhance public safety. Mr IP expressed concern about whether the Administration would provide assistance to maintain slopes within private lots, especially those which involved multiple ownership. Ms Miriam LAU said that the Government was not responsive in giving technical or financial assistance to owners of private slopes, and enforcement actions were taken against breaches of the Dangerous Hillside Order. She called on the Government to provide more assistance to owners in dealing with private slope issues.

19. H of GEO, CEDD advised that the Community Advisory Unit of CEDD would provide information and advisory services to the community through seminars and talks, and discussions with private slope owners particularly on issues related to Dangerous Hillside Orders and slope maintenance works. If the slope in question was partly owned by the Government, CEDD would consult other owners to undertake stabilization works on a shared-cost basis. H of GEO, CEDD further explained that upon legal advice, the Buildings Department would serve Dangerous Hillside Orders on the owners of the private slopes requiring investigation and upgrading works. He said that an appeal system was in place for aggrieved parties to seek redress where appropriate.

20. The item was voted on and endorsed.

Head 707 – New Towns and Urban Area Development

PWSC(2009-10)67 736CL Site formation for Kai Tak Cruise Terminal development

21. The Chairman advised that the proposal sought to upgrade 736CL to

Category A at an estimated cost of $2,303.9 million in MOD prices to carry out site formation works for the Kai Tak cruise terminal development. The Panel on Economic Development had been consulted on the proposal at the meeting on 25 May 2009 and Panel members generally had no objection to the tendering and implementation approach.

Disposal of sea-bed sediments and construction waste

22. Mr IP Kwok-him said that members of the relevant district councils were supportive of the proposal. Noting that dredging works would be carried out for about 86 hectares of the adjoining seabed to allow manoeuvring and berthing of cruise vessels with deep drafts, he was concerned about the amount of seabed sediments that would be generated and their treatment. DCED advised that around 1.38 million cubic metres (m^3) of sea-bed sediments would be generated from the dredging works for the project. Contaminated sediments would be disposed of at the sediment disposal facility situated at the east of Sha Chau, while clean mud would be delivered to mud disposal sites at the south of Cheung Chau.

23. Ms Starry LEE expressed concern that if the contaminated sea-bed sediments were to be transported for disposal by land, it would cause nuisance to local residents. She enquired how these sediments would be transported. The Chief Engineer (Kowloon)1, Civil Engineering and Development Department (CE(K)1,CEDD) said that the contract did not specify requirements in relation to the transportation mode for delivering the sediments. As the sea-bed sediments would be dredged up and loaded onto dumping barges, it should be more efficient and cost-effective for the contractor to deliver the sediments to the specified disposal facilities by sea. Ms LEE considered that the Administration should advise the contractor on the preferred mode of delivery and confirm the arrangements with the contractor in advance so as to allay local residents' worries. Referring to the location of the dredging zone in Enclosure 1 to PWSC(2009-10)67, the Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) (PS(W), DEVB) explained that as the sea-bed sediments would be loaded onto dumping barges which were on the sea, it would only be practical and logical to transport the sediments to the disposal sites by sea.

Admin Ms LEE requested the Administration to provide written information on the transportation mode to be adopted for delivering and disposing the sea-bed sediments collected during the dredging works, and the timing for completing the delivery process.

24. Mr KAM Nai-wai said that the Administration did not address the concerns of residents in the vicinity. He considered that the Administration should specify in the contract that sea transportation should be adopted for delivering the sea-bed sediments, so that the contractor would not have the option of using land transportation. DCED said that to allow some flexibility for the contractor, the contract would not specify the mode of transportation. He assured members that the Government was fully aware of the residents' concerns, and there were stringent requirements governing the transportation of sediments by land.

25. In response to Mr KAM Nai-wai, DCED explained that of the estimated 1.38 million m^3 sea-bed sediments to be disposed of, majority of the sediments would be disposed of at the disposal site at South of Cheung Chau. He assured members that the facility had sufficient capacity to meet the disposal demand arising from the project.

