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Panel on Transport
Meeting on 15 March 2013

Background brief on Central Kowloon Route

Purpose

This paper provides background information on the Central Kowloon Route ("CKR") and summarizes the discussions held by Legislative Council ("LegCo") Members in recent years on CKR at meetings of the Panel on Transport ("the Panel"), the Public Works Subcommittee ("PWSC") and the Finance Committee ("FC").

The need for CKR

2. The east-west traffic movements across central Kowloon are primarily served by Lung Cheung Road, Boundary Street, Prince Edward Road West, Argyle Street, Waterloo Road, Gascoigne Road Flyover and Chatham Road North. Most of these routes are already operating at full capacity at peak hours. Apart from Lung Cheung Road and Gascoigne Road Flyover, the rest of these existing east-west road links have frequent frontage accesses and signal controlled junctions, which are constraining the traffic flow of these road links.

3. The proposed CKR will connect West Kowloon with the proposed Kai Tak Development and the road network in Kowloon Bay. It will provide a new strategic road link across central Kowloon and relieve traffic congestion at peak hours on the existing east-west road links.

Preliminary and detailed design of CKR

4. The Administration started the engineering review of CKR in its original alignment and dual two-lane configuration in June 1998.
5. The original scheme of CKR was a 3.9-kilometre ("km") trunk road with about 2.6 km of dual two-lane tunnel connecting the existing Yau Ma Tei Interchange in the west and the proposed road network under the previous South East Kowloon Development ("SEKD") (now known as Kai Tak Development) in the east. Owing to changes in the SEKD scheme in the past years, the Administration had revised the alignment of CKR. The Administration also considered it necessary to adopt a dual three-lane configuration to meet the anticipated traffic demands between east and west Kowloon.
6. In April 2007, FC approved the Administration's proposal to change the scope of **582TH** "CKR-consultants' design fees and site investigations" to cover the expansion from dual two-lane configuration to a longer dual three-lane configuration for the CKR and to increase the Approved Project Estimate from \$99.0 million by \$93.3 million to \$192.3 million in money-of-the-day prices.
7. At the PWSC meeting on 7 February 2007 and FC meeting on 20 April 2007, members had expressed concerns about the alignment of CKR and its implications on preserving the Yau Ma Tei Police Station ("the Police Station"), a Grade III historic building. They also expressed concerns on how the existing community facilities in the vicinity will be affected by the project. While approving the increase in funding for the consultancy study and site investigations, members requested the Administration to consult the public on the alignment and report back on the preferred option. An inter-departmental steering committee chaired by the Director of Highways has since been formed to take forward the project.
8. At the Panel meeting on 16 May 2008, the Administration briefed the Panel on the latest progress of the consultancy study for CKR. The Administration also advised that it planned to start the construction of CKR in 2012 for completion in 2016.

Public engagement activities

9. According to the Administration, it has been keeping in close

touch with the respective District Councils, local communities, trade and hawker representatives, professional bodies and academics having an interest in the CKR project so as to collect views on the preferred alignment of the trunk road. It has organized public forums, outreach events and visits, meetings with local communities and District Council Members, on-street surveys, and in-depth interviews to collect public views and to explain the progress of the project. A dedicated web-site for the project was also launched.

10. In arriving at the preferred alignment, the Administration has advised that it has incorporated views from the public, and paid particular attention to public concerns, such as local culture and heritage conservation, reprovisioning of community facilities and land use planning, and environmental issues.

Preferred alignment

11. The Panel noted that the Administration started the consultancy study for the investigation and preliminary design of CKR in August 2007. As the first step in identifying possible alignment options, the consultant reviewed more than 40 proposals considered during previous CKR studies, which included tunnel and flyover options covering most of the Kowloon Peninsula as far north as Boundary Street and across the harbour around the southern tip of Tsim Sha Tsui. The review affirms that tunnel (as opposed to flyover) options across central Kowloon (as opposed to northern or southern Kowloon) are more favourable for the development of the preferred alignment, taking into account factors such as environmental impacts, land impacts, traffic implications and connections to existing road networks.

12. The preferred alignment scheme is a dual 3-lane trunk road of about 4.7 km connecting West Kowloon with the proposed Kai Tak Development. It will further connect the road network in Kowloon Bay. About 3.9 km of the CKR will be in tunnel.

