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**Public Works Subcommittee of the Finance Committee
of the Legislative Council**

**Minutes of the 8th meeting
held in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex
on Wednesday, 11 December 2019, at 8:30 am**

Members present:

Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP (Chairman)

Hon Charles Peter MOK, JP (Deputy Chairman)

Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP

Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP

Hon CHAN Hak-kan, BBS, JP

Hon Claudia MO

Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP

Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP

Hon WU Chi-wai, MH

Hon CHAN Chi-chuen

Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP

Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP

Hon Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung, SBS, JP

Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung

Hon Alvin YEUNG

Hon CHU Hoi-dick

Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP

Hon HO Kai-ming

Hon Holden CHOW Ho-ding

Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH

Hon Tanya CHAN
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan, JP
Hon HUI Chi-fung
Hon LUK Chung-hung, JP
Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH
Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai
Hon Jeremy TAM Man-ho
Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai
Hon AU Nok-hin
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH, JP
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS
Hon CHAN Hoi-yan

Member attending:

Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki

Members absent:

Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Han-pan, BBS, JP
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan
Hon KWONG Chun-yu

Public officers attending:

Mr Howard LEE Man-sing	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) ³
Mr LAM Sai-hung, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Works)
Ms Bernadette LINN, JP	Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands)
Ms Maisie CHENG Mei-sze, JP	Permanent Secretary for the Environment

Ms Margaret HSIA Mai-chi	Principal Assistant Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury) (Works)
Miss Cheryl CHOW Ho-kiu	Principal Assistant Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands)2
Ms Alice PANG, JP	Project Manager (South) South Development Office Civil Engineering and Development Department
Mr Raymond LEE Wai-man	Chief Engineer (South)1 South Development Office Civil Engineering and Development Department

Clerk in attendance:

Ms Doris LO	Chief Council Secretary (1)2
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Staff in attendance:

Ms Ada LAU	Senior Council Secretary (1)2
Ms Christina SHIU	Legislative Assistant (1)2
Ms Christy YAU	Legislative Assistant (1)8
Ms Clara LO	Legislative Assistant (1)9

Action

The Chairman advised that there were two papers for discussion on the agenda for the meeting. The first funding proposal was carried over from the meetings on 19 June, 27 November and 4 December 2019. The second funding proposal was a new submission from the Administration. The two funding proposals involved a total funding allocation of \$22,847.4 million. He reminded members that in accordance with Rule 83A of the Rules of Procedure ("RoP") of the Legislative Council ("LegCo"), they should disclose the nature of any direct or indirect pecuniary interests relating to the funding proposals under discussion at the meeting before they spoke on the proposals. He also drew members' attention to Rule 84 of RoP on voting in case of direct pecuniary interest.

Head 707 — New Towns and Urban Area Development
PWSC(2019-20)16 332CL West Kowloon Reclamation — main
works (remainder)

2. The Chairman advised that the proposal, i.e. [PWSC\(2019-20\)16](#), sought to upgrade part of 332CL to Category A at an estimated cost of \$331.9 million in money-of-the-day prices for the construction of a footbridge system at the junction of Sham Mong Road and Hing Wah Street West in Sham Shui Po ("the proposed footbridge system"). The Government consulted the Panel on Development on the proposed works on 30 April 2019. Panel members supported the submission of the funding proposal to the Subcommittee for consideration. A report on the gist of the Panel's discussion was tabled at the meeting.

Number of lifts and escalators of the proposed footbridge system

3. Ms Tanya CHAN noted that the proposed footbridge system would be equipped with a total of seven lifts and four covered escalators, including two lifts at each of the three crossheads adjacent to SKH St. Mary's Church Mok Hing Yiu College ("MHY College"), Tack Ching Girls' Secondary School ("TCGSS") and the North West Kowloon Reclamation Area Site 6 ("Site 6") respectively. What was more, the crossheads of MHY College and TCGSS were each provided with a pair of escalators. Ms CHAN was deeply concerned whether the proposed footbridge system was provided with facilities that exceeded its needs, resulting in an unnecessary increase in the construction cost.

4. Mr AU Nok-hin pointed out that according to the record of the 15th meeting of the Transport Affairs Committee of the Fifth Sham Shui Po District Council ("DC"), the Administration had consulted the public on the proposed footbridge system and decided to provide the escalators and lifts in response to the views collected. He disagreed that the Government should relax the pedestrian flow requirement for the provision of such facilities just for the sake of satisfying the demand of the local community. Mr AU was also concerned that outdoor escalators were prone to failure, which would in turn result in an increase in the recurrent expenditure of the proposed footbridge system in the future.