26. Mr LEE Wing-tat said that there were complaints from the fishing communities about the impact of sediments disposal at Sha Chau on the water quality. He expressed concern about the monitoring system for ensuring proper disposal of contaminated sediments to the disposal facility in the east of Sha Chau, such as the latest technology to be adopted to enhance on-site control during dumping into the sea-bed pits, in order to avoid leakage or drifting of contaminated mud into the adjacent waters. DCED said that the Administration would monitor the water quality near the disposal sites and ensure that the contractor would comply with the disposal requirements. The Administration would keep abreast of the latest technologies for disposing contaminated sediments and consider whether such technologies could be adopted for use in Hong Kong. The Chairman requested the Administration to inform PWSC if any new technology for sediment disposal was to be adopted.

27. Noting that the existing seawall near the former runway would be demolished, Prof Patrick LAU enquired whether the rock fill would be reused to enhance sustainable development. DCED explained that the existing seawall was a sloping structure which had to be demolished in order to allow berthing of cruise vessels. The contractor would be required to reuse inert construction waste, including the excavated rock fill, on site as far as possible.

28. Referring to the nuisance arising from the delivery and storage of dumpings in the To Kwa Wan district near the Grand Waterfront for carrying out works associated with the Shatin to Central Link railway project and the Kai Tak Development, Mr James TO expressed concern about the cumulative environmental impact and the mitigation measures if the inert construction waste generated by the proposed site formation works would be temporarily stored near the same residential areas before reuse. CE(K)1,CEDD said that 45.8% of the inert construction waste would be reused either for the proposed project or other projects in the Kai Tak Development. The construction waste would be stacked up to a height of not more than three metres at the designated site which would be enclosed by hoardings to alleviate their visual impact on the harbourfront. While the quantity of the construction waste would be gradually reduced in the reuse process, the Administration would require the contractor to put in place necessary measures to control dust and site run-off to levels within the established standards and guidelines.

29. Mr James TO considered that the Administration should specify in the contract the temporary storage arrangements for the remaining 54.1% of inert construction waste and the consequences if the contractor failed to follow them. DCED advised that as there was limited space for storage at the project site, the

contractor had been requested to deliver the inert construction waste in question to the public fills at Tuen Mun or Tseung Kwan O as soon as practicable if they would not be reused on site. The Chairman requested the Administration to look into the relevant contract terms and requirements in view of the concern raised by Mr TO.

Admin DCED agreed to provide, before the relevant meeting of the Finance Committee (FC), information on the relevant terms and conditions in the works contracts.

30. Ms Miriam LAU expressed support for the proposal. Noting that some 2 000 tonnes (0.1%) of non-inert construction waste would be disposed of at landfills, she enquired about the source of these waste and the possibility of reusing them. DCED advised that the construction waste in question would be mostly garbage and grass arising from site clearance which was non-inert construction waste of no reuse value. He further clarified that the waste did not include the sediments dredged up from the seabed.

Proposed site formation works

31. Mr IP Kwok him enquired about the justification for the substantial costs of the pile foundation works which were estimated to be $1,000 million. DCED explained that pile foundation works was a major item of expenditure for the site formation works for the new cruise terminal. The piling works would prepare for the construction of the piled structures for two alongside berths and associated piled transition structures at two ends of the berths, which would involve the driving of more than 1 000 piles into the harbour. Due to the geological nature of the sea-bed, some of the piles would go as deep as 70 m.

32. Mr Albert CHAN suggested that the Administration undertake measures to restore the marine ecology following the dredging of sea-bed sediments by eliminating any contaminated substances found in the area. Referring to overseas experiences in nurturing marine ecology, Mr CHAN said that his suggestion could be undertaken on a modest scale and at relatively low cost. CE(K)1,CEDD said that according to the environmental assessment studies, the seabed of the dredging zone in question did not contain highly contaminated substances that would require special treatment. As regards the corals found in the area, they had been relocated to suitable habitats at Tseung Kwan O, and were subject to a one-year post-relocation monitoring to ensure their health conditions. DCED advised that the manoeuvring and berthing movements of cruise vessels after the berths had come into operation might pose difficulty in rehabilitating the marine ecology. Nevertheless, he agreed to discuss the suggestion with the works consultant.

Implementation timeframe of the cruise terminal project

33. Prof Patrick LAU enquired whether berthing of cruise vessels could commence after the commissioning of the first berth. Noting that the site formation works would start in December 2009 for completion by end 2015, Mr WONG Kwok-kin enquired whether the timeframe could be compressed, in view of the aspiration of the local communities for the early operation of the new

cruise terminal and the economic benefits it would bring about. Mr CHAN Kam-lam asked about the timeframe for constructing the cruise terminal building.

