

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(1)1307/12-13
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB1/PL/TP/1

Panel on Transport

**Minutes of meeting held on
Friday, 22 February 2013, at 10:45 am
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Members present : Hon CHAN Kam-lam, SBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai (Deputy Chairman)
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Hon James TO Kun-sun
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, GBS, JP
Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Hon NG Leung-sing, SBS, JP
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming
Hon CHAN Han-pan
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP
Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, BBS, MH, JP
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan
Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen

Member attending : Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan

Members absent : Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH
Hon TANG Ka-piu

Public Officers attending : **Agenda item IV**

Prof Anthony CHEUNG, GBS, JP
Secretary for Transport and Housing

Mr Patrick CHAN, JP
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing
(Transport) 3

Mr David TO Kam-biu
Deputy Commissioner/Planning & Technical
Services
Transport Department

Mr Anthony LOO, JP
Assistant Commissioner/Planning
Transport Department

Agenda item V

Mr YAU Shing-mu, JP
Under Secretary for Transport and Housing

Mr Patrick CHAN, JP
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing
(Transport)3

Ms Cordelia LAM Wai-ki
Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport and
Housing (Transport)2

Ms Connie HO Kam-yin
Senior Treasury Accountant (Transport)1
Transport and Housing Bureau

Mr TANG Wai-leung
Chief Engineer/Transport Planning
Transport Department

Agenda item VI

Mr YAU Shing-mu, JP
Under Secretary for Transport and Housing

Ms Rebecca PUN, JP
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing
(Transport) 1

Mr Edward TO
Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport and
Housing (Transport) 5

Mr WONG Wai-man
Deputy Project Manager (New Territories East)
Civil Engineering and Development Department

Mr Stephen LI
Chief Engineer/New Territories East 1
Civil Engineering and Development Department

Attendance by invitation : Agenda item IV

Ms Sue CHAN
Director
Wilbur Smith Associates Limited

Mr Michael C CLARK
Principal Consultant
Wilbur Smith Associates Limited

Mr Billy WONG
Associate
Wilbur Smith Associates Limited

Clerk in attendance : Ms Sophie LAU
Chief Council Secretary (1)2

Staff in attendance : Ms Macy NG
Senior Council Secretary (1)2

Miss Katherine CHAN
Council Secretary (1)2

Ms Clara LO
Legislative Assistant (1)9

Action

I Confirmation of minutes of meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(1)545/12-13 - Minutes of meeting on
16 November 2012)

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2012 were confirmed.

II Information papers issued since last meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(1)512/12-13(01) - Administration's response
to the submissions from
Our Bus Terminal on
parking spaces for coaches
LC Paper No. CB(1)531/12-13(01) - Letter dated 4 February
2013 from Hon TANG
Ka-piu on taxi licence
premium)

2. Members noted the above papers which had been issued since the last meeting.

III Items for discussion at the next meeting on 15 March 2013

(LC Paper No. CB(1)544/12-13(01) - List of outstanding items
for discussion
LC Paper No. CB(1)544/12-13(02) - List of follow-up actions)

3. Members agreed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting to be held on Friday, 15 March 2013, at 10:45 am –

- (a) Installation of "stop-and-go" e-payment facilities at Government tolled roads and tunnels; and
- (b) Reprovisioning of Yaumatei Police Station [advance project for Central Kowloon Route].

4. Mr WONG Kwok-hing referred to his letter [LC Paper No. CB(1)603/12-13(01)] raising his concern on the safety issues of the local passenger-carrying vessels. He requested that the matter should be discussed by the Panel. The Chairman proposed to write to the Administration, inviting them to respond to Mr WONG's concerns. The Panel would consider whether to further discuss the matter at a future meeting with reference to the Administration's reply.

Clerk

(Post-meeting note: On the instruction of the Chairman, the Administration had been requested to provide response to the concern raised by Mr WONG Kwok-hing in his letter. The Administration's response was issued to members on 11 March 2013 vide LC Paper No. CB(1)603/12-13(02).)

5. Dr KWOK Ka-ki suggested to put the aforesaid matter into the list of outstanding items for discussion. Mr Jeffrey LAM supplemented that the review of vessel safety should be conducted for all types of passenger-carrying vessels, including that of private yachts and vessels for public transport, for the sake of the safety of all passengers. The Chairman agreed.