Local culture study and heritage conservation

13. On members' concerns about heritage conservation and the need to preserve local culture, the Administration had advised that the consultant had carried out a local culture study and a social impact assessment which aimed at understanding the Yau Ma Tei local culture

and characteristics, and provided guiding principles based on sustainable development concepts and evaluation criteria for the CKR alignment selection, reprovisioning arrangements and planning of land use in the affected areas in Yau Ma Tei associated with the construction of CKR.

14. The preservation of the Police Station has been a major theme in developing the alignment options at the western end. The Police Station comprises an old wing and a new wing built in 1922 and 1957 respectively. According to the Administration, the preferred alignment scheme would avoid the old wing of the Police Station and would run underneath about one-third of the new wing which could be retained technically with underpinning. The underpinning method might cause minor but repairable damage to the building. It would also increase the construction cost and time.

15. Since the project is a designated project under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance (Cap 499) ("EIAO"), the Administration advised that it would conduct a Built Heritage Impact Assessment on the Police Station which would be submitted to the Antiquities and Monuments Office. In the course of conservation, members also asked the Administration to pay particular attention to the inner parts of the Police Station as well.

Reprovisioning arrangements and land use planning

16. At the Panel meeting on 16 May 2008, members noted that in the revised proposal, the Yau Ma Tei Jockey Club Polyclinic building would not be affected and could continue to be in operation. Moreover, the Post Office and the Library would be reprovisioned temporarily in Yau Ma Tei during construction, and moved to a permanent accommodation in the same area after construction. The Jade Hawkers' Bazaar would also be reprovisioned temporarily in Yau Ma Tei during construction, and would be moved back to the original location thereafter. The Administration would continue to explore possible options to make way for the operation of the Temple Street night market, which held a variety of commercial activities and was considered an important part of the Yau Ma Tei local culture, during the CKR construction.

17. The construction of CKR in Yau Ma Tei and the relocation of community facilities would provide opportunities for land use restructuring to enhance the area. The consultant had carried out an urban design study to develop the plan for future land use for the affected

areas under the sustainable development principles. Increased greening and quality open space would be provided.

Environmental issues

18. The Panel noted that some local residents had raised concerns on air and noise impacts in Yau Ma Tei that might arise from CKR. It had requested the Administration to put in place suitable mitigation measures to address the air and noise pollution arising from the project.

19. The Administration advised that the study consultant had proposed to include the following measures for detailed study in the EIA and in the design of CKR -

- (a) A landscaped deck would be constructed at the western tunnel portal so that the vehicular entrance and exit would be moved from Ferry Street to Hoi Wan Road, farther away from existing residential buildings. This arrangement would also provide additional greening to the area;
- (b) On ventilation design, an exhaust extract system would be installed to limit emissions at the portal; and
- (c) The ventilation building would be relocated from the previously proposed location near Ferry Street to the Yau Ma Tei Interchange of the West Kowloon Highway. The new location would allow a better dispersion of tunnel exhaust to reduce air quality impact on existing dwellings.

20. Regarding the concerns on the traffic noise arising from Gascoigne Road Flyover, the Administration advised that it would continue to examine re-provisioning the Flyover, with noise barriers or other appropriate measures, so as to maintain traffic on the Flyover during CKR construction.

Other concerns

21. In the course of deliberations, members urged the Administration to speed up the delivery of the project and studied in detail the potential safety hazard of tunnel operations and put in place necessary contingency

measures. Opportunity should be taken to examine how the CKR project could help improve the sustainability of adjacent areas such as Ma Tau Wai and To Kwa Wan.

Relevant papers and relevant questions raised at Council meetings

22. In the fourth LegCo, Members raised five questions relating to CKR at the Council meetings of 29 October 2008, 11 March 2009, 1 April 2009, 10 June 2009 and 21 March 2012. The hyperlinks to relevant papers and questions are given in **Appendix**.