34. DCED confirmed that it was a target of the Government to commission the first berth by mid 2013 upon completion of the associated civil engineering works, followed by completion of the relevant works for the second berth by 2014 and further dredging works by end 2015. He considered the current timeframe the most optimistic estimation. Nevertheless, the Administration would monitor the progress of works during implementation to see if the schedule could be compressed. The Commissioner for Tourism (C for T) added that the first berth would start to receive cruise vessels in mid-2013, and bookings for slots would be accepted 18 months in advance. The first berth could accommodate the biggest mega cruise vessels under construction, while the second berth to be completed by 2014 would be able to berth medium-size cruises.. Upon completion of more extensive dredging works by around 2015/2016, the capacity of the second berth would be enhanced to accommodate mega cruises. As for the construction of the cruise terminal building, the Administration would seek funding approval from the FC in early 2010, which would bring forward the commencement of the relevant works from 2011 to 2010. PS(W), DEVB highlighted that there were three major stages of development for the project, i.e. the site formation works under discussion, then the construction of the cruise terminal building for which the Architectural Services Department had already invited the design-and-build tenders, and finally tendering for the tenancy agreement for operating the berths. He added that preparatory work for these stages was already in progress.

Operation and management of the new cruise terminal

35. Mr Albert CHAN urged the Administration to finalize and award the tender for the tenancy agreement for the operation of the new cruise terminal as early as possible. An early decision on the tenancy agreement would allow the lessee to provide input in the design of the cruise terminal to achieve better interface between construction and operation/management of the cruise terminal. This would save the need and additional expenditure to change the design of the relevant facilities in the middle of the project works or after commissioning of the facilities. C for T said that to ensure that the new cruise terminal would meet market needs, the Tourism Commission (TC) had already consulted the cruise and tourism industries about the user requirements and ancillary facilities for the new cruise terminal. As for selection of the cruise terminal operator, TC had been coordinating inputs from relevant departments and consulting the cruise and tourism industries in formulating the terms and conditions of the future tenancy agreement, including the operation and management requirements, with a view to conducting the prequalification exercise for the tenancy agreement in 2010.

36. Mr Albert CHAN said that the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) Authority was set up for implementing the WKCD project from its planning to the operational stages. He considered that it was important for the terminal operator to consider the interface arrangements for the operation and management of the

new cruise terminal as early as practicable. The Administration took note of the suggestion.

Other issues

37. Ms Starry LEE considered it crucial to provide adequate road infrastructures to tie in with the commissioning of the first berth in mid 2013, including connecting roads with the old districts in the vicinity (e.g. Kowloon City, Kowloon Bay and Kwun Tong), to facilitate cruise passengers to visit these areas after disembarkation. Mr CHAN Kam-lam shared similar views. CE(K)1,CEDD advised that advance infrastructure works for developments at the southern part of the former runway were underway, which included the construction of a carriageway linking the area with Cheung Yip Street at Kowloon Bay. Besides, vehicle loading and unloading areas as well as parking facilities for coaches would be provided at the cruise terminal. DCED added that the said carriageway would be a two-lane two-way carriageway which would be eventually converted to a dual two-lane distributor road. A traffic impact assessment had confirmed that the proposed road infrastructure could cope with the traffic demand arising from the operation of the new cruise terminal.

38. Ms Starry LEE considered that providing only one road to link up the cruise terminal and the former runway with the nearby areas would not be adequate. She urged the Administration to plan as early as possible the road connection with other districts, in particular Kowloon City and Kwun Tong. Mr WONG Kwok-kin opined that such planning should be incorporated into the design in advance. The Chairman advised that issues relating to road infrastructures of the Kai Tak Development were outside the scope of the current discussion.

39. PS(W), DEVB briefed members on the stages of the Kai Tak Development and explained that as the scale of the project was very large, the works had to be taken forward progressively. Referring to Enclosure 3 of PWSC(2009-10)67 which set out the scope, approved project estimates and progress of the Kai Tak Development projects approved by FC so far, PS(W), DEVB advised that part of the first phase infrastructural works (such as construction of new roads, landscaping works and drainage network) were already taken forward under individual items (e.g. 739CL and 741CL), and these works would be completed by end 2013. In response to Hon CHAN Kam-lam, the Administration undertook to provide, before the relevant FC meeting, updated information on the implementation plan for the Kai Tak Development, including the timeframe and projects in each stage of development.