5. Project Manager (South), South Development Office, Civil Engineering and Development Department ("PM(S)/CEDD"), said that generally speaking, the construction cost of a footbridge system depended on the geographical setting and geotechnical conditions of its location, and the

number of facilities such as lifts and escalators. As regards the proposed footbridge system, the Administration found it necessary to install two lifts at certain landing points after considering the following factors, among others: (a) the need for those in need to make a relatively long detour to access other barrier-free crossing facilities when the lifts were not in service in the event of failure or during routine maintenance; (b) the purpose to reduce lift users' waiting time; and (c) the removal of at-grade pedestrian crossings at the junction of Sham Mong Road and Hing Wah Street West after completion of the proposed works. In addition, the number of facilities, such as lifts and escalators, of the proposed footbridge would also have implications on the annual recurrent expenditure. Such expenditure would be higher than that of other footbridge systems equipped with fewer lifts.

6. At the request of Ms Tanya CHAN, the Administration should provide supplementary information setting out the construction costs and annual recurrent costs for maintenance under the respective scenarios of providing one lift and a set of two lifts (each complete with a pair of escalators).

(Post-meeting note: The supplementary information provided by the Administration was circulated to members vide [LC Paper No. PWSC68/19-20\(01\)](#) on 10 January 2020.)

7. Mr Jeremy TAM said that, having resided in Aqua Marine for five years, he was familiar with the local environment. He pointed out that even in the event of failure or during maintenance of the lifts installed at the crossheads of MHY College and TCGSS of the proposed footbridge system, people in need could still access the ground level by the lift in Aqua Marine. They could then head northwest along Sham Mong Road and cross the road at a crossing to reach Hoi Lai Estate or MHY College, or head north along the sidewalk of Hing Wah Street West and cross the road at a crossing to reach TCGSS and places to its north (including Hing Wah Street West Playground). He therefore considered it unnecessary to provide two lifts at each of the two aforesaid crossheads.

8. In addition, citing the minutes of Sham Shui Po DC's meeting, Mr Jeremy TAM pointed out that 24-hour public walkways would be provided at Site 6 and the topside development of MTR Nam Cheong Station connecting to the proposed footbridge system, the footbridge system at Sham Mong Road/Tonkin Street West and the footbridge system at Sham Mong Road/Yen Chow Street West. Mr TAM enquired whether the proposed footbridge system and the public housing development at Site 6 would be connected to each other and co-use the lifts to be provided in the housing development. If so, the relevant bureau(x)/department(s) should

consider opening such lifts for public use around the clock and removing one lift from the crosshead concerned.

9. PM(S)/CEDD responded that the Administration had considered different factors in determining the number of lifts to be provided for the proposed footbridge system, including the relatively large number of housing developments and community facilities (many of which targeted the elderly and persons with disabilities ("PWDs")) that were either completed or under construction in the vicinity; the need to make lift facilities as convenient as possible to encourage pedestrians to use the footbridge system; the availability of sufficient at-grade space to accommodate two lifts; the Administration's plan to remove the existing at-grade pedestrian crossings at the junction of Sham Mong Road/Hing Wah Street West after completion of the proposed works; and the need for those in need to make a relatively long detour to access other barrier-free crossing facilities when the lifts were not in service. The Administration proposed providing a total of seven lifts for the proposed footbridge system, which could bring convenience to a large number of users (including disabled and wheelchair-bound persons and users of social welfare and other public facilities) on the one hand, and minimize the inconvenience to members of the public on the other hand by obviating their need to make a detour to access other barrier-free facilities when the lifts were not in service. Moreover, schools nearby had requested that escalators be provided during the Administration's local consultation on the proposed footbridge system. Having considered local views and technical feasibility and consulted the relevant departments, the Administration decided to provide escalators in both directions at the two crossheads adjacent to the schools.

10. PM(S)/CEDD added that near the crosshead connecting to Aqua Marine of the proposed footbridge system, a lift and a covered staircase provided by the developer of Aqua Marine were open for public use around the clock. Therefore, provision of one lift at the said location would suffice. As regards the crosshead connecting to Site 6, according to the planning of the Housing Department ("HD"), a Social Welfare Facilities Block was the structure at the site located closest to the proposed footbridge system. However, she had learnt from the discussion with HD that in view of actual operational needs and for security reasons, the lift in the block was not suitable to be opened for use by the public. Hence, the public could only use the lift located farther away from the proposed footbridge system at a distance of about 95 metres to access the ground level directly. The Administration considered that the connectivity of Site 6 and the adjacent public transport interchange could be enhanced by providing two lifts directly connecting to the deck level of Site 6 at the said crosshead.

