

立法會
Legislative Council

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Finance Committee of the Legislative Council

Minutes of the 8th meeting
held at Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex
on Friday, 11 December 2020, from 3:00 pm to 5:20 pm

Members present:

Hon CHAN Kin-por, GBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon CHAN Chun-ying, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP
Hon Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung, GBS, JP
Hon WONG Ting-kwong, GBS, JP
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Hak-kan, BBS, JP
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-kin, SBS, JP
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBS, JP
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin, BBS
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming, SBS, JP
Hon YIU Si-wing, BBS
Hon MA Fung-kwok, GBS, JP
Hon CHAN Han-pan, BBS, JP
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, SBS, MH, JP
Hon Alice MAK Mei-kuen, BBS, JP
Hon KWOK Wai-keung, JP
Hon Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung, SBS, JP
Hon Elizabeth QUAT, BBS, JP
Hon Martin LIAO Cheung-kong, GBS, JP

Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH
Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, SBS, JP
Ir Dr Hon LO Wai-kwok, SBS, MH, JP
Hon CHUNG Kwok-pan
Hon Jimmy NG Wing-ka, BBS, JP
Dr Hon Junius HO Kwan-yiu, JP
Hon Holden CHOW Ho-ding
Hon SHIU Ka-fai, JP
Hon Wilson OR Chong-shing, MH
Hon YUNG Hoi-yan, JP
Dr Hon Pierre CHAN
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-kwan, JP
Hon LUK Chung-hung, JP
Hon LAU Kwok-fan, MH
Hon Kenneth LAU Ip-keung, BBS, MH, JP
Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai
Hon Vincent CHENG Wing-shun, MH, JP
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen, BBS, JP

Public officers attending:

Ms Alice LAU Yim, JP	Permanent Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury)
Mr Raistlin LAU Chun, JP	Deputy Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Treasury)1
Miss Jennie CHAN Cheuk-yin	Principal Executive Officer (General), Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau (The Treasury Branch)
Dr CHOI Yuk-lin, JP	Under Secretary for Education
Mr Philip HAR Mung-fei	Principal Assistant Secretary for Education (Infrastructure and Research Support)
Mrs Gloria LI HO Suk-wa	Principal Education Officer (Special Education)
Mr Frank WONG Tak-choi, JP	Project Director 1, Architectural Services Department
Ms Maria TSANG Pui-shan	Chief Project Manager 102, Architectural Services Department
Ms Judy LAU Oi-wing	Senior Project Manager 125, Architectural Services Department
Mrs Sharon YIP LEE Hang-ye, JP	Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Transport)1

Mr Peter MAK Chi-kwong	Principal Assistant Secretary for Transport and Housing (Transport) ⁷
Mr Jimmy CHAN Pai-ming, JP	Director of Highways
Mr Robert CHAN Cheuk-ming, JP	Principal Government Engineer (Railway Development), Highways Department
Mr NGAI Hon-wah	Government Engineer (Railway Development) ⁽²⁾ , Highways Department
Miss Rosanna LAW Shuk-pui, JP	Commissioner for Transport
Mr Patrick HO Kwong-hang	Assistant Commissioner for Transport (Planning)
Mr Stephen LEE Hoo-tin	Chief Engineer (Transport Planning), Transport Department

Clerk in attendance:

Ms Anita SIT	Assistant Secretary General 1
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Staff in attendance:

Miss Bowie LAM	Council Secretary (1) ¹
Mr Frankie WOO	Senior Legislative Assistant (1) ³
Miss Yannes HO	Legislative Assistant (1) ⁷

Action

The Chairman reminded members of the requirements under Rule 83A and Rule 84 of the Rules of Procedure.

Item 1 — FCR(2020-21)72
RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PUBLIC WORKS
SUBCOMMITTEE MADE ON 18 NOVEMBER 2020

PWSC(2020-21)14
HEAD 703 — BUILDINGS
Government Offices — Intra-governmental services
133KA — Drainage Services Department Office
Building at Cheung Sha Wan Sewage
Pumping Station

PWSC(2020-21)15

HEAD 703 — BUILDINGS

Education — Other

113ET — Extension of Hong Chi Morninghill School, Tuen Mun

PWSC(2020-21)16

HEAD 707 — NEW TOWNS AND URBAN AREA DEVELOPMENT

Civil — Land development

Engineering

765CL — Development of Anderson Road Quarry site — remaining pedestrian connectivity facilities works

PWSC(2020-21)17

HEAD 709 — WATERWORKS

Water Supplies — Fresh water supplies

353WF — Upgrading of Sheung Wong Yi Au fresh water supply system

371WF — Ngau Tam Mei Water Treatment Works extension

2. The Chairman advised that this item sought the approval of the Finance Committee ("FC") for the following recommendations made by the Public Works Subcommittee ("PWSC") at its meeting held on 18 November 2020:

- (a) regarding PWSC(2020-21)14, to upgrade 133KA to Category A at an estimated cost of \$2,157.5 million in money-of-the-day ("MOD") prices for the construction of the Drainage Services Department Office Building at Cheung Sha Wan Sewage Pumping Station;
- (b) regarding PWSC(2020-21)15, to upgrade 113ET to Category A at an estimated cost of \$61.2 million in MOD prices for carrying out the extension works at the Hong Chi Morninghill School, Tuen Mun;
- (c) regarding PWSC(2020-21)16, to upgrade 765CL to Category A at an estimated cost of \$250.6 million in MOD prices for constructing the remaining pedestrian connectivity facilities works for the development of the Anderson Road Quarry site; and

- (d) regarding PWSC(2020-21)17, (i) to upgrade 353WF, i.e. Upgrading of Sheung Wong Yi Au fresh water supply system, to Category A at an estimated cost of 136.5 million in MOD prices; and (ii) to upgrade part of 371WF, i.e. Ngau Tam Mei Water Treatment Works extension, as 372WF, entitled "Ngau Tam Mei Water Treatment Works extension – investigation study, design and site investigation", to Category A at an estimated cost of \$136.6 million in MOD prices; and retain the remainder of 371WF in Category B.

3. The Chairman advised that with the exception of the recommendation stated in paragraph 2(b) above, members had not requested any further discussion or separate voting on the recommendations under this item at FC meeting. He would jointly put the recommendations without the need for further discussion to vote first.

4. The Chairman declared that he was an Executive Director and the Chief Executive Officer of Well Link Insurance Group Holdings Limited. He was also a Director of Well Link General Insurance Company Limited and Well Link Life Insurance Company Limited, which were subsidiaries of Well Link Insurance Group Holdings Limited.

Voting on part of FCR(2020-21)72

5. At 3:03 pm, the Chairman put part of the recommendations (i.e. the recommendations mentioned in paragraph 2(a), (c) and (d) above regarding PWSC(2020-21)14, PWSC(2020-21)16 and PWSC(2020-21)17) to vote. The Chairman declared that the majority of the members present and voting were in favour of the recommendations. The recommendations were approved.

Discussion on the recommendation in PWSC(2020-21)15 (Extension of Hong Chi Morninghill School, Tuen Mun)

6. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok expressed support for the proposed works project.

7. Mr Michael TIEN was supportive of the proposed works project, and pointed out that parents of students of Hong Chi Morninghill School had demanded the expansion of the school premises since many years ago. However, he expressed concern that Hong Chi Morninghill School and Hong Chi Morninglight School ("the two schools") would have to continue to share the school premises and the associated facilities, including the covered playground and inadequate parking spaces, and the school

premises did not have a school hall. Moreover, taking into account the 75 additional school places to be added to Hong Chi Morninghill School, the average usable space for each student after the extension of the school premises might still be smaller than that of an average school in Hong Kong. In other words, the proposed works project could not fully satisfy the needs of students and parents. Given that there were a number of vacant school premises in Tuen Mun, he requested the Administration to study the feasibility of relocating one of the two schools to suitable vacant school premises, so that each of the two schools would have independent school facilities (including a school hall) in the long run.

8. The Chairman said that the Administration should consider Mr Michael TIEN's suggestion of utilizing vacant school premises to improve the teaching space of the two schools.

9. Dr CHENG Chung-tai pointed out that the Administration had implemented the New Senior Secondary ("NSS") academic structure in special schools, and the measure to extend students' years of study. These had led to the need for special schools to increase the number of classes, which in turn required additional classrooms and facilities. He considered it incumbent upon the Administration to provide adequate resources on a timely basis for the special schools affected by the policy to improve their teaching space and associated facilities. However, given that several other special school improvement works projects were yet to commence or complete, the work progress of the Administration in this regard seemed rather slow. Taking the arrangement of school premises sharing pointed out by Mr Michael TIEN as an example, the Administration seemed to focus only on fulfilling the basic requirement of increasing teaching space, etc., when it launched school premises extension/improvement works projects, without comprehensively considering the needs of special school students. He also pointed out that the Public Complaints Office of the Legislative Council Secretariat was handling a complaint concerning the conversion works of Rhenish Church Grace School (a special school in Wong Tai Sin). Despite the fact that the stakeholders had been consulted on the planning matters of the improvement works of Rhenish Church Grace School and the estimated cost of the conversion works was only about \$40 million, while that of the extension project of Hong Chi Morninghill School, Tuen Mun was over \$60 million, the conversion works project was rejected by the Administration on the grounds that its estimated cost was too high. He thus questioned the criteria that the Administration used for assessing the pros and cons of proposed improvement works projects for special schools and whether they were good value for money.

10. In response to the above questions, Under Secretary for Education ("US(Ed)"), Principal Assistant Secretary for Education (Infrastructure and Research Support) ("PAS(I&RS)") and Project Director 1 of Architectural Services Department said that:

- (a) the proposed works project was designed to fulfil the practical need for teaching space of Hong Chi Morninghill School, Tuen Mun (especially the problem of inadequate classrooms) in the light of the implementation of the NSS academic structure and the measure to extend students' years of study. The scope of the project mainly included the construction of a three-storey new annex block to provide five classrooms and other associated facilities, including parking spaces. It was expected that the new facilities would sufficiently address the needs of Hong Chi Morninghill School after the addition of school places;
- (b) after the completion of the proposed works project, the new annex block of Hong Chi Morninghill School could provide about 12.6 sq m of usable space per student;
- (c) the issue of sharing school premises by the two schools was outside the scope of the proposed works project; and the complaint case concerning Rhenish Church Grace School was also not directly related to the project. The environment and space of school premises, site constraints and teaching space needs of different schools varied and should not be compared directly;
- (d) in the light of the implementation of the NSS academic structure and extension of students' years of study since 2009-2010, the Government had reviewed the circumstances of 40-odd special schools and set project scopes and their priorities for the gradual implementation of improvement works projects. In brief, the Government would assess whether the proposed works projects were technically feasible and met the practical needs of the special schools based on individual schools' circumstances, including whether the school environment would allow for relatively large-scale works projects;
- (e) so far, about half of the special school improvement works projects had been completed and the remaining improvement works projects for 21 special schools were at different stages of

implementation. The Government would continue to keep in view the development of the education policies and study suitable improvement works projects for special schools; and

- (f) school premises constructed at different eras were up to their prevailing school construction standards and complied with relevant requirements. The allocation of vacant school premises that were suitable for education purposes was normally done through a competitive process. The Government would consider Mr Michael TIEN's above suggestion concerning the use of vacant school premises.

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11. In response to a follow-up question from Mr Michael TIEN, US(Ed) said that the Government would provide the following supplementary information after the meeting: the space per student of Hong Chi Morninghill School, Tuen Mun at present and after the extension works and a comparison with the space per student of other schools in Hong Kong, and the number of schools currently sharing school halls with other schools.

12. Dr CHENG Chung-tai said that the proposed conversion works of Rhenish Church Grace School mentioned above were originally put forth by the Administration for consideration by the school administration. That the proposal was ultimately rejected gave an impression that the Administration was inconsistent in its policies. He urged the Administration to review the relevant work procedure, so as to expedite the improvement works projects for the remaining 21 special schools. He enquired whether the Administration could ensure that improvement works projects for special schools would not end up reducing the usable space for students and teachers.

13. US(Ed) replied that the sites of some special schools did not have open space for constructing new blocks. In these cases, the usable space of the students and teachers would be inevitably affected during the implementation of extension/improvement works (e.g. constructing additional storeys on an existing block or interior alteration, etc.). If a site had to be secured for a special school for constructing a new block before carrying out improvement works, it would take a very long time to complete the improvement works projects required for all the special schools.

14. PAS(I&RS) supplemented that apart from projects of a relatively large scale like the proposed project under discussion, the Government would also carry out other repair or improvement works for different

special schools each year having regard to their needs. Generally speaking, if there was no increase in the number of students in special schools, such works would produce no marked impact on their space per capita. Regarding the case relating to the Rhenish Church Grace School, the Government had already explained related issues to Members at three case conferences held by the Public Complaints Office of the Legislative Council Secretariat.

15. Mr Holden CHOW expressed support for the proposed project. He noted from the information paper provided by the Administration on 3 November 2020 (LC Paper No. PWSC10/20-21(01)) that there was no specified standard schedule of accommodation for special schools. In this connection, he enquired how the Administration would assess what facilities were required in each special school.

16. US(Ed) responded that the Government would provide different special schools with suitable facilities in the light of the actual circumstances and operation needs of individual schools. For example, Hong Chi Morninghill School, Tuen Mun was a school for children with mild intellectual disability, and apart from additional classrooms, new facilities to be provided under the proposed project also included a social worker's room, a speech therapy room, a multi-purpose area, an accessible/fireman's lift, etc., so as to cater for the needs of students and provide adequate working space to professionals serving the school.

Voting on recommendation regarding PWSC(2020-21)15

17. At 3:38 pm, the Chairman put to vote the recommendation regarding PWSC(2020-21)15 (Extension of Hong Chi Morninghill School, Tuen Mun) in FCR(2020-21)72. The Chairman declared that the majority of the members present and voting were in favour of the recommendation. The recommendation was approved.

Item 2 — FCR(2020-21)69

HEAD 60 — HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT

Subhead 700 General non-recurrent

New item "Strategic Study on Railways beyond 2030"

HEAD 186 — TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT

Subhead 700 General non-recurrent

New item "Strategic Study on Major Roads beyond 2030"

18. The Chairman advised that this item sought the approval of FC for (a) the creation of a new commitment of \$64.9 million under Head 60—Highways Department Subhead 700 General non-recurrent for conducting the "Strategic Study on Railways beyond 2030" ("the Proposed Study on Railways"); and (b) the creation of a new commitment of \$27.5 million under Head 186—Transport Department Subhead 700 General non-recurrent for conducting the "Strategic Study on Major Roads beyond 2030" ("the Proposed Study on Major Roads"). The Transport and Housing Bureau had consulted the Panel on Transport on the relevant proposals on 21 July 2017.

The necessity and manpower resources for conducting the two Proposed Studies

19. Mr Christopher CHEUNG said that he supported the two Proposed Studies in principle, but given that the local economy had been badly hit by the epidemic, he was concerned about the necessity for the Administration to apply to FC for a total funding of \$92.4 million at this juncture for studying the transport demands ten years later. He enquired whether the Administration could defer the Proposed Studies, and whether the Studies could be undertaken by civil servants rather than consultants. Dr CHENG Chung-tai expressed similar concerns and raised his objection against the Proposed Studies. Mr CHEUNG was also concerned that with rapid social development, the results of the Proposed Studies might not be suitable to meet the needs of social development ten years later, and in this connection, he asked whether there were previous examples where findings of completed studies were subsequently considered obsolete.

20. Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Transport)1 ("DS(T)1") advised that land planning should be supported by the provision of infrastructural facilities, and as it generally took more than ten years to take forward large-scale infrastructure projects from study, investigation, design to construction, it was now an opportune time to start planning for the layout and associated facilities of the railway and major road infrastructures beyond 2030, so as to tie in with the planning and development then. Taking the "Railway Development Strategy 2014" ("RDS-2014") as an example, the study had, similarly, covered a railway development blueprint for more than ten years, and the Government had so far been committing itself to taking forward the recommendations contained therein. DS(T)1 went on to point out that given the wide coverage of the two Proposed Studies, research work concerning certain professional aspects would have to be conducted with the assistance of external professionals. Director of Highways supplemented that as the Highways Department was pressing ahead at full steam with the seven

railway projects recommended in RDS-2014, there were no sufficient internal resources to conduct the Proposed Studies on its own.

The scope and timetables of the two Proposed Studies

21. Mr CHAN Chun-ying expressed support for the two Proposed Studies and raised the following questions:

- (a) the North-South Transport Corridor as revealed in Enclosure 1 to the discussion paper FCR(2020-21)69 would link up New Territories North and Kowloon, and with the gradual commissioning of facilities in the Lok Ma Chau Loop and Liantang/Heung Yuen Wai Boundary Control Point, whether a Y-shaped/cross-shaped network would be adopted as the design of the Corridor to connect it with various land boundary control points;
- (b) as updating the "Railway Development Study Model" ("RDS Model") of the Highways Department was one of the areas covered by the Proposed Study on Railways, what elements of the Model would be updated and what would be the usable life of the updated RDS Model; the cost of \$2 million for updating the Model would indeed be too high if it only involved input of new data, and why the Highways Department did not absorb the relevant cost with its existing departmental resources; and
- (c) it was noted from paragraph 9(b) of the discussion paper FCR(2020-21)69 that one of the focuses in the Proposed Study on Major Roads was to come up with corresponding short- to medium-term proposals as soon as possible to alleviate congestion at the bottlenecks of the major roads connecting the New Territories and the urban areas. In this connection, whether the Administration had identified the specific locations of these bottlenecks, and what were the details of the short- to medium-term improvement proposals.

22. DS(T)1, Director of Highways and Commissioner for Transport responded respectively by pointing out that:

- (a) the Proposed Studies would include an in-depth review of the route alignment and associated transport facilities of the North-South Transport Corridor, and the Legislative Council would be briefed of the results of the review once they were available;

- (b) generally speaking, the Highways Department would update the parameters used under RDS Model every year, and determine if a large-scale restructuring of the Model would be required, depending on whether there were any major changes in such parameters. Given that some of the data in the Model were derived from the Territorial Population and Employment Data Matrix compiled by the Planning Department, and that the data had been updated recently, a relatively large scale restructuring would be required for enhancing the Model. It so happened that the Government needed to take forward the Proposed Study on Railways, the Highways Department had included the cost of updating the Model into the funding application for the two Proposed Studies. If the work involved only the updating of the Model, the expenses could be met with existing resources of the Highways Department; and
- (c) the Proposed Study on Major Roads sought to explore transport infrastructure planning beyond 2030. Regarding the Government's short and medium term efforts to improve transport infrastructure, specific examples included the soon-to-open Tuen Mun—Chek Lap Kok Link Northern Connection in New Territories West, which would improve the traffic conditions of the district after its commissioning; the commencement of the widening works of Tai Po Road (Sha Tin Section) in New Territories East, which was expected for completion in 2023, by then the existing congestion problem in that road section could be relieved with an additional traffic lane; and the planning for the construction of Trunk Road T4 in Sha Tin to connect the area to various existing tunnels (such as Shing Mun Tunnel). As for long term planning, the Government was planning for the construction of Route 11. It could therefore be seen that the Government had been continuously taking forward short, medium and long-term road improvement projects.

23. Mr Tony TSE referred to various major roads and railways under planning/construction as set out in paragraph 4 of the discussion paper FCR(2020-21)69, and enquired whether the two Proposed Studies would be conducted on the basis of these major road or railway projects, thereby reviewing the overall transport needs of the territory. He was also concerned if the progress of these major road and railway projects under planning/construction would be affected by the commencement of the

Proposed Studies by the Administration.

24. Director of Highways responded that the progress of delivering seven railway projects recommended under RDS-2014 was as follows:

- (a) Tuen Mun South ("TMS") Extension and Tung Chung Line ("TCL") Extension: the Government had already invited the MTR Corporation Limited ("MTRCL") to commence the relevant detailed planning and study;
- (b) Hung Shui Kiu Station, East Kowloon Line ("EKL") and North Island Line ("NIL"): the Government was examining the proposals submitted by MTRCL;
- (c) South Island Line (West) ("SIL(W)"): MTRCL would submit a proposal at the end of 2020; and
- (d) Northern Link: it was the Government's hope that the relevant planning and study could be commenced as soon as possible.

The Proposed Studies would take into account the situation after the commissioning of the above-mentioned railway projects, and explore the transport needs of Hong Kong having regard to the new strategic growth areas proposed under the "Hong Kong 2030+: Towards a Planning Vision and Strategy Transcending 2030" ("Hong Kong 2030+") planning study as well as the overall layout. The Proposed Studies would not hinder the Government from taking forward the aforementioned railway projects.

25. Noting that the Proposed Study on Railways and the Proposed Study on Major Roads would respectively take 38 months and 27 months to complete, Mr Martin LIAO enquired how the Administration could ensure that the Studies could tie in with the Government's economic and land development planning (such as the development of the logistics industry) and they would be forward-looking; whether the scope of the Studies would be adjusted as a result of the above development changes; and whether the Administration would provide relevant policy support.

26. Director of Highways advised that the contents of the Proposed Studies would be adjusted according to the latest developments (for example, the progress of the Studies related to Artificial Islands in the Central Waters), so that the transport infrastructure could cope better with the economic and land development needs. In the example of the Proposed Study on Railways, the basic information mainly came from the results of the Hong Kong 2030+ Planning Study, including the positions

and scope of the future strategic growth areas and the established developed areas in Hong Kong. The Planning Department would provide data for the Department to input into the RDS Model in order to produce forecast on traffic demand and to understand whether the existing transport infrastructure could meet the development needs. For instance, in case there were bottlenecks, they might study whether additional railways/roads could be provided to meet the needs. After the consultant had put forward recommendations, the Government would conduct a public consultation. If certain recommendations were confirmed to be feasible, an in-depth study would be carried out to explore the engineering and financial feasibility before formulating the final implementation strategy.

27. Mr Kenneth LAU noted that as indicated in the discussion paper, the Proposed Studies on Major Roads and Railways would be finished respectively in 2022 and the second half of 2023. He asked whether there were any changes to the timetables concerned and how the Administration could expedite the study progress for an early commencement of the transport infrastructural works so as to avoid making the new development areas "isolated islands".

28. DS (T)1 said that when the Government drafted the discussion paper, the two Proposed Studies were originally expected to commence in August 2020. If FC approved the related funding today, the Government hoped that the Studies could commence in December 2020, with the completion dates of the Studies being postponed accordingly for four to five months.

29. Mr Wilson OR pointed out that the Hong Kong 2030+ Planning Study conducted by the Development Bureau and the Planning Department since 2015 also involved transport infrastructure. He enquired about the differences between the content of the abovementioned study and that of the two Proposed Studies and whether there were areas of duplication.

30. In response, DS (T)1 said that the Hong Kong 2030+ Planning Study had put forward the initial concept of corresponding transport corridors for land development in Hong Kong, but the specific infrastructural layout and alignments would need to be examined in detail in the two Proposed Studies, and there was no duplication in the contents of the studies.

31. Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok expressed his support for the two Proposed Studies. In his view, the increasingly serious transport problems in Hong Kong were attributed to the Administration's lack of comprehensive planning and execution ability in regard to transport infrastructure. For

example, RDS 2014 proposed seven railway projects but it was not until recently that the two projects of TCL extension and TMS extension were confirmed to be launched, i.e. six years after the recommendations had been made. He considered the progress rather slow. He urged the Government to implement the recommendations without delay after the related studies had been finished. He enquired whether the two Proposed Studies and the Studies related to Artificial Islands in the Central Waters were complementary to each other, with a view to improving the land, housing, economic and transportation planning as a whole.

32. Ms YUNG Hoi-yan asked whether there was any duplication between the two Proposed Studies and the Studies related to Artificial Islands in the Central Waters, and whether the Proposed Studies would facilitate the Government's consideration of how to redress the traffic congestion problem in the New Territories.

33. DS (T)1 advised that the scope of the two Proposed Studies were different from that of the Studies related to Artificial Islands in the Central Waters. While the former studies mainly complemented the final development strategy of the Hong Kong 2030+ Planning Study in examining the infrastructural layout of railways and main roads of other districts beyond the artificial islands in the Central Waters, the latter studies mainly focused on the planning of various transport infrastructural facilities on the artificial islands. They were thus complementary to each other.

34. Mr Holden CHOW and Ms Alice MAK were concerned about the tardiness in Hong Kong's infrastructural development which could neither cope with the population growth in new development areas nor meet the traffic needs that arose accordingly. They urged the Administration to assess the transport infrastructural needs of new development areas with a forward-looking mindset with a view to realizing the policy direction of "according priority to infrastructure".

35. DS (T)1 emphasized that it was the wish of the Government to realize the policy direction of according priority to infrastructure. The two Proposed Studies would, pursuant to the development strategy of the Hong Kong 2030+ Planning Study, study the layout of railways and main roads as well as the priorities of the infrastructural projects in order to support the existing development and, where practicable, reserve sufficient capacity to meet the long-term development needs.

36. Ms Alice MAK and Mr CHAN Hak-kan criticized the Administration for its failure to support city development by delaying the implementation of the related recommendations for many years after they

were proposed upon completion of the studies. In the example of the Northern Link railway project, although it had been under discussion for many years, its construction had yet to commence. But the first batch of residents would move into North East New Territories New Development Areas in 2030 at the earliest. Mr Kenneth LAU also expressed similar concern. Mr CHAN asked the Administration to ascertain whether the implementation of the Northern Link railway project had been confirmed. Ms MAK urged the Administration to give an explanation about the ways of implementing various recommendations and provide timetables for their implementation in the two Proposed Studies.

37. DS (T)1 advised that the Proposed Studies would prioritize the various recommendations in order to tie in with the population development and planning timetables of different districts. For instance, the SIL(W) project was to tie in with the Wah Fu Estate Redevelopment Project. As regards the Northern Link railway project, DS (T)1 said that as mentioned in the Chief Executive's 2020 Policy Address, the Government hoped that the project could be launched shortly and would report to the Legislative Council as soon as the details were finalized.

38. Mr CHAN Han-pan opined that there were shortcomings in the Hong Kong 2030+ Planning Study as reflected by its failure to study a transport network connecting New Territories East and New Territories West. He also mentioned the railway development ideas of the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong ("DAB"), including the construction of the Tuen Mun to Tsuen Wan Link, and urged the Government to incorporate the proposal of DAB into the proposed studies. Ms Alice MAK also pointed out that Tuen Mun Road could not adequately cope with the traffic demand brought by the population growth in North West New Territories and enquired whether the Proposed Studies could include a feasibility study for constructing the Tuen Mun to Tsuen Wan Link.

39. DS (T)1 said that the Government would study in depth whether DAB's proposal was compatible with the future development in Hong Kong. According to a study conducted earlier by the Government, the feasibility of constructing the Tuen Mun to Tsuen Wan Link was rather low. However, the Proposed Studies would explore the railways or main roads needed in Hong Kong on the basis of the results of the Hong Kong 2030+ Planning Study and other latest data, including development strategy, population distribution, travel patterns of the public and conditions of different economic development areas. Hence, the Government was willing to explore anew the feasibility of various railway options proposed by Members.

40. Mr Michael TIEN referred to the motion which he proposed and was passed by the Panel on Transport in 2017, and asked whether the Administration would consider conducting a feasibility study on a Tuen Mun-Kowloon Railway proposed by him for alleviating the overcrowding problem of the West Rail Line. He opined that the construction of additional roads would in a way encourage more people to use private cars, and he therefore suggested that the Administration construct a multi-storey car park at Tuen Mun Road Interchange for people travelling from the New Territories to the urban areas to park their private cars there before taking buses to the urban areas, with a view to mitigating the traffic congestion problem that might arise. He enquired whether the abovementioned proposal could be covered by the Proposed Studies.

41. In response, DS (T)1 said that the two Proposed Studies would, depending on the needs of the new development areas, study the construction of suitable transport infrastructural facilities on the basis of the results of the Hong Kong 2030+ Planning Study. The Government was willing to examine any changes to the required transport infrastructural facilities by making reference to the development strategy as well as the latest information on population movements and employment situations. Nevertheless, since the Studies were mainly concerned about the layout of railways and main roads, it would be difficult to cover the car parking problem.

42. Mr CHAN Hak-kan mentioned the views expressed by some owners of several housing estates, including Providence Bay, at Pak Shek Kok in Tai Po, and asked whether the two Proposed Studies would also cover how to improve the existing railway network and roads, for example, the overcrowding of the East Rail Line and the congestion of Tolo Highway.

43. DS (T)1 advised that apart from exploring new projects which would facilitate development, the Government would also identify the existing transport bottlenecks through the Proposed Studies, with a view to making improvements. Actually, the Government always strove to rectify existing transport problems by, for example, taking forward the TMS Extension and the TCL Extension projects under the existing railway network and also the Tolo Highway widening works.

44. Mr Holden CHOW enquired about the possibility to submit in the Proposed Railway Study a specific timetable on the Tuen Mun-Sunny Bay railway project, and to expedite the implementation of the project concerned. DS (T)1 advised that the Studies related to artificial islands in

the Central Waters would explore the feasibility of the Tuen Mun-Sunny Bay railway project.

Comprehensive Transport Study

45. Mr Tony TSE noted that the Administration had undertaken three Comprehensive Transport Studies ("CTSs"), and it had been over 20 years since the last CTS was conducted back in 1997. Expressing discontent about the Administration's refusal to commence a fourth CTS, he criticized the Administration for only conducting studies concerning individual districts/transport services which were fragmented and failed to meet the overall development needs. Mr CHAN Han-pan also pointed out that Hong Kong people's modes of living and travel had undergone drastic changes. He questioned whether it could still meet the needs of the times to maintain railway as the backbone of the public transport system, while also urging the Government to commence a study on its overall transport strategy.

46. Mr Kenneth LAU pointed out that rural areas in the New Territories would be the main source of land supply in Hong Kong in the days ahead, but since Kwu Tung North, Fanling North, Hung Shui Kiu, Kam Tin South, etc., were remote from the urban areas and subject to inconvenient transport, improvement to their transport infrastructure would be necessary for any massive development in order to cope with the demand arising from future population growth in these areas. Therefore, he considered it necessary to conduct a strategic transport study for the purpose of facilitating social development.

47. Mr Tony TSE noted that the Chief Executive's 2020 Policy Address put forth the idea of conducting a comprehensive traffic and transport strategy study. He enquired about the timetable for that study and its difference with the two Proposed Studies.

48. DS (T)1 advised that the two Proposed Studies were complementary with the comprehensive traffic and transport strategy study. The former mainly concerned transport infrastructure projects involving railways and major roads, whereas the latter aimed to collect information on people's travel patterns and behaviour. The two, when combined, could enable an understanding of how Hong Kong's infrastructure projects could accommodate people's travel patterns. Commissioner for Transport added that one of the purposes of the relevant traffic and transport strategy study was to ascertain people's travel patterns, especially the impact produced by social development or even the epidemic on their travel patterns, and in turn examine the transport infrastructure planning such as

whether to build more railways or roads, or to introduce more innovative transport modes. The Government was drafting contract documents concerning the investigation and study of people's travel patterns and intended to conduct the relevant tender exercise next year.

Recommendations in Railway Development Strategy 2000 and Railway Development Strategy 2014

49. Mr Wilson OR noted that the Administration had published the Railway Development Strategy 2000 and RDS 2014. He enquired about the expenses incurred by the two studies and their outcomes. Raising particular concern about the latest planning progress of EKL proposed in RDS 2014, he asked whether the Administration could undertake that the railway project concerned would not end up stillborn. Dr CHENG Chung-tai also enquired about the progress in implementing EKL.

50. DS (T)1 advised that as far as the seven railway projects proposed in RDS 2014 were concerned, the Government had already invited MTRCL to proceed with the detailed planning and design of the TCL and TMS Extension projects, and it was expected that MTRCL could submit a proposal on the SIL(W) project by the end of 2020. And, the Chief Executive's 2020 Policy Address also stated that the Administration would press ahead with the Northern Link railway project. As the EKL project involved more complicated technical problems, the Government already offered comments to MTRCL and hoped that MTRCL could complete the relevant studies and submit a proposal as soon as possible. In response to Mr Wilson OR's request, the Administration would provide the latest planning progress of EKL after the meeting, including a specific timetable on its target completion date.

[Post-meeting note: The supplementary information provided by the Administration was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. FC84/20-21(01) on 31 December 2020.]

51. Mr KWOK Wai-keung opined that the Administration should implement the policy direction of "according priority to infrastructure" and complete railway infrastructure before developing the relevant sites, so as to increase people's desire to move to satellite towns. He enquired about the specific completion timetable for SIL(W), and whether the Administration would consider the construction of the following railways/roads: (a) NIL; (b) Siu Sai Wan Line ("SSWL"); and (c) an Aberdeen-Kennedy Town route.

52. DS (T)1 advised that the Proposed Studies would tie in with the development strategy set out in the Hong Kong 2030+ planning study, and in case of any new development areas, the Government hoped that the relevant transport infrastructure could dovetail with the resident intake schedule in those districts. MTRCL would submit a proposal on the SIL(W) project by the end of 2020, and as for NIL, a railway project proposed in RDS 2014, the Government was examining the technical problems involved with MTRCL and would give an account to the Legislative Council after the details had been finalized. As for SSWL and an Aberdeen-Kennedy Town route, the Government could explore their feasibility in the Proposed Studies based on the latest development strategy and statistics.

Impact of the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and the National Fourteenth Five-Year Plan

53. Mr Tony TSE opined that in order to achieve further development, Hong Kong must enhance its co-operation with other cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area ("GBA"), so it should also take account of GBA's development in its road planning. He also expressed concern about the fact that many sites in the vicinity of Frontier Closed Areas had remained idle. Mr Kenneth LAU likewise pointed out that while the New Territories area was remote from the urban areas of Hong Kong, it was located in the centre of GBA as far as the latter's development was concerned. He enquired whether the Administration would consider such factors as GBA's development and the National Fourteenth Five-Year Plan in drawing up transport planning for the New Territories area.

54. DS (T)1 said that based on the planning layout drawn up by the Planning Department and its recommendations, the Government would examine cross-boundary transport and traffic planning, including how Hong Kong's road and railway infrastructure could tie in with the development. Mr Tony TSE enquired when the Planning Department would conduct the cross-boundary transport study mentioned above. DS (T)1 replied that the Planning Department would update from time to time the relevant statistics on cross-boundary transport, including vehicular and people flows at various boundary crossings and also railway condition, and the Government would take forward the proposed study with reference to such statistics.

Other concerns

55. Dr CHENG Chung-tai was concerned whether a regular communication mechanism had been put in place among various Policy Bureaux as various Policy Bureaux (such as the Development Bureau and the Transport and Housing Bureau) would conduct different studies under their respective policy portfolios. He also enquired whether the positioning of the Proposed Studies would be affected by a government changeover or the resultant re-organization of Policy Bureaux or changes in their functions and duties following the Chief Executive Election; and if so, whether the Administration would formulate a response plan so as not to affect the implementation of the relevant recommendations.

56. DS (T)1 advised that various Policy Bureaux would maintain close communication with one another on their respective studies, and the Proposed Studies were launched precisely for dovetailing with the Planning Department's Hong Kong 2030+ planning study, so any changes in the division of duties among various Policy Bureaux would not affect the launch of the Proposed Studies.

57. Criticizing the varying quality of transport infrastructure projects in recent years and their excessive costs (one example being the Shatin to Central Link), Dr CHENG Chung-tai asked whether the Administration would examine ways to enhance infrastructure quality and reduce costs, so as to rebuild people's confidence.

58. DS (T)1 advised that the Government had commissioned a consultancy study to examine such issues as possible improvements to railway management, project supervision and cost control, and it hoped to give a report to the Legislative Council after the completion of the study. Director of Highways added that the Project Strategy and Governance Office under the Development Bureau was responsible for examining the costs of government infrastructure projects, and it would ensure that the cost estimate was reasonable before project commencement.

Meeting arrangements

59. At 4:54 pm, the Chairman announced that the meeting would be extended by 15 minutes in order to complete the deliberation on the agenda item FCR(2020-21)69.

Voting on agenda item FCR(2020-21)69

60. At 5:15 pm, the Chairman put the agenda item FCR(2020-21)69 to vote. At the request of members, the Chairman ordered a division. The Chairman declared that 22 members voted in favour of and 1 member voted against the item, and no member abstained from voting. The votes of individual members were as follows:

For:

Mr Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan	Mr Jeffrey LAM Kin-fung
Dr Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun	Mr Michael TIEN Puk-sun
Mr Frankie YICK Chi-ming	Mr YIU Si-wing
Mr MA Fung-kwok	Mr CHAN Han-pan
Mr LEUNG Che-cheung	Ms Alice MAK Mei-kuen
Mr KWOK Wai-keung	Mr Christopher CHEUNG Wah-fung
Ms Elizabeth QUAT	Mr POON Siu-ping
Ir Dr LO Wai-kwok	Mr Holden CHOW Ho-ding
Mr SHIU Ka-fai	Dr Pierre CHAN
Mr CHAN Chun-ying	Mr LUK Chung-hung
Mr Vincent CHENG Wing-shun	Mr Tony TSE Wai-chuen
(22 members)	

Against:

Dr CHENG Chung-tai
(1 member)

61. The Chairman announced that the item was approved.

62. The meeting ended at 5:20 pm.