IV Proposed measures to improve the traffic distribution among the road harbour crossings

- (LC Paper No. CB(1)544/12-13(03) - Administration's paper on proposed measures to improve the traffic distribution among the road harbour crossings
- LC Paper No. CB(1)544/12-13(04) - Paper on measures to improve the traffic distribution among the road harbour crossings prepared by the

Legislative Council
Secretariat (Background
brief)

LC Paper No. CB(1)570/12-13(01) - Submission from 的士、小
巴權益關注大聯盟)

6. At the invitation of the Chairman, Secretary for Transport and Housing ("STH") introduced the Administration's proposed measures to improve the traffic distribution among the Road Harbour Crossings ("RHCs"). With the aid of a powerpoint presentation, Assistant Commissioner/Planning ("AC/P") of the Transport Department ("TD") briefed members on the Administration's three options to shorten the traffic queues at the Cross Harbour Tunnel ("CHT"), namely *Option A – Resource Management Option*, *Option B – Eastern Harbour Crossing ("EHC") Reduction CHT Increase Option* and *Option C – Status Quo for Public Transport Option*. Mr Michael CLARK of Wibur Smith Associates Limited further made a powerpoint presentation to brief members on the study methodology and transport modelling.

7. The Chairman expressed that traffic congestion at RHCs was the public's major concern. In this connection, he suggested and members agreed to hold a special meeting to listen to the views from professionals, stakeholders and the public on the Administration's proposed measures to improve the traffic distribution among three RHCs.

(*Post-meeting note:* The special meeting was scheduled for Monday, 22 April 2013.)

Toll reduction at EHC and toll increase at CHT

8. Mr WONG Kwok-hing expressed support to the Administration's proposal to reduce the tolls at EHC and increase the tolls at CHT to divert traffic from CHT to EHC because the Administration should at least implement short term measures to alleviate the traffic congestion at RHCs. Mr WONG, however, showed concern about the effectiveness of such proposal.

9. Mr Jeffrey LAM shared Mr WONG Kwok-hing's views that the Administration's proposal was on the right track and enquired about the sustained effect of the proposed measures. He wondered whether the small increase in CHT tolls would be able to achieve the Administration's expected results. Mr LAM enquired if the Administration had any large-scale projects which might have impact on the proposed measures. He also

urged the Administration to note that professional drivers for public transport means including buses, mini-buses and taxis could not choose which tunnels to use but to follow instructions of the company/client.

10. In response to Mr WONG Kwok-hing's and Mr Jeffrey LAM's concerns, STH advised that the Administration estimated that the proposed measures would effectively reduce traffic congestion at CHT before 2017. Upon the completion of the Central-Wanchai Bypass ("CWB") in 2017, traffic conditions at RHCs would be further improved. Besides, the Administration decided to implement the proposed measure on a 12-month trial basis and would review the results of the trial before deciding whether the toll adjustments should continue. STH pointed out that the Administration had addressed the calls from the public to freeze public transport tolls and the requests of the goods vehicles trade to minimize the impact of toll adjustment on goods vehicles by devising *Option C – Status Quo for Public Transport Option*. In addition, STH confirmed that the Administration at the current stage had no plan for any large-scale projects that would affect the RHCs besides the CWB Project.

11. Mrs Regina IP expressed support to *Option C – Status Quo for Public Transport Option* and urged the Administration to carry out the proposal soonest possible to alleviate the traffic congestion at RHCs. Mrs IP asked whether the proposed measures would be implemented by way of positive or negative vetting procedures and why the proposed measure would not come into effect until mid-2014.

12. STH replied that since the CHT tolls were stipulated in the Schedule to the Road Tunnels (Government) Regulations, adjusting CHT's tolls would require an amendment regulation which was subject to negative vetting. In addition to effecting the necessary legislative amendments, the Administration would also need time to conduct public consultation and to negotiate with the EHC franchisee on the implementation of the most preferred toll adjustment option. Thus, the Administration would only be able to conduct the proposed 12-month trial in the second half of 2014 at the earliest.