Admin

40. Prof Patrick LAU suggested that the Government should enhance its publicity on the Kai Tak Development project to increase public awareness of its stages of development and implementation timetable, such as by way of exhibiting relevant information and three-dimensional models at the Hong Kong Planning and Infrastructure Exhibition Gallery. He also suggested the Administration make reference to the Mainland cities and enhance the promotion of local infrastructural

projects at the Exhibition Gallery. The Administration took note of the suggestion.

41. The item was voted on and endorsed.

Head 706 – Highways

PWSC(2009-10)70 159TB Reconstruction of footbridge near Hsin Kuang Centre and extension of bus bays at Lung Cheung Road

42. The Chairman advised that the proposal sought to upgrade 159TB to Category A at an estimated cost of $83.8 million in MOD prices for the reconstruction of a footbridge near Hsin Kuang Centre and extension of two adjacent bus bays at Lung Cheung Road. An information paper on the proposal had been circulated to the Panel on Transport on 22 June 2009.

Implementation timeframe

43. Mr CHAN Kam-lam welcomed the proposal and pointed out that the existing footbridge was among the four footbridges on Lung Cheung Road and Choi Hung Road, and the local communities had called for their reconstruction for a long time. He hoped that reconstruction project could be completed as early as possible. Mr IP Kwok-him said that the proposal was the fruit of strenuous efforts of the Wong Tai Sin District Council (WTSDC) over the years. He believed that the new footbridge together with the extension of bus bays would give greater convenience to the commuting residents in Wong Tai Sin. However, he expressed concern about the long time anticipated for completion of the proposed footbridge which would commence in December 2009 but was scheduled for completion in December 2011. Mr IP enquired whether there was room to enhance the efficiency of the works and compress the schedule. Ms Miriam LAU shared similar view and enquired about the steps for undertaking the demolition and construction works, and whether the service of the existing footbridge would be suspended during the construction of the new footbridge.

44. The Deputy Director of Highways (DDHy) explained that the Administration would strive to complete the project as early as possible. The proposed timeframe had taken into account the need to maintain the service of the existing footbridge until the new one was ready to replace it. Due to the lack of space at the project site, the ramps of the existing footbridge had to be demolished first to release space for carrying out the construction and associated works, and temporary structures serving the function of the ramps would be provided by the contractor to ensure that the service of the existing footbridge would not be interrupted. DDHy further explained that the new footbridge would be an arc-shaped structure with a large span that would require the construction of relatively large building components, and the headroom of the footbridges along

Lung Cheung Road was insufficient for passage of pre-fabricated components. These components therefore could not be delivered from other locations and had to be constructed on-site. In view of these technical difficulties, the Administration considered the proposed timeframe appropriate and reasonable.

45. Mr IP Kwok-him said that despite the Administration's explanation, he remained to be convinced that the proposed footbridge had to take two years to complete. Ms Miriam LAU commented that as the demolition of the existing footbridge and construction of the new one were carried out concurrently, the timeframe for completion of the project could be compressed. DDHy took note of members' concerns and agreed to explore the possibility of shortening the construction as far as practicable.

46. Mr WONG Kwok-kin said that being a Member returned from the Kowloon East constituency, he supported the proposal, in particular the existing ramps would be replaced by lifts which would provide greater convenience to the public in need. However, he was concerned about the adverse impact of the proposed works on the pedestrian and traffic flow, and requested the Administration to consider shortening the construction time.

47. The Principal Assistant Secretary (Transport)5, Transport and Housing Bureau said that the Administration had struck a balance between maintaining the service of the existing footbridge and commissioning the new footbridge early when working out the construction timetable. The proposed timeframe was a reasonable duration for the project. The Chief Highway Engineer (Works), Highways Department (CHE(W), HyD) supplemented that the timeframe was considered reasonable as the works would involve demolition of the existing footbridge and construction of a new one. The limited space available at the project site also posed constraints on the operation of the works. He pointed out that the Administration had consulted the local communities on other locations outside the project site for carrying out the necessary works, but no suitable sites could be identified. The Administration would further explore whether the timeframe could be shortened.