11. Mr Jeremy TAM did not subscribe to the Administration's explanation and urged the Administration to examine seriously whether the proposed footbridge system should be provided with fewer lifts in the light of members' views. At the request of Mr TAM, the Administration undertook to provide a graphical illustration to explain the geographical reasons for the need to provide two lifts at each of the crossheads of the proposed footbridge system connecting to MHY College, TCGSS and Site 6 (including the routes that could be taken by persons in need to access different locations in the vicinity via the proposed footbridge system); and advise whether joint effort had been made with HD to explore the possibility of opening the lifts and/or escalators at Site 6 for round-the-clock access by the public, so that consideration could be given to removing one of the lifts from the crosshead concerned; if so, what outcome was reached.

(Post-meeting note: The supplementary information provided by the Administration was circulated to members vide [LC Paper No. PWSC68/19-20\(01\)](#) on 10 January 2020.)

12. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen questioned that although the Administration had pointed out in the paper for discussion that the three footbridge systems to be constructed and being constructed along Sham Mong Road (i.e. the proposed footbridge system, the footbridge system at Sham Mong Road/Tonkin Street West under construction and the footbridge system at Sham Mong Road/Yen Chow Street West under planning) could serve nine existing and future major housing developments nearby covering a total population of about 72 000 in 2022, as well as 10 existing primary and secondary schools attended by about 9 000 students, it did not separately provide such data as the relevant projected user rates specific to the proposed footbridge system (e.g. the number of Aqua Marine residents using the footbridge, the number of students of MHY College and TCGSS and the number of residents at Site 6 after population intake), making it difficult for members to judge if the construction of the proposed footbridge system was fully justified. Mr CHAN also enquired about the service hours and usage of the lift provided by the property developer of Aqua Marine, and whether the usage of the lift had reached its limit. The Administration might, taking into account the usage of the lift, consider the feasibility of removing the one lift at the crosshead connecting to Aqua Marine of the footbridge in order to bring some cost savings in the construction.

13. Dr CHENG Chung-tai pointed out that the Administration had explained in detail the benefits of the proposed footbridge system at Sham Mong Road/Tonkin Street West in the relevant paper for discussion (i.e. [PWSC\(2016-17\)28](#)). On the contrary, the paper for discussion for the current item provided only vague information in this regard.

14. PM(S)/CEDD replied that the Administration planned the continuous grade-separated pedestrian network comprising the three aforesaid footbridge systems based on its projection of pedestrian flow arising from the population of a number of existing and future housing developments in the district, as well as the number of students of the many schools and users of the many community facilities nearby. As regards the proposed footbridge system, its design capacity would be able to cope with the estimated peak two-way pedestrian flow of about 1 400 pedestrians per hour per span in 2031. She also advised that as the covered staircase and lift provided in Aqua Marine would be open for public use around the clock, the Administration would provide only one lift at the crosshead concerned for the convenience of those in need.

15. Ms CHAN Hoi-yan pointed out that apart from housing developments and schools, there were also quite a number of social welfare facilities providing services for young children and the elderly in the vicinity of the proposed footbridge system. Also, residents, students and users of social welfare facilities would go out at different hours of the day, and many of them were wheelchair-users, infants, young children and their caretakers. Ms CHAN opined that the Administration should provide sufficient information (e.g. the projected pedestrian flow at different hours of the day, and the number of wheelchairs that could be accommodated in each of the lifts) to illustrate how the barrier-free facilities provided for the proposed footbridge system and their quantity could bring convenience to such people in need. The Administration should also give details on the planning of Site 6 as appropriate, including the number of residents in the housing development after population intake and the user numbers of the supporting facilities, so that members could consider if the facilities of the proposed footbridge system were provided suitably and reasonably.

16. At the request of the Chairman and members, the Administration agreed to provide the following supplementary information after the meeting: (a) an account of the schools and community facilities in the vicinity of the proposed footbridge system and the type of the Site 6 housing project; the projected pedestrian flow of the proposed footbridge system arising from these schools, community facilities and housing developments at different hours of the day (especially the peak hours before and after school and lunch breaks) and the demand of these users for the installation of barrier-free facilities for the proposed footbridge system; and (b) an elaborate account of the considerations behind the provision of a total of seven lifts and four covered escalators under the project of the proposed footbridge system, especially the rationale behind providing two lifts at each of the crossheads connecting to MHY College, TCGSS and Site 6 respectively.

(*Post-meeting note:* The supplementary information provided by the Administration was circulated to members vide [LC Paper No. PWSC68/19-20\(01\)](#) on 10 January 2020.)