13. Dr KWOK Ka-ki opposed the Administration's proposal to reduce the tolls at EHC and increase the tolls at CHT to divert traffic from CHT to EHC. After the implementation of *Option C – Status Quo for Public Transport Option*, it was estimated that about 4 200 vehicles would be reduced at CHT per day while about 4 800 vehicles would be increased at EHC per day. The effectiveness of such a proposal might be limited. Dr KWOK further pointed out that traffic congestion at RHCs only occurred

during peak hours whereas the traffic condition was normal for the rest of the day. The Administration's proposal might add burdens on all CHT users while having no strong impact on shortening the queue at CHT. Dr KWOK said that he would move a motion to oppose the toll increase at CHT.

14. In response to Dr KWOK Ka-ki's concern, STH stated that if 4 200 vehicles could be reduced at CHT per day, it was estimated that cross-harbour traffic queues would be eased and the non cross-harbour traffic would no longer be affected. Despite the increase in CHT toll charges, CHT users would benefit from shortened travel time.

15. Mr Frankie YICK opined that some Members at previous Legislative Council's discussions and the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in Hong Kong had doubts on whether the Administration's proposal to reduce the tolls at EHC and increase the tolls at CHT was able to achieve the desired outcome. The response from the community, in particular drivers of goods vehicles, might not be positive. Mr YICK suggested that the Administration should conduct cost and benefit analysis for the proposed measures to alleviate traffic congestion at RHCs.

16. Mr CHAN Hak-kan was worried that the traffic congestion at RHCs might be worsened if *Option C – Status Quo for Public Transport Option* was implemented. He expected that traffic might not only be heavier at CHT, EHC, but also at Island Eastern Corridor on Hong Kong Island and Tseung Kwan O Road. AC/P explained that in spite of the lengthened cross-harbour traffic queues at EHC during peak hours, the non cross-harbour traffic at CHT and EHC would not be adversely affected.

17. Dr Elizabeth QUAT echoed the concerns and worries of Mr Frankie YICK, Dr KWOK Ka-ki and Mr CHAN Hak-kan that the Administration's proposed measure to reduce the tolls at EHC and increase the tolls at CHT might not be able to cut short the queue at CHT or might even aggravate the current situation.

18. Mr Ronny TONG questioned the Administration's projections for the proposed measures. He wondered why under *Option C*, the number of vehicles to be added to EHC would be 1 400 as indicated in a slide [LC Paper No. CB(1)604/12-13(01)] whereas in another slide, the number concerned became 2 900. He also pointed out that apart from toll level, factors like parking fees at a certain destination would also affect the choice of RHC made by the drivers. Mr TONG urged the Administration to consider differential toll during peak and non-peak hours at the RHCs.

19. In response, STH stated that the Administration had considered the possible outcome of various scenarios, including peak hours and non-peak hours. AC/P explained that the idea was to rationalize the traffic distribution among the three RHCs by means of toll adjustment. The traffic forecasts for all three crossings were formulated as a whole because vehicles would be switched from one RHC to another due to toll adjustments. Deputy Commissioner/Planning & Technical Services of TD supplemented that the vehicles to be added to EHC as mentioned by Mr TONG were different in the two slides because the two slides covered two different scenarios with the tunnel tolls for EHC and CHT set at different levels. The second one indicated that additional traffic would be attracted to EHC causing serious traffic congestion at EHC if the toll level was reduced from \$25 to \$15 whilst keeping the tunnel tolls for CHT and the Western Harbour Crossing ("WHC") unchanged.

20. Mr James TO was concerned that the Administration's proposal to reduce the tolls at EHC and increase the tolls at CHT might be too marginal to divert the traffic from CHT to EHC. While appreciating the Administration's intent to freeze tolls for public transport fees under *Option C – Status Quo for Public Transport Option*, Mr TO asked the Administration to consider further decreasing the tolls at EHC with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of the proposed measures. He suggested that the Administration and the consultants should study further the vehicular traffic at RHCs during peak hours and to design measures to improve traffic congestion during these particular periods. He hoped that the Administration would work out a proposal which could balance the interests of all stakeholders.

21. Mr Tony TSE expressed concern that the total daily average traffic throughput of the three RHCs was about 250 000 vehicles, which exceeded RHCs' capacity limit of 210 000 assuming that WHC could only absorb 55 000 to the most at present. He also asked whether the Administration had any plan to build the fourth cross-harbour tunnel. He expected the consultant to elaborate more on how the key factors like travel time, toll charges and travel distance would affect tunnel users' selection.

