

For information

16 April 2010

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

Progress Report on the Kwun Tong Line Extension

Introduction

This paper briefs Members on the latest progress of the proposed Kwun Tong Line Extension (KTE).

Background

2. The proposed KTE will be about 2.6 kilometers long. It is an extension of the existing MTR Kwun Tong Line from Yau Ma Tei to the proposed railway stations at Ho Man Tin and Whampoa (a plan showing the alignment is at **Annex 1**). The station at Ho Man Tin will provide an interchange with the future Shatin to Central Link (SCL). The KTE will provide convenient railway service to the residents of Ho Man Tin, Hung Hom and Whampoa areas.

3. We last briefed the Subcommittee on the latest progress of the planning and preliminary design of the KTE project on 17 September 2009 and collected views of the Members.

Latest Progress

4. During public consultation, we noted that the public views on the KTE project were generally positive and supportive. The public also urged the Government to expedite the project implementation. As such, after we have briefed Members on the progress of KTE, the proposed railway scheme was gazetted under the Railways Ordinance (Cap. 519) in end 2009 to start the statutory consultation process. Upon expiry of the objection period in January 2010, we are now following up and handling the objection and enquiry cases, meeting the objectors and reviewing the railway scheme.

5. To match with the project programme, the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) has commenced the detailed design of the KTE and is proceeding with the environmental impact assessment in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance. According to the progress accomplished so far, we expect construction works would be completed in 2015.

Public Consultation

6. Since the commencement of preliminary design of KTE in 2008, the Government and MTRCL had conducted extensive public consultation. In 2008 and 2009, we, in collaboration with the Kowloon City District Council, jointly conducted two rounds of public consultation to consult the local community on issues related to the proposed railway scheme, including railway alignment and locations of stations, entrances, ventilation shafts and works areas, etc. Through holding two rounds of roving exhibitions and attending 7 district council meetings and 42 public forums, residents' and stakeholders' meetings and site inspections, we discussed the issues on the KTE thoroughly with the stakeholders.

7. The gazetted scheme has taken account of the views collected in the two rounds of public consultation as far as practical on railway system design, station and station entrance / exit locations, as well as the technical considerations on the construction and operation of the railway. The Government and MTRCL will continue to liaise with the residents regarding their concerns about the KTE project, and stay in close touch with the District Councils concerned and the local community with a view to continuing to collect and consider their views.

Public Concerns

8. From the consultation with District Councils and local community and the objections and enquiries raised by the public on the gazetted railway scheme, we note the following views and concerns of the public at this juncture:

(A) Station Entrances and Connections to Adjacent Estates

After the extensive public consultation, we propose to locate the Ho Man Tin

Station at the ex-Valley Road Estate Phase 1 site and Whampoa Station at Tak On Street as shown in the gazetted railway scheme. The public generally accept the proposed locations and have requested for pedestrian facilities connecting the stations to the neighbouring developments.

i) Ho Man Tin Station

To facilitate the local community in accessing the station and taking into account the public views, we propose to construct a pedestrian link comprising subway, lifts, covered walkway and footbridges to connect Oi Man Estate and Ho Man Tin Estate to Ho Man Tin Station.

Some residents have concerns about the above proposed pedestrian link which they view it as a detour to the station and cannot directly connect the station to Ho Man Tin Estate and Oi Man Estate. We appreciate the concerns of the local community and we have reviewed and explored a number of options for the pedestrian link as suggested by the local community and explained to them the design considerations and constraints. The Government and MTRCL will continue to maintain close liaison with the community and to exchange views on optimizing the design of proposed pedestrian link.

ii) Whampoa Station

The proposed station is located at the centre of Whampoa area with four station entrances sited at convenient locations which, in conjunction with the existing pedestrian network, will provide direct and convenient link between the station and the neighbouring housing estates.

Some residents suggest to construct subways to connect neighbouring housing estates, such as Hok Yuen district / Laguna Verde and Hung Hom Bay / Harbour Place, etc. to the Whampoa Station. We have reviewed these suggestions. The Whampoa district is on level ground and served by a good at-grade pedestrian network that provides suitable walking environment for the commuters. The proposed station entrances / exits can adequately provide the need to the local community. Notwithstanding this, the Government and MTRCL will continue to closely liaise and exchange views with the residents in enhancing the existing pedestrian facilities.

(B) Location of Ventilation Shafts

Ventilation shafts are essential facilities of an underground railway system. The number and size of the ventilation shafts must comply with the design standards and the locations of which should take account of the railway alignment and the geographic condition.

In the gazetted railway scheme, there are seven ventilation shafts serving Ho Man Tin Station, for which no objections have been received from the public regarding the locations and design. For Whampoa Station, four ventilation shafts will be provided. Some residents and schools nearby have expressed concerns about the potential environmental and visual impact resulting from the ventilation shafts.

It is not easy to identify suitable locations to accommodate the necessary railway facilities in the densely populated Whampoa area. When determining the location of the railway facilities, other factors such as railway alignment, station locations, constraints of structures in the vicinity have also been considered. During the preliminary design stage, the MTRCL has investigated into various possible locations for the ventilation shafts. The present proposed locations are considered as appropriate. We have explained to the residents that the trains are driven by electricity and do not produce exhaust air and hence the ventilation shafts will not affect the air quality. We will continue to keep close liaison with the stakeholders, listen to their views and explore opportunities for enhancing the design, with a view to avoid the exhaust vent facing schools and residential units. We will also consider improvements to the design and appearance of the ventilation shafts so as to minimize the impact on the neighbouring community.

(C) Traffic Impact to the Area during Construction

Since most of the railway tunnels in the KTE are located deep in rock strata, we suggest using mainly the drill and blast method in the construction of the tunnels, except for the Ho Man Tin and Whampoa Stations which will use the cut-and-cover method.

Some residents in Whampoa have concerns about the traffic impact due to construction of the station using cut-and-cover method. In this regard, the MTRCL has appointed an independent consultant to conduct a traffic impact study to assess in detail the traffic implication due to the construction activities and to review the

construction method and formulate temporary traffic schemes. Based on the traffic impact assessment report, we will adopt suitable measures to minimize the traffic impact on the local road network during construction. We will closely liaise with the local community and relevant government departments in working out suitable temporary traffic management schemes.

(D) Resumption of Land and Underground Stratum

According to the gazetted KTE railway scheme, two private lots will have to be partially resumed and no building will be affected therein. Resumption of underground strata will be required for eleven private lots, six of which will be underneath the existing buildings. Since the railway scheme was gazetted, we have met the affected stakeholders and explained to them the proposed scheme and collected their views. We will continue to closely liaise with them.

Project Programme

9. We are carrying out the detailed design, handling the objection cases under the Railways Ordinance and conducting the Environmental Impact Assessment for the KTE. The Government and MTRCL will continue to maintain close communication and liaison with the District Councils and the local community with a view to complete construction of the KTE to serve the community in 2015.

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

Transport and Housing Bureau

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觀塘線延線
KWUN TONG LINE EXTENSION