Criteria applied in the provision of lifts and/or escalators at footbridges

17. Mr AU Nok-hin questioned if the criteria applied by the Administration in providing facilities for the three footbridge systems to be constructed and being constructed along Sham Mong Road were inconsistent with those applied in other footbridge systems. Both Mr AU and Ms Tanya CHAN pointed out that even if MTR Admiralty Station had a heavy flow of people, the footbridge connecting to it was provided with only one lift and one pair of escalators.

18. Mr WU Chi-wai opined that the provision of lifts or escalators at footbridges could encourage more people to use footbridges, so that fewer people would directly get across the roads despite the presence of a footbridge nearby. However, not all existing footbridges were equipped with escalators. As far as he understood, the Administration would consider installing escalators at a footbridge only when the peak pedestrian flow rate was up to 4 500 persons per hour in both directions. As a result, some footbridges that did not measure up to the pedestrian flow requirement were not equipped with escalators (e.g. the footbridge connecting the East Kowloon Cultural Centre under construction and MTR Kowloon Bay Station). Mr WU enquired if the Administration had started relaxing the aforesaid pedestrian flow requirement since its planning of the footbridge system at Sham Mong Road/Tonkin Street West.

19. PM(S)/CEDD said that in determining the number of lifts and/or escalator facilities to be provided for individual footbridge systems, the Administration considered not only the quantitative indicators, but also the actual circumstances in the district. That included the availability of lifts and/or escalators for public use at the connection points to other facilities; local views; the population distribution in the district and whether there were a large number of community facilities in the vicinity that gave rise to a higher demand for barrier-free facilities; the pattern of use of road facilities by pedestrians and the overall traffic conditions; whether people in need were required to make an inconvenient detour to access other barrier-free facilities when the lifts were not in service; and the space available in the work area and technical feasibility. As the location and geographical constraints of every footbridge varied, it was only natural that the designs adopted and facilities provided would differ, and the need to install lifts and/or escalators

for footbridge projects was a matter to be considered with the involvement of the Transport Department on an individual basis.

20. PM(S)/CEDD pointed out that a total of seven lifts and two pairs of escalators were proposed to be installed for the proposed footbridge system. Among them were the twin lifts provided at three of its crossheads and a pair of covered escalators and covered staircase at two of them. At the crosshead connecting to another housing development, one lift was installed in the light of the actual circumstances. As for the footbridge system at Sham Mong Road/Yen Chow Street West, its functions and concept of design as well as the number of its facilities, such as lifts, were similar to that of the other two footbridge systems along Sham Mong Road. The Administration had gazetted the proposed project and would submit the related funding proposal to LegCo at the appropriate time.

21. Ms Tanya CHAN opined that the lift towers housing the twin lifts respectively installed at the three crossheads of the proposed footbridge system were bulky and unsightly while taking up a lot of ground space. Ms CHAN was concerned whether the Government would, in its future planning of footbridges, install twin lifts and even complementary escalators at crossheads as long as ground space allowed. Mr Alvin YEUNG and Dr CHENG Chung-tai raised similar concerns.

22. Mr Alvin YEUNG opined that many footbridge systems in a number of districts met the above criteria mentioned by the Administration, and one or two lifts should therefore be added provided that there was sufficient space. Mr YEUNG enquired whether the relevant bureau(x) had plans to re-examine all the existing footbridges in Hong Kong to ascertain if there was space for addition of lifts, and to overhaul the standards of facilities for footbridges. Mr YEUNG suggested that the Administration withdraw the funding proposal for the proposed project for the time being, pending the availability of such standards in clearly defined terms.

23. Permanent Secretary for Development (Works) and Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands) ("PS(PL)/DEVB") said that review of existing footbridge facilities (including lifts) was under the policy purview of the Transport and Housing Bureau ("THB"). The Development Bureau would relay members' views to THB. PS(PL)/DEVB added that the Government had different considerations when planning the facilities of new footbridge systems and considering the addition of lifts for existing footbridge systems. As regards the facilities of new footbridge systems, the Government normally considered the demographic composition and spatial factors of the districts in which these facilities were located in determining the number of lifts to be installed. For completed footbridge projects, THB

and the Highways Department would examine the need to add lift facilities and the feasibility of the proposals on a need basis.

24. The Administration also undertook to provide supplementary information on the criteria it currently adopted in determining whether lifts and/or escalators would be provided at government-built footbridge systems and the number of such facilities provided, and set out these criteria and the minimum threshold for meeting them; for the proposed footbridge system which was provided with a large number of lifts and escalators, whether a lower threshold had been adopted; if so, whether similar footbridge systems to be constructed by the Government in future would be designed with reference to the lower threshold.