22. STH replied that while the Administration understood that traffic congestions might still exist, their objective was to reduce the cross-harbour traffic queues at CHT so that the non cross-harbour traffic would not be adversely affected. Long term speaking, the Administration would consider other possible measures, such as improvements in connecting roads of RHCs, to relieve congestion. Mr Michael CLARK added that tunnel users' behavioural choice was derived from both tolls and travel time. Toll

charge could to a substantial extent influence choice of the tunnels by drivers.

Admin

23. Ms Cyd HO remarked that the Administration's proposal to improve the traffic distribution among RHCs should have sustained effects for a certain period as the railway development projects proposed under the Review and Update of the Railway Development Strategy 2000 were estimated to be completed by 2030 when the traffic congestion problem could be largely solved. In response to Ms HO's request, STH suggested that the consultants' report regarding the traffic distribution among RHCs, and the expected lasting effects of the three options proposed by the Administration, would be submitted for members' reference as appropriate.

Toll decrease at EHC only

24. Mr CHAN Hak-kan opined that the Administration should consider reducing the tolls at EHC only and maintaining the status quo for CHT tolls. STH responded that the situation was estimated to become worse under such a scenario. CHT might remain congested because the resulting relief would be offset by the newly generated cross-harbour traffic and some traffic would also be diverted from WHC. EHC might become congested due to the traffic diverted from CHT as well as some of the additional cross-harbour traffic. The Administration, therefore, did not recommend reduction in EHC tolls only.

Toll reduction at WHC only

25. Mr WONG Kwok-hing relayed Motor Transport Workers General Union's suggestion that the Administration should reduce WHC tolls from \$50 to \$15 for taxi drivers in order to alleviate cross-harbour traffic. AC/P mentioned that 28% of vehicles using WHC were taxis, which was already comparatively higher than that of CHT (26%) and EHC (22%). The Administration did not recommend toll reduction at WHC for individual vehicle class as WHC's connecting roads, especially those in Central, might become more congested.

26. Mr CHAN Hak-kan questioned why the Administration did not consider toll reduction at WHC. In response, AC/P explained that although WHC itself had spare capacity, its connecting roads were already congested. These roads would not be able to cope with additional traffic especially during the morning and evening rush hours. The Administration thus decided against reducing tolls at WHC to divert traffic from CHT.

27. Mr CHAN Han-pan pointed out that traffic congestion at CHT was serious. The Administration might consider toll reduction at WHC to divert the traffic from CHT to WHC during non-peak hours. AC/P responded that even the off peak-hour traffic at WHC was often heavy and the Administration's priority was to ease traffic congestion at CHT during peak hours.

Buyback proposal

28. Mr Frankie YICK suggested that the Administration should consider buying back WHC now. If so, the Administration might improve the traffic distribution among three RHCs by controlling their cost structures and toll level.

29. Dr KWOK Ka-ki shared Mr Frankie YICK's idea that the Administration should buy back WHC with a view to standardizing the fee structures of three RHCs. STH explained that this might not help to improve the traffic distribution at RHCs because of their different locations and connectivity.

Cross-harbour transport infrastructure

30. Messrs WONG Kwok-hing and POON Siu-ping echoed Mr Tony TSE's suggestion that the Administration should study some forward looking and long term measures like the construction of the fourth RHC or a cross-harbour bridge to relieve the heavy cross-harbour traffic. In response, STH explained that the traffic flow at RHCs might be improved after the completion of the CWB by end of 2017. In addition, the major obstacles to constructing the fourth RHC would be technical ones like insufficient physical space in the developed urban areas for providing the tunnel approach roads and other geographical constraints. The Administration would continue monitoring the traffic flows of three RHCs after 2017 and members' proposed option was noted.

Encouragement of driving less

31. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan opined that the Administration should consider both traffic management and environmental impacts when considering means to ease traffic congestion at RHCs. The Administration should encourage the drivers of private vehicles to drive less, such as making use of the "park-and-ride" scheme proposed earlier. The motorists could park their vehicles and take public transport to their destinations, instead of using RHCs. Mrs Regina IP and Ms Cyd HO shared Mr LEE Cheuk-yan's idea

that the Administration should also consider environment issues when making proposals on traffic improvement. STH replied that the Administration would continue to keep in view the feasibility of the "park-and-ride" as well as Electronic Road Pricing schemes to encourage the public to drive less.