Latest developments

23. The Administration will seek support from the Panel for the funding application of the advance project – reprovisioning of the Police Station (3277LP Project) and update progress of the CKR project at the next Panel meeting to be held on 15 March 2013.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
12 March 2013

Central Kowloon Route

List of relevant papers

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
17.2.1998	Public Works Subcommittee ("PWSC")	Administration's paper on 582TH - Central Kowloon Route - consultants' design fees and site investigations	PWSC(97-98)133 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr97-98/english/fc/pwsc/papers/p1702133.htm
		Minutes of meeting	PWSC 79/07-09 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr97-98/english/fc/pwsc/minutes/pwmn1702.htm
13.3.1998	Panel on Transport and Panel on Planning, Lands and Works	Administration's paper on Central Kowloon Route	CB(1)1103/97-98(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr97-98/english/panels/tp/papers/t13032aj.htm
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1290/97-98 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr97-98/english/panels/tp/minutes/tj130398.htm
25.3.1998	PWSC	Administration's paper on 582TH - Central Kowloon Route - consultants' design fees and site investigations	PWSC(97-98)143 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr97-98/english/fc/pwsc/papers/p2503143.htm
		Minutes of meeting	PWSC 86/97-98 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr97-98/english/fc/pwsc/minutes/pwmn2503.htm

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
7.2001	Panel on Transport ("TP")	Administration's paper on Central Kowloon Route	CB(1)1688/00-01(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr00-01/english/panels/tp/papers/a1688e03.pdf
26.4.2002	TP	Administration's paper on Central Kowloon Route Administration's supplementary information paper on Central Kowloon Route	CB(1)1558/01-02(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr01-02/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0426cb1-1558-3e.pdf CB(1)2130/01-02(06) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr01-02/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0426cb1-2130-6e.pdf
		Minutes of the meeting	CB(1)2200/01-02 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr01-02/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp020426.pdf
24.11.2006	TP	Administration's paper on Central Kowloon Route and improvement to Tuen Mun Road Administration's supplementary information paper on Central to Kowloon Route	CB(1)296/06-07(04) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/tp/papers/tp1124cb1-296-4-e.pdf CB(1)515/06-07(01) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/tp/papers/tp1124cb1-515-1-e.pdf
		Minutes of the meeting	CB(1)527/06-07 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp061124.pdf

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
19.12.2006	PWSC	Administration's paper on Central Kowloon Route - consultants' design fees and site investigations	PWSC(2006-07)51 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/fc/pwsc/papers/p06-51e.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	PWSC 33/06-07 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/fc/pwsc/minutes/pw061219.pdf
7.2.2007	PWSC	Administration's paper on Central Kowloon Route - consultants' design fees and site investigations	PWSC(2006-07)74 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/fc/pwsc/papers/p06-74e.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	PWSC 57/06-07 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/fc/pwsc/minutes/pw070207.pdf
20.4.2007	Finance Committee	Minutes of meeting	FC 100/06-07 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/fc/fc/minutes/fc070420.pdf
16.5.2008	TP	Administration's paper on Central Kowloon Route progress report	CB(1)1494/07-08(02) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0516cb1-1494-2-e.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)2205/07-08 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp080516.pdf

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
29.10.2008	-	Hon Andrew CHENG raised a question on traffic noise and air pollution problems along Gascoigne Road Flyover	http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/200810/29/P200810290198.htm
27.2.2009	TP	Administration's paper on Central Kowloon Route - progress report Background brief on Central Kowloon Route prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat	CB(1)858/08-09(03) http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0227cb1-858-3-e.pdf CB(1)859/08-09 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/tp/papers/tp0227cb1-859-e.pdf
		Minutes of meeting	CB(1)1351/08-09 http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr08-09/english/panels/tp/minutes/tp20090227.pdf
11.3.2009	-	Hon Starry LEE raised a question on impact of infrastructural projects in To Kwa Wan and Ma Tau Kok districts	http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/200903/11/P200903110149.htm
1.4.2009	-	Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG raised a question on installation of road barriers along the road sections	http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/200904/01/P200904010223.htm
10.6.2009	-	Hon James TO raised a question on Greening Master Plans	http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/200906/10/P200906100139.htm

Date of meeting	Committee	Minutes/Paper	LC Paper No.
21.3.2012	-	Hon WONG Kwok-kin raised a question on traffic improvement measures in Kwun Tong North	http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/201203/21/P201203210195.htm

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