(Post-meeting note: The supplementary information provided by the Administration was circulated to members vide [LC Paper No. PWSC68/19-20\(01\)](#) on 10 January 2020.)

Benefits of the proposed footbridge system

25. Mr Vincent CHENG declared that he was the chairman of the Transport Affairs Committee of the Fifth Sham Shui Po DC. He said that Sham Shui Po DC generally supported the construction of the footbridge system network along Sham Mong Road comprising the proposed footbridge system, and considered that the proposed footbridge system could help ease the traffic congestion in the areas around Sham Mong Road and enhance the connectivity among communities (including the topside development of Nam Cheong Station, the proposed Site 6 and public housing developments). With the successive completion of the developments in the areas around the North West Kowloon Reclamation Area, it was believed that the problem of pedestrians and vehicles competing for road space would be exacerbated. As far as he understood, local residents, including those of Aqua Marine and Hoi Lai Estate, generally supported the construction of the proposed footbridge system. However, he considered that the explanation given by the Administration in response to members' concerns was vague, fueling members' concern about the proper use of public money. Mr CHENG also pointed out that residents of Hoi Lai Estate had indicated that the installation of lifts would better incentivize them to use the proposed footbridge system in the future. They also hoped that the cover of the proposed footbridge system could be extended to the walkway and crossing leading up to Hoi Lai Estate. In this connection, Mr CHENG said that he would support the proposed project only if the Administration undertook to respond to the request made by residents of Hoi Lai Estate for extending the cover.

26. PM(S)/CEDD took note of Mr Vincent CHENG's views, and said that discussion would be held with the relevant department(s) about the feasibility of connecting the proposed footbridge system to Hoi Lai Estate with covered facilities.

27. Mr CHAN Chi-chuen opined that the Administration had been taking forward certain footbridge systems in the North West Kowloon Reclamation Area to make it a "streetless community". However, he was concerned about the suitability of taking forward footbridge systems in the areas around Sham Mong Road, which was not heavily used by pedestrians. Mr CHAN also referred to the recent drive of Taipei to reconsider whether the footbridges in the city centre should be kept or removed. In some areas, footbridges and subways were even demolished to give a reboot to a street planning policy based on the pedestrian-first principles. Mr CHAN called on the Administration to consider the policy direction of constructing footbridge systems. On the other hand, Mr Vincent CHENG pointed out that there were relatively few street-level shops in the areas around Sham Mong Road. The proposed footbridge system was unlikely to have effects on the operation of shops. However, he pointed out that the persistently low utilization rate of a footbridge at Yen Chow Street completed years ago was a matter that deserved the Administration's attention.

28. PM(S)/CEDD explained that the proposed footbridge could provide a safe and comfortable walking environment, enhance the connectivity of the existing and new developments in the vicinity and increase junction capacity, so as to cope with the traffic flow arising from population growth and the completion of facilities in the future. With the ever-increasing number of vehicles in Hong Kong, in the long run, at-grade pedestrian crossing facilities would be overwhelmed and pedestrians' waiting time for crossing the roads would become increasingly longer. In planning new development projects, if the Administration failed to act early to provide suitable crossing facilities but did so only at a later stage after completion of the development projects and population intake, it would be more challenging and cause more inconvenience to the residents. For that reason, the Administration would lose no time in taking forward the necessary footbridge systems under new development projects, and also install lifts for the proposed footbridge system, considering that many of the users (including wheelchair-users, infants, young children and their caretakers) would need them.

29. Dr Fernando CHEUNG questioned if the construction of three footbridge systems within the short span of two street blocks along Sham Mong Road was fully justified. Dr CHEUNG noted that the construction of the proposed footbridge system would make it safer for pedestrians (especially PWDs) to cross the roads. However, he was

concerned about the high construction cost of the three footbridge systems and the high maintenance cost of facilities, as well as the environmental implications of the materials used for their construction and the construction waste generated. He questioned the effectiveness of the three footbridge systems in improving the traffic of Sham Mong Road, and enquired if the Administration had examined the situation and confirmed that the traffic problems in the areas around Sham Mong Road could not be solved by road improvement works. Dr CHEUNG opined that the Administration should provide information on the expected changes in the traffic capacity of Sham Mong Road before and after construction of the three footbridge systems for members' reference.

30. PM(S)/CEDD said that the vehicular traffic in the vicinity of Sham Mong Road was busy, and local residents had to wait for relatively long time to cross the roads. The three footbridge systems concerned would form a continuous grade-separated pedestrian network, creating a convenient, barrier-free and covered walking environment around the clock to serve the nine existing and future major housing developments nearby covering a total population of about 72 000 in 2022, as well as the students of 10 existing primary and secondary schools. They could also enhance the connectivity of Hing Wah Street West with the community facilities to be completed at Site 6 and the public transport interchange. The traffic capacity of the junction of Sham Wong Road and Hing Wah Street West could also be improved.