Admin

32. Dr Elizabeth QUAT said that the Administration should consider implementing "park-and-ride" scheme. She also asked if the Administration had any other measures if all the three proposed options were found to be unacceptable to the public and stakeholders, and that if the Autotoll company could consider lowering the monthly fee of \$35 for Autotoll users because many drivers were deterred from using it due to the monthly fee and that if the Administration found the fee of \$35 per month set at a reasonable level. She also asked if the CWB could be completed in advance of the target completion date in 2017. Due to time constraint, the Administration would issue a written reply in respect of Dr QUAT's views and queries.

Connecting roads

Admin

33. Mr POON Siu-ping expressed concern about the traffic flows at the connecting roads of three RHCs and requested the Administration to submit information on the relevant peak traffic flow. Mr CHAN Han-pan also raised concern over WHC and requested the Administration to provide data to illustrate the traffic of WHC's connecting roads during peak and non-peak hours. STH responded that the Administration would pass those relevant information and data, if available, for members' reference.

34. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok was concerned that WHC's capacity was limited to 55 000 at the moment due to traffic congestion at its connecting roads. Ir Dr LO enquired to what extent WHC's traffic would be improved with the CWB coming into operation in 2017. AC/P replied that the estimated daily throughput of WHC would be increased to around 80 000 to 90 000 vehicles after 2017 with the operation of CWB.

Summing up

35. The Chairman pointed out that the Administration had not projected the vehicular traffic at WHC under *Options A, B and C* and expressed concern that the traffic congestion at EHC and CHT might become worse after tolls were adjusted as proposed. STH said that the Administration considered that toll reduction at EHC should be complemented by toll

increase at CHT in order to effectively alleviate congestion at CHT and rationalize the traffic distribution among the three RHCs.

(To allow sufficient time for discussion, the Chairman further extended the meeting by 15 minutes.)

Motions

36. After discussion, Dr KWOK Ka-ki moved the following motion –

"反對政府增加紅隧收費的建議。"

(Translation)

"Opposition to the Government's proposal of increasing the CHT tolls"

37. The Chairman put the motion to vote. Three members voted for and eight members voted against it. The Chairman declared that the motion was negated.

38. Mr WONG Kowg-hing moved the following motion –

"促請政府研究興建第四條過海隧道或跨海大橋可行性。"

(Translation)

"The Government is urged to examine the feasibility of constructing the fourth road harbour crossing or a cross-harbour bridge."

39. The Chairman put the motion to vote. Six members voted for and no member voted against it. The Chairman declared that the motion was carried.

V Toll adjustments of Western Harbour Crossing and Route 3 (Country Park Section)

(LC Paper No. CB(1)353/12-13(01) - Information paper provided by the Administration on Route 3 (Country Park Section) Tolls

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|---------------------------------|--|
| LC Paper No. CB(1)353/12-13(02) | - Letter dated 24 December 2012 from Route 3 (CPS) Company Limited on Route 3 Country Park Section (R3CPS) Toll Adjustment |
| LC Paper No. CB(1)361/12-13(01) | - Information paper provided by the Administration on Western Harbour Crossing Tolls |
| LC Paper No. CB(1)361/12-13(02) | - Paper provided by Western Harbour Tunnel Company Limited on the Company's background brief |
| LC Paper No. CB(1)544/12-13(06) | - Paper on toll adjustments of Western Harbour Crossing and Route 3 (Country Park Section) prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief)) |

40. Due to lack of time, the Chairman proposed and members agreed to defer the discussion of this item to the next regular meeting.

VI Tseung Kwan O–Lam Tin Tunnel – detailed design and site investigation

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|----------------------------------|---|
| (LC Paper No. CB(1)544/12-13(07) | - Administration's paper on 823TH – Tseung Kwan O – Lam Tin Tunnel Detailed Design and Site Investigation Works |
| LC Paper No. CB(1)544/12-13(08) | - Paper on Tseung Kwan O–Lam Tin Tunnel prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief) |
| LC Paper No. CB(1)574/12-13(01) | - Memorandum referring to the Panel the views and concerns raised by Kwun Tong District Council on |

the noise and emission of the planned Tseung Kwan O–Lam Tin Tunnel to be constructed)