Admin

Design of the footbridge

48. Noting from the Enclosure to PWSC(2009-10)70 that landscaping works would be carried out near the staircase of the proposed footbridge on the northern side of Lung Cheung Road, Mr CHAN Kam-lam pointed out that the pedestrian flow of the narrow walkway there was very heavy, especially during rush hours. He requested the Administration to consider reducing the size of the proposed landscaping areas or abolishing the landscaping works altogether so that more space could be released for the pedestrian walkway. DDHy agreed to consider providing more space for the pedestrian walkway near that location.

Admin

49. Prof Patrick LAU noted that the Advisory Committee on the Appearance of Bridges and Associated Structures (ACABAS) had been consulted on the aesthetic design of the footbridge four times on 15 April, 19 August, 21 October 2008 and 21 July 2009 before it accepted the proposed design. He enquired why the consultation took such a long time. CHE(W), HyD said that a longer time was taken to consult the ACABAS so as to perfect the appearance of the footbridge, which included the details of the layout design, such as the positions of the drains.

50. Prof Patrick LAU and Mr Albert CHAN requested the Administration to provide the design plans of the proposed footbridge for members' reference. The Chairman said that he and other PWSC members had time and again requested the Administration to provide adequate information and relevant layout plans in the PWSC papers to facilitate members' consideration of the proposals. He advised the Administration to provide the design plan of the footbridge before the relevant FC meeting.

Admin

51. Mr Alan LEONG said that being a Member returned from the Kowloon East constituency, he welcomed the construction of a new covered footbridge which was long awaited by the local communities. He suggested that the cover of the new footbridge should be extended to the nearby public transport service areas, such as green minibus stations at the Shatin Pass Road and the Wong Tai Sin Mass Transit Railway (MTR) Station, for the convenience of the people using the footbridge.

52. The Chief Traffic Engineer (Kowloon), Transport Department (CTE(Kln), TD) explained that the cover was designed for the proposed footbridge. The Administration would separately explore the suggestion of providing cover for the footpath linking the new footbridge to the public transport service areas in the vicinity, taking account of the actual pedestrian flow after commissioning the new footbridge.

Admin

53. In response to Mr CHAN Kam-lam, CTE(Kln), TD advised that under the prevailing policy, new bus stations, including the existing two bus bays to be extended at Lung Cheung Road under the proposal, would be provided with covers.

54. Ms Miriam LAU expressed concern about the provision of barrier-free access if no ramps were to be provided for the footbridge. CHE(W), HyD said that two lifts each would be provided at either end of the new footbridge, and in the unlikely event that all lifts were out of order, there was still barrier-free access, through the adjacent Wong Tai Sin MTR Station, for crossing Lung Cheung Road.

Environmental impact

55. Mr Alan LEONG noted that the proposed works would be carried out at night or during non-peak hours as far as practicable. As the proposed bridge was close to densely populated residential areas, such as the Lower Wong Tai Sin Estate, he asked about the specific location for the proposed works, and the noise

mitigation measures to be taken. CHE(W), HyD said that the works would be carried out mainly at the proposed landscaping areas near the staircase of the proposed footbridge on the northern side of Lung Cheung Road. Mr LEONG pointed out that as the location was close to public housing estates and private residential buildings, the Administration should ensure that effective mitigation measures would be put in place to minimize noise nuisance to the residents. CHE(W), HyD advised that the mitigation measures, including the use of silenced construction plants and the provision of temporary noise screens at works locations, would be implemented during the construction stage to keep the noise level within the statutory limits.

56. In response to Mr WONG Kwok-kin's concerns about the traffic impact assessment and mitigation measures, CTE(Kln), TD said that temporary traffic arrangements (TTAs), including lane closures, would be implemented to facilitate the construction works. A traffic management liaison group comprising representatives of the Highways Department, the Hong Kong Police Force, the Transport Department and other concerned government departments would be set up to assess the TTAs, and the WTSDC would be consulted prior to the implementation of major TTAs.

Other issue

57. Mr CHAN Kam-lam requested the Administration to actively consider the reconstruction of the existing footbridge near the former Tai Hom Village at Diamond Hill and other old footbridges along Choi Hung Road and Lung Cheung Road. CTE(Kln), TD said that the Administration would review the need to reconstruct these footbridges as appropriate, having regard to their patronage.

58. The item was voted on and endorsed.

59. The meeting ended at 10:17 am.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
19 November 2009