31. Mr CHU Hoi-dick opined that there was no quantitative information (e.g. the amount of time saved for vehicles using Sham Mong Road after pedestrians were diverted to the three aforesaid footbridge systems) available in the Administration's paper for discussion to illustrate how the three footbridge systems could help address the traffic problems in the district. Mr CHU pointed out that the construction of the three aforesaid footbridge systems would cost around \$1 billion in total. He opined that in order to justify its argument for the necessity of the three footbridge systems, the Administration should assess separately the benefits of pursuing and not pursuing the relevant projects for members' reference. Mr CHU also enquired whether the Administration had conducted traffic impact assessments ("TIAs") for taking forward the three footbridge systems as a network and for each of them separately.

32. PM(S)/CEDD replied that traffic in the areas around Sham Mong Road would become increasingly busier as the population in the vicinity continued to grow. The waiting time for pedestrians to cross the roads was expected to become longer and the safety risk would increase in the long run if the signalized at-grade crossings at the three intersections (i.e. at Sham

Mong Road/Hing Wah Street West, Sham Mong Road/Tonkin Street West and Sham Mong Road/Yen Chow Street West) were not cancelled. Should these at-grade crossing facilities be retained and converted into the more desirable straight crossings, the reserve capacity of the junction of Sham Mong Road and Hing Wah Street West would be reduced to -23% in 2031. At the request of Mr CHU Hoi-dick and Dr Fernando CHEUNG, the Administration undertook to provide the full texts or the relevant websites of TIA reports for the three projects, namely the proposed footbridge system, the footbridge system at Sham Mong Road/Tonkin Street West and the footbridge system at Sham Mong Road/Yen Chow Street West.

(Post-meeting note: The supplementary information provided by the Administration was circulated to members vide [LC Paper No. PWSC68/19-20\(01\)](#) on 10 January 2020.)

Aesthetic design of and materials used for the proposed footbridge system

33. Mr Tony TSE said that he had all along disagreed with the Administration's pursuit of large-scale footbridge systems as a solution to traffic congestion problems and a way to facilitate pedestrian flow. Mr TSE opined that the proposed footbridge system was designed with practical function. Massive in size, it had very negative impact on the overall landscape, and was not designed to be pedestrian-friendly. The Government's planning of the North West Kowloon Reclamation Area in recent years was also skewed towards vehicles and roads, with no consideration given to pedestrian-friendly measures. Mr TSE also expressed his view that under the current consultation mechanism, even though the Administration would consult the Advisory Committee on the Appearance of Bridges and Associated Structures ("ACABAS") on proposed footbridge systems, it was hardly possible for members of ACABAS to overrule the whole project or make major revisions because the planning and design had basically been cast in stone, leaving little room for them to contribute their input. Mr TSE opined that the Administration should be receptive to the views offered by professional sectors regarding aesthetic design, management and maintenance in order to address the aforesaid planning issues and the inadequacy of the consultation mechanism. Mr Vincent CHENG concurred with Mr TSE's opinions.

34. Mr Tony TSE enquired whether there were other proposed footbridge systems along Sham Mong Road apart from the three mentioned above. Mr TSE and Mr AU Nok-hin enquired whether the three footbridge systems were all designed by the same consultant/government department. Dr CHENG Chung-tai enquired whether the proposed footbridge system shared the same aesthetic design as the other footbridge systems respectively

located at Sham Mong Road/Tonkin Street West and Sham Mong Road/Yen Chow Street West.

35. PM(S)/CEDD replied that all of the three footbridge systems were designed by the same consultant engaged by the Civil Engineering and Development Department. The same criteria were therefore adopted in terms of the concept of design, aesthetic design and facilities, but with differences in surface colours. In the areas around Sham Mong Road, there were other completed footbridge systems that were in use.

36. At the request of Dr CHENG Chung-tai and Ms Tanya CHAN, the Administration undertook to provide the artist's impression of the three footbridge systems to be constructed and being constructed along Sham Mong Road, and illustrate the number and locations of the lift and escalator facilities installed for the footbridge system being constructed at Sham Mong Road/Tonkin Street West.

(Post-meeting note: The supplementary information provided by the Administration was circulated to members vide [LC Paper No. PWSC68/19-20\(01\)](#) on 10 January 2020.)