41. Upon invitation, Under Secretary for Transport and Housing ("USTH") briefed members on the Administration's paper which set out its proposal to carry out detailed design and associated site investigation works of the Tseung Kwan O–Lam Tin Tunnel ("TKO-LT Tunnel") at an estimated cost of \$196.0 million in money-of-the-day prices. Deputy Project Manager (New Territories East) of Civil Engineering and Development Department ("DPM(NTE)") then made a powerpoint presentation to brief members on the details of the TKO-LT Tunnel project ("the Project"). Members noted that subject to the support of the Panel, the Administration planned to seek the support of Public Works Subcommittee ("PWSC") in March 2013 for upgrading part of 823TH "TKO-LT Tunnel" to Category A, comprising detailed design as well as associated site investigation works and supervision, with a view to seeking funding approval from Finance Committee ("FC") in May 2013.

Works schedule

42. The Deputy Chairman recognized that the Panel had considered the Project when the Administration sought funding from FC to carry out the Feasibility Study for Further Development of Tseung Kwan O ("TKO") back in 2002. He opined that it took too long for the Administration to take forward the project despite the concerns raised by nearby residents about the environmental and traffic impact of Lam Tin Interchange. He urged the Administration to expedite its implementation and asked for the timetable of constructing TKO-LT Tunnel.

43. USTH replied that given the complexity of the relevant works, a longer time was required for implementation, particularly in the planning stage. He advised that the relevant preparatory work and gazettal procedures of the Project, including handling of objections, if any, required about three years and that the construction time was about five years. He advised that TKO-LT Tunnel was targetted for commissioning in around 2021.

Admin 44. At the request of the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman, USTH agreed to provide written information on the relevant procedures of implementing the Project and the timetable after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: the supplementary information provided by the Administration was issued to all Members on 5 March 2013 vide LC Paper No. CB(1)668/12-13.)

45. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung considered that those who lodged objections to the Project should not be blamed for the delay of works as some of the suggestions of the public were accepted by the Administration and the construction, once commenced, could hardly be changed. He asked whether there were still objections to the Project which had not been resolved by the Administration and whether further objections were envisaged.

46. USTH said that the Administration was aware that the implementation of an infrastructure project might affect local residents to a certain extent. As such, the Administration had been carrying out various public engagement exercises to understand the public's concern and explore different design options with a view to maximizing the benefits of the projects while minimizing the adverse impact on the public. He said that local residents had indeed given valuable suggestions to the Project. Citing Cha Kwo Ling Village ("CKLV") as an example, USTH advised that the Administration had proposed to adopt a tunnelling scheme to avoid any works which might affect the integrity of the community of CKLV and the local landmarks including Cha Kwo Ling Tin Hau Temple and the former Four Hills Public School.

47. In respect of any foreseeable objections to the Project, USTH said that as there were still statutory procedures ahead in taking forward the Project, the Administration would not eliminate the possibility of receiving objections in the gazettal process. Nevertheless, appropriate procedures were in place to handle the objections received.

48. In response to Mr CHAN Hak-kan's enquiry about whether both the projects of TKO-LT Tunnel and Cross Bay Link could be completed in parallel, USTH replied that the Administration planned to complete both projects at about the same time. He added that as the Project involved more complicated works, early commencement was necessary.

Alignment of TKO-LT Tunnel

49. Mr Frankie YICK noted that the alignment of TKO-LT Tunnel had been revised and straightened. He understood that the planning of TKO-LT Tunnel was based on the presumption that it would be a tolled tunnel and asked whether a toll plaza was still included in the Project.

50. USTH confirmed that the alignment had been changed to exclude the toll plaza. He explained that under the revised alignment, reclamation would be minimized to reduce the environmental impact of the Project in response to the views of the public. He added that under the existing policy, the operating cost of Government tunnels and roads should be recovered through toll charges. The Administration would explore other toll collection means in the detailed design stage due to the exclusion of the toll plaza.

51. Mr Frankie YICK suggested that the straightened alignment would not only reduce the reclamation area but also the construction cost of the Project. He commended the Administration's willingness to take into account views expressed by the relevant trade, academic bodies and the public. Noting that the Government was collecting a flat toll of \$3 for TKO Tunnel, he expected that the toll of TKO-LT Tunnel would be set at the same level. As such, he proposed that it would be better for the Administration not to charge any tolls for both tunnels for the overall benefits of the community. USTH noted Mr YICK's views. The Chairman suggested that since the design of TKO-LT Tunnel did not include a toll plaza, if tolls were to be collected at this Tunnel, electronic means might have to be adopted.