37. Mr Gary FAN noted that the Administration had consulted ACABAS on the aesthetic design of the proposed works, and the aesthetic design was accepted by ACABAS. He enquired whether ACABAS or its members had taken the initiative to offer their views on the design during the consultation process; if so, whether the Administration had adopted these views and improved on the original design. In addition, pointing out that the proposed footbridge system and the footbridge system at Sham Mong Road/Tonkin Street West abutted closely on the adjoining Ying Wah College, MHY College and TCGSS, Mr Gary FAN enquired about the shortest distances between the footbridges and these schools, and the materials used for constructing the relevant parts of the footbridges with regard to the security concern of the schools and the privacy concern of teachers and students, so as to minimize the impact of pedestrian traffic on the security and privacy of these schools after completion of the footbridge systems.

38. PM(S)/CEDD replied that the Administration had provided the documents on the aesthetic design of the proposed footbridge system for scrutiny by ACABAS and for vetting. ACABAS had offered its views on the trees proposed to be used in landscaping works, the materials and colours proposed to be adopted for the proposed footbridge system and so on. The proposed footbridge system featured a no-frills design, and the materials used were lightweight. The views offered by ACABAS were incorporated to the fullest extent in the process.

39. PM(S)/CEDD further said that the shortest distance between the footbridges and the schools was about 4.5 metres at the point where they stood closest to each other. The Administration had been consulting the schools in the district on its plans of the three footbridge systems, including exchanging views with them regarding the footbridges' design and the ways to protect the security and privacy of the schools. The Administration would install blocking objects, such as frosted glass, at some appropriate parts of the proposed footbridge systems that faced the schools, so as to minimize the impact of pedestrian traffic on students, privacy and school security. The Administration also provided the design plans for the schools' consideration. After works completion, school representatives would be invited to participate in on-site inspections to ensure that the requests put forward by the schools had been properly addressed.

40. Mr AU Nok-hin enquired about the materials to be used for the cover of the proposed footbridge system, whether the use of transparent materials would make the walkway excessively sultry in summer, and whether Sham Shui Po DC had put forward its views on the materials used for the cover. PM(S)/CEDD said that striped glass would be used for constructing the cover for the dual purposes of natural lighting and shade.

Arrangements for removal of at-grade pedestrian crossings

41. Mr Holden CHOW enquired whether the existing at-grade pedestrian crossings in the vicinity would be cancelled after completion of the proposed footbridge system, and about the related arrangements. Mr WU Chi-wai was concerned whether the Administration had consulted and secured support from the local DC regarding the arrangements for future changes to at-grade crossing facilities.

42. PM(S)/CEDD replied that the Administration would remove the existing signalized at-grade crossings after completion of the proposed works. The Administration would then, through liaising with the Transport Department and imposing contractual requirements on the contractor, deploy traffic ambassadors to assist local residents in adapting to the changes to the crossing facilities and using the facilities of the footbridge system. The local DC had also accepted such arrangements. The Administration had gazetted the proposed footbridge system to be taken forward and stated that the existing signalized at-grade crossings at the location would be removed after completion of the proposed works. The Administration received no objection.

43. Ms Tanya CHAN enquired about the other at-grade pedestrian crossings in the vicinity that were planned to be removed apart from those at the junction of Sham Mong Road and Hing Wah Street West. The Administration undertook to provide supplementary information after the meeting.

(Post-meeting note: The supplementary information provided by the Administration was circulated to members vide [LC Paper No. PWSC68/19-20\(01\)](#) on 10 January 2020.)

Connection of the proposed footbridge system to private developments

44. Both Mr Holden CHOW and Mr CHAN Chi-chuen opined that the developer of Aqua Marine would stand to benefit from the pedestrian flow brought to the commercial facilities of the estate after completion of the proposed footbridge system connecting to it. They enquired whether the Administration would consider negotiating with the developer on whether the latter should bear part of the construction cost of the proposed footbridge system.

45. Mr Gary FAN noted that in recent years, the Administration tended to adopt the planning approach of "streetless communities" in new developments. While expressing understanding for the Administration's consideration in adopting the approach of separating pedestrians and vehicles in its planning of crossing facilities having regard to the high population density, he opined that subways might also be an alternative to be considered. Mr FAN pointed out that many of the projects of footbridge systems carried out by the Administration in recent years were connected to the shopping malls of housing estates developed by MTR Corporation Limited ("MTRCL") or private developers, where those access links were often designed to support the marketing of these shopping malls. Mr FAN expressed reservation about connecting government-built footbridge systems to private developments, and sought details of the lease terms signed with the developers concerned regarding the management of the space connecting footbridge systems taken forward by either the Government or MTRCL to MTRCL's facilities or private developments, and enquired whether the respective responsibilities of the Government and the developers in matters such as the future maintenance and upgrading of footbridge facilities were set out therein.

46. PM(S)/CEDD said that if the projects of footbridge systems carried out by the Administration were to be connected to private properties or developments, provisions were normally stipulated in the lease to set out the respective roles of the Lands Department and the private developer or

property owner concerned in managing the relevant parts of the footbridges with regard to the specific conditions and actual needs. She added that footbridge systems were taken forward in different years, and the relevant lease terms also varied. For the projects of footbridge systems carried out by the Government in recent years, the Government would, having regard to the future planning and facilities of the districts concerned, stipulate in the lease the respective responsibilities of developers and the Administration in facility provision.

Planning of the North West Kowloon Reclamation Area Site 6

47. Mr Tony TSE spoke of the exceptionally slow progress of the planning and project implementation of Site 6, which had been laid idle for up to 10 years. He enquired about the current progress of the related projects. PM(S)/CEDD said that HD was taking forward a public housing project of the Hong Kong Housing Authority ("HA") at Site 6, which was currently under construction.

48. In view of the provision of the 24-hour public walkway at Site 6 that would be connected to the proposed footbridge system, Ms Tanya CHAN enquired whether the Administration would consider discussing with HA about whether the latter would undertake the construction of some facilities.

Greening arrangements

49. Mr WU Chi-wai sought details of the landscaping works of the proposed footbridge system, including the plant species used for at-grade greening, the flower species used on the footbridge (whether seasonal flowers would be used) and the watering work (to be done manually or automatically). Mr WU pointed out that while the Administration often used low-growing shrubs to complement trees for at-grade greening, such shrubs were difficult to take care of and they were also black spots of accumulation of rubbish. Not only were they unable to enhance the surrounding landscape, they were a cause of hygiene issues and eyesores. He urged that the Administration must change its policy, and suggested that only trees be used for at-grade greening without having low-growing shrubs planted around them.

50. PM(S)/CEDD replied that *Pongamia pinnata*, a native tree species, was proposed to be planted for at-grade greening, which would be complemented by *Schefflera arboricola*, jasmines and *Pittosporum tobira* planted around them. For the footbridge itself, the more colourful species of *Allamanda cathartica* and *Asparagus densiflorus* were proposed to be used. Community planting activities of these plants would be organized jointly with

schools of the district concerned. After completion of the project, routine maintenance of the greening works would be taken over by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department ("LCSD"). She advised that there were water supply points in the areas around the footbridge. LCSD would deploy staff to carry out the routine watering and maintenance work. Regarding Mr WU Chi-wai's strong opinions for using automatic sprinklers for watering and against planting low-growing shrubs, she said that further evaluation would be conducted with LCSD.

Construction schedule

51. Mr Holden CHOW enquired whether the completion time of the proposed footbridge system in end-2023 could tie in with the population intake schedule of the housing developments being implemented in the vicinity, including the public housing development at Site 6. As the proposed footbridge system would be connected to Site 6, he enquired whether the walkway at the connection point would be completed in sync with the proposed footbridge system. Mr AU Nok-hin relayed the request of Sham Shui Po DC that for the sake of convenience to residents nearby, part of the footbridge could be opened for public use upon partial completion of the works of the proposed footbridge system.

52. PM(S)/CEDD said that subject to the timely approval of the funding proposal by the Finance Committee, the proposed footbridge system was expected to be completed substantially in 2023. The development of Site 6 and the housing developments being constructed in the vicinity were expected to be completed in batches between 2021 and 2022. The construction of the proposed footbridge system needed not wait until the completion of works at Site 6 to commence.

Construction cost and recurrent expenditure

53. Ms Claudia MO pointed out that with a total length of 222 metres for its four spans, the proposed footbridge system incurred a per-metre construction cost of up to around \$1.5 million, and enquired how it compared with the cost of similar projects. Mr Vincent CHENG was also concerned about the relatively high construction costs of footbridge systems taken forward in recent years.

54. PM(S)/CEDD replied that the per-square-metre construction cost of the proposed footbridge system was comparable to that of similar projects. She advised that for the four spans, lift towers, escalators and staircases of the footbridge which covered a total area of 1 147 square metres, the

per-square-metre construction cost was in the region of \$230,000 and \$240,000. For the spans of the footbridge alone, which covered an area of about 980 square metres, the per-square-metre construction cost was about \$270,000.

[At 10:25 am, the Chairman asked members if they agreed to extend the meeting for 15 minutes to 10:45 am. No member raised objection.]

55. The Chairman said that the Subcommittee would continue to discuss this item at the next meeting. The meeting ended at 10:41 am.

Council Business Division 1
Legislative Council Secretariat
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