52. Dr KWOK Ka-ki asked about the actual area of reclamation required under the revised alignment. He hoped that a portion of the reclaimed land would be used for providing community facilities, such as waterfront enhancement facilities.

53. DPM(NTE) replied that the reclamation area of the Project had been reduced to about three hectares under the revised alignment. He advised that while the major part of the reclamation area would be used for constructing TKO-LT Tunnel, pedestrian access facilities linking the existing Junk Bay waterfront promenade would be provided. Dr KWOK hoped that the Transport and Housing Bureau would collaborate with the relevant bureau/department like the Leisure and Cultural Services Department in drawing up the waterfront enhancement facilities.

54. In response to Dr KWOK Ka-ki's further enquiry about the estimated construction cost of the Project, USTH said that as the detailed design of the Project was not yet commenced, it would be difficult to estimate the cost accurately at this stage.

Capacity of TKO-LT Tunnel

55. Given the growing population in TKO, Dr Elizabeth QUAT asked whether the current design of TKO-LT Tunnel would cater for future expansion. She also enquired about the estimated population of TKO in 2021.

56. DPM(NTE) said that the design capacity of TKO-LT Tunnel had taken into account the future expansion of TKO population, which was anticipated to grow from the current figure of 380 000 to 450 000 in 2021. DPM(NTE) added that the anticipated volume/capacity ratios at TKO-LT Tunnel and TKO Tunnel would be around 0.9 and 0.8 respectively in 2021, representing that there would be spare capacity for both tunnels in the future.

57. Dr KWOK Ka-ki expressed support for the Project. In light of the Government's plan to increase the land supply for housing development, he expressed concern on whether the population in TKO would further increase to over 450 000, hence affecting the traffic flow of TKO-LT Tunnel.

58. USTH advised that future increase in population would be quite unlikely. He added that the two tunnels in TKO, together with other connecting roads, would be able to cope with the anticipated traffic demand.

Environmental impacts

59. Dr Elizabeth QUAT noted that there were concerns about the noise impact of TKO-LT Tunnel at both ends to nearby residents. She asked about the measures which would be taken by the Administration to address those concerns. Mr CHAN Hak-kan shared with Dr QUAT.

60. DPM(NTE) said that the Administration had carried out an Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA") study and had submitted the EIA report to the Director of Environmental Protection for approval under the EIA Ordinance (Cap. 499) ("EIAO"). The Administration would provide the EIA report for inspection and comment by the public and the Advisory Council on the Environment by mid 2013. He said that the current design of TKO-LT Tunnel had fully complied with the requirements specified under EIAO. Under the current proposal, the Administration would construct the main carriageways of the Lam Tin Interchange below the adjacent ground level and cover it with a landscape deck and noise enclosures. Moreover, a variety of measures would be implemented on the slip roads of the Interchange, such as to construct roads between cut-slopes

or to provide noise barriers/enclosures, so as to minimize noise and visual impact as well as light nuisance.

Other views

61. Noting that the Administration was pursuing the bus route rationalization and enhancement of interchange services, Mr CHAN Hak-kan asked whether the Project would provide bus-bus interchange facilities near the entrance of TKO-LT Tunnel to facilitate TKO residents interchanging for different destinations.

62. USTH said that the Administration would adopt an "Area Approach" in which the entire district was to be used as the basis for reviewing and rationalizing franchised bus services to relieve the pressure of traffic congestion and to ensure effective use of resources. He agreed to study Mr CHAN's suggestion in the detailed design, having regard to the relevant cost involved and impact on the alignment of TKO-LT Tunnel.

Summing up

63. The Chairman concluded that the Panel supported in principle the funding proposal and the submission of it to PWSC for further consideration. He also informed members that the Deputy Chairman had submitted a motion to him under this agenda item. He explained that since the motion was handed to him during the period of extension of the meeting, Rule 24A(f) of the House Rules disallowed the motion to be dealt with at the meeting. The Chairman invited members to note that any motions directly related to an agenda item of the meeting must be proposed during the original appointed meeting time. In addition, any motions proposed must be seconded by a